# EU-funded Strength2Food launches 1st ever Food Quality Schemes (FQS) sustainability Strategic Guide

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Brussels, 26 April – The EU-funded project Strength2Food launched today the first Strategic Guide on Sustainable Food Quality Schemes(FQS), as a result of a 5-year research at European level. Presented on the occasion of  World Intellectual Property Day, the tool will allow practitioners, policymakers and researchers to explore the links between sustainability and FQS. It also aims to increase consumers' awareness of the relationships between FQS, public goods and sustainability, and boost their willingness to pay for services embedded in FQS products.

Prof. Matthew Gorton, the  Strength2Food project coordinator, said: "on World Intellectual Property Day, it is wonderful to demonstrate Strength2Food research relating to geographical indications – a form of intellectual property protection - that can benefit not just farmers but also local communities, consumers, and the environment. Through collaboration between researchers and food producers in Europe and Asia, we draw together examples of the economic, social and environmental benefits of geographical indications, to inspire others as to what might be possible."

With the University of Parma, Italy, leading an international team of researchers from academia, public and private sector, the guide showcases the positive impacts of FQS linked to responsible production and consumption practices. Based on the results of 26 benchmarked value chains, involving different FQS such

as organic, Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) in 14 countries, the guide presents a toolbox to explore the sustainability performance of FQS and their potential. The research identified three main dimensions of public goods linked to FQS production: a) cultural and heritage preservation; b) socio-economic and c) natural resources.

## Geographical Indications (GIs) and intellectual property rights

Since 26th April 1970, [World Intellectual Property Day](#) has represented a unique opportunity to raise awareness on the central role that intellectual property and creativity play in different sectors of daily life, from the arts and music to technological innovation, for the development of societies across the globe.

In this context, [Geographical Indications (GIs)](#) establish intellectual property rights for specific products (e.g. agricultural products, foodstuffs, wine and spirit drinks and industrial products), whose qualities, characteristics and reputation are specifically linked to their area of production, as they entail important benefits from a socio-economic point of view. Not only do GIs provide a way for businesses to leverage the value of their geographically unique products, but they also enable consumers to trust and distinguish quality products.

## EU quality policy and Food Quality Schemes (FQS)

At the European level, both EU quality policy and Public Sector Food Procurement have recently witnessed important reforms to protect the names and GIs of specific products and to promote their unique qualities and characteristics, which are linked to their geographical origin and traditional know-how. [Food Quality Schemes (FQS)](#) allow to promote unique qualities and characteristics found in foods, wherein GIs have emerged as prime examples of food production systems incorporating both traditional and sustainable practices.

The FQS Guide launched today encompasses the positive impacts or externalities that are not remunerated by the market (the so-called 'Public Goods'), whose role in achieving sustainability is significant but still not directly visible to consumers nor economically valued.

## Strength2Food Final Conference – 20 May

The project's results and recommendations will be presented at the final conference of the project on 20 May. The European Food Information Council (EUFIC) will organize the event, presenting in a digital format the Strength2Food 5-year long research journey and bringing together a set of innovative networking and exhibition features for a truly engaging experience.

The conference agenda and free registration can be found  [here](#).

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## About Strength2Food

Strength2Food is a five-year Horizon 2020 EU-funded project, consisting of 13 European academic partners and 2 non-European academic partners who aimed at assessing the sustainability of FQS supply chains and providing EU Member States with evidence-based recommendations to be implemented and verified through innovative pilot actions. Strength2Food research focused on the impacts of FQS linked to good production and consumption practices, and more specifically on public goods, whose role in achieving sustainability is significant but still not directly visible to consumers nor economically valued.

Since the beginning of the project, Strength2Food has aimed at:

- aiding policy makers and stakeholders in improving both the effectiveness of current policies on food quality designations and public sector food procurement to enhance their sustainability and promotion of healthy and nutritious diets.
- demonstrating and validating how to stimulate the development of new quality markets and local food chains through pilot initiatives and innovative actions.

[Strategic Guide on Sustainable Food Quality Schemes (FQS)](#).

Strength2Food [official website](#).

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