

Press Release

Luebeck, 23.06.2010

It is arranged: The first transnational e-learning course for the food industry

The baltfood project, significantly supported by the European Fund for Regional Development, takes over a pioneering task in view of the first currently developed transnational e-learning course for the food industry. This project lays down the foundation for a comprehensive virtual learning platform for the food industry. Support is given by the leading administration departments of the participating regions within the Baltic Sea region.

At the beginning an opinion survey of people responsible for personnel management and production managers of food companies was carried out. They gave the route of the content for this first e-learning course on the topic food: All respondent agreed upon the topic "Healthy Convenience Products" and considered this subject as trend-setting and realizable for a computer-based learning.

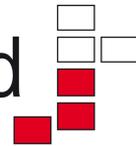
There were over 60 course participants from six countries of the Baltic Sea region. After five weeks and 30 hours of learning workload, the course officially was finalized in June. The participants were guided stepwise through the course, beginning with preliminary assumptions to first product ideas resulting in a concept to launch a "Healthy to Go" product into the market. The participants received a profound overview by interactive and practical exercises, case studies and studying material. Nobody was alone in the virtual class room, on the contrary, the discussion forums were used extraordinary. The possibility to exchange information with colleagues from other countries was used actively, e. g. to receive more information about national food law requirements or consumption habits and preferences within the convenience segment of other participating countries within the Baltic Sea region.

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Part-financed by the European Union (European Regional Development Fund)



This pilot-course, technically implemented by the Luebeck University of Applied Sciences, was successfully finalized on the 30th of June and the baltfood participants took the opportunity to present the course content and methodology to the public. The project partners invited guests and a simultaneous presentation via video conference took place in five countries of the Baltic Sea region: Copenhagen, Kaunas, Turku, Lublin and Luebeck. As a highlight of this event a letter of intent was jointly signed by the present representatives of the regional authorities and the State representatives of the six participating countries. Dr. Cordelia Andreßen, the Secretary of State of Schleswig-Holstein, signed the letter of intent also and pointed out the transnational character of our project. We assess this signature as a clear and positive signal of the regional administrative level to support actively the baltfood network and especially the baltfood Academy. Björn P. Jacobsen, responsible for the baltfood project as lead partner, stated that in the long term we hope to gain a competitive advantage in view of international comparison by this new created qualification-platform within the food industry of the Baltic Sea region.

The on-line course “Healthy to Go – Healthy Convenience Products” represents just the kick-off for a manifold virtual baltfood Academy, where the conceptualization of additional courses will be in accordance with the requirements of the food industry in the Baltic Sea region. It is planned to implement additional courses within this e-learning platform. The next course “Healthy to Go” will start in autumn 2010, accompanied by the Luebeck University of Applied Sciences.

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baltfood is an international project with the principal goal to enhance the competitiveness of the food industry in the Baltic Sea region. Under the general management of the Luebeck Business Development Corporation twelve partners from six Baltic Sea countries have founded the project. Within the first three years the project is supported by the European Union through its Interreg IV B Programme with an amount of 1,8 million euro.

The twelve partners of the baltfood project

Denmark / Sweden

- Øresund Food Network, Danish/Swedish Cluster Management for the food industry in the Øresund region

Germany

- Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Authority of Economic Affairs and Employment
- Luebeck University of Applied Sciences
- University of Rostock
- Luebeck Business Development Corporation

Finland

- Agropolis Oy
- University of Turku, Food Finland Theme Group

Lithuania

- Lithuanian Cluster of Food Sector

Poland

- Lubelskie Voivodship, Regional Cluster Management Biofood
- University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Polish Cluster Management for Dairy Farming

Sweden

- Skåne Food Innovation Network
- University of Lund, Lund International Food Studies

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