

Introduction of IENICA

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The initial IENICA project (Interactive European Network for Industrial Crops and their Applications) was funded under the 4th Framework of EC funding. It involved all EU-15 states except Luxembourg.

Initial targets were to identify crops or other plant species, which had potential to provide sustainable non-food products, to assess markets in EU-15 for non-food products based upon a market segmentation of oils, fibres, carbohydrates, speciality products, proteins.

In these first 2 objectives over 100 plants and crops were identified and their products characterised. Additionally market assessments indicated considerable market potential, probably in the order of €20 billion per annum at end product value for EU15. Lubricants and fibres offered most confirmed but unexploited potential in short term.

All information leading from the original IENICA project is readily available on the IENICA website (www.ienica.net) and has also been promulgated via IENICA conferences and newsletters.

EC Directorate General Research confirmed the findings of the original IENICA project as the first time anyone had reported an EU wide overview on potential of non-food products from agriculture.

A further consortium including original IENICA members from many CEEC States, Switzerland, Israel, USA and Canada formed the basis for a further project funded under EC Framework 5, This project, IENICA-INFORRM, has 2 workstreams and continues at present. It is identifying further markets, product specifications, case studies and is supported by a revised website plus newsletters and conferences. Final reports are due in 2004.