

Protocol from the forty-sixth PlantLink steering committee meeting

Date: 7 February 2023, 13:00-17:00

Place: SLU Alnarp

Present: Thomas Moritz, Copenhagen University (chairman); Erik Andreasson, SLU; Leif Bülow, LTH (vice-chairman); Allan Rasmusson, LU; Mariette Andersson, SLU (deputy director); Jean W.H. Yong, SLU; Alf Ceplitis, Lantmännen Lantbruk AB; Abraham Ontiveros Cisneros, LU (PhD students' representative); Johanna Osterman SLU (PhD students' representative)

Federico Gómez LU (director); Erik Alexandersson, SLU (assistant director)

Online: Anna Maňourová, SLU (coordinator); Sofia Marmon, LU; Karl Magnus Adielsson, Region Skåne

Absent with valid impediment: Sofia Marmon was absent at 14:00-15:00

1. Opening of the meeting

Thomas Moritz opened the meeting.

2. Election of the person in charge of verifying the minutes

Jean Yong agreed to be the verifier of the minutes.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting (Annex 1)

Thomas Moritz reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting, and the minutes were approved.

4. Introduction of invited speakers

Federico Gómez introduced representatives of X-Lab, Sweden Food Arena and Good Food Institute Europe.

5. X-Lab

Anders Warell, Professor at Innovations Technology Dept (LU), and Deputy Director of the X-Lab project at LTH, introduced X-Lab's current activities and future perspectives. X-Lab is open to everyone interested in innovation and development, providing space and technological support for experiments. Away day and X-talks are good examples of how to reach out to companies, students and the general public. PlantLink will consider arranging a visit at X-Lab for the steering committee.

6. Sweden Food Arena

Kerstin Eriksson from the Sweden Food Arena (SFA) discussed challenges and opportunities in the agri-food value chain. There is a great need for food sector innovation in Sweden, though most food companies are fairly small (less than 10 employees). SFA works as a platform where different stakeholders (academia, industry, policymakers, public) can meet, discuss their needs and come up with joint solutions. A short article was published on the PlantLink webpage sharing the "The Plant-based food chain's need for investment in innovation and research 2022" analysis by SFA.

7. Good Food Institute Europe

Martina Helmlinger from the Good Food Institute (GFI) Europe introduced the organisation's work, structure and goals. GFI is a non-profit organization, based solely on private funding, with a defined focus on alternative plant proteins. GFI provide open-access research, solution databases and funding programs, free study materials, laboratory protocols and research tool directory, while organising conferences and promoting researchers ("Researcher in Spotlight" scheme). PlantLink and GFI might collaborate in regional stakeholders mapping, joint workshop creation, and PL can receive GFI support in calls for funding.

8. Follow up from strategic meeting + news and notes

- a) A summary of the 6th of December PlantLink Strategy meeting was written and will be circulated among steering committee members. Concluding points were presented by the director, who also expanded on them in separate slides. As a follow-up, Federico Gómez, Erik Alexandersson and Anna Mañourová will attend meetings with Marieke ten Hoeve and Staffan Persson from the Copenhagen Plant Science Center and Signe Vaerbak from the Food and Biocluster Denmark in Copenhagen on the 16th of March.
- b) PlantLink-associated scientists should be more engaged in current affairs. PL can serve as a platform for promoting the findings and achievements of their research groups and students. The list of associated scientists will be revised and updated; its name can be simplified to, e.g., PlantLink researchers. The list should include experts from all parts of the plant agri-food value chain, from basic research to biodiversity, climate change and food processing.
- c) In the future, PL may create another advisory/reference group (apart from the steering committee), where representatives from both academia and industry will be present.
- d) PlantLink meeting with deans of LU and SLU will be held on the 17th of April (15:00-16:00) and the 21st of April (13:30-14:30). A draft of the meeting's presentation will be firstly prepared by Federico Gómez, Erik Alexandersson, Thomas Moritz and Jean Yong and then circulated among the members of the steering committee for further inputs.
- e) In the first half of May, PlantLink will host an event for academia, industry and the general public with a preliminary name "What to eat in times of crisis – the perspective of innovation and sustainability". It will be a hybrid event conducted in the name and scheme of Fascination of Plants Day. Different stakeholders (plant breeders, environmentalists, policymakers, and industry representatives) will be invited to join the panel discussion, followed by a general discussion with the audience. The idea is to cover the whole agri-food value chain from primary production to product development with an emphasis on environmental issues and sustainability.

9. Other issues

No

10. Next meetings

20th of April at 13:00 (LU) – will be changed to a more suitable date; 14th of June at 13:00 (SLU Alnarp)

11. Closure of the meeting

Thomas Moritz closed the meeting.

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