



Coordination of the **Agricultural Research In the Mediterranean Area**

DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL Agri-Med RESEARCH SYSTEM

(Programmes and capacity)



PORTUGAL

Funding scheme

Ministry	Funding Organizations	Funding area	Budget € year 2008
Ministry of Science Technology and Higher Education		Instituto Nacional dos Recursos Biológicos, INRB, I.P, (State Laboratory)	36.215.779
Ministry of Science Technology and Higher Education	Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (Agriculture domain)	R&D projects	4.012.327
		R&D Research Centres	2.760.000
		Fellowships and grants	5.117.804
		Scientific Community Support Program	40.500
TOTAL			48.146.410

Research capacity

<i>Research Institutions considered in the report</i>	<i>Agri-med area annual budget (full cost in €)</i>	<i>Human resources in Agri-med area (total N. scientists)</i>
TOTAL		1 458

The agri_Med research structure in the country

The funding of the Portuguese agricultural research system is mainly conducted by FCT, which acts as a Research Council under the authority of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education. FCT supports four main funding actions:



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Research projects: in the framework of a national research program FCT funds projects in all domains of science among which the Mediterranean agricultural research; however, it does not focus on any priority theme. FCT has launched calls for proposals in all scientific domains every 2 years since 2000, and every year since 2008. In 2009, FCT launched a thematic program on cork oak which funded 12 projects.

Fellowships and grants: FCT supports a great variety of fellowships and grants for graduate students (e.g. MSc, PhD, post-doc) through annual public calls, according to the applicable regulations.

Recently, post-doctoral research positions to promote jobs in scientific fields were launched in 2007 and 2008, through program *Ciência2007* and *Ciência 2008* initiatives to provide support for hiring individuals with doctoral degrees, under the individual employment contract regime.

Institutional funding: the majority of Portuguese scientific research takes place in research in R&D Units evaluated and funded by FCT : State Laboratories (in agriculture domain, Instituto Nacional de Recursos Biológicos); other public research institutions; private research institutions such as Associate Laboratories, associations, NGO's, foundations, research societies, etc.

A total of 23 Research Units under the agriculture domain were funded between 2003-2009, which became 13 Research Units, for the period 2009-2012, reflecting a merging process of the units to achieve larger competitiveness.

Scientific Community Support Program (FACC): it provides selective funding to Portuguese scientific community initiatives that foster R&D activities or dissemination of information, in any scientific area, which is not supported by a specific programs (e.g. scientific meetings; publications; scientific societies or similar institutions; participation of PhD researchers or post-doctoral students in scientific meetings abroad; short term stays in Portugal for foreign scientists).

The Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development and Fisheries (MADRP) is the governmental department responsible for the definition of agricultural, rural development and fisheries policies. Currently, MADRP does not manage any agricultural research programme at national level but it has under its responsibility the "Instituto Nacional dos Recursos Biológicos" (INRB), which develops research in agricultural fields, such as veterinary, animal growth, marine biology and fishing. Ministry of Science Technology and Higher Education funds directly the State Laboratory (INRB) with a total budget of 36.215.779€ in 2008.

Priorities:

The rapid scientific and technological development of the country is a national priority (*Commitment to Science for the future of Portugal Act*). Towards the fulfillment of this objective, several measures are considered among which the enhancement of the R&D projects program, evaluation and selection in public calls, by international expert's panels, advanced training and qualification of human resources.

Main research thematic area/programmes:

FCT is funding agriculture research in Portugal holding two research programs:

a) Program in all scientific domains: under the same program, during 2008, FCT funded 4M€ on R&D projects on Agriculture corresponding to 33% of the total budget for the Agriculture domain. The remaining budget was used on other funding actions: fellowships and grants (43%); institutional funding (23%) and FACC (1%). The main thematic area are: natural resources, environment, renewable energies & climate-climate change; food & feed processing, quality and safety; water & soil management.



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b) Thematic Program on Cork Oak: funds projects to obtain and characterize cork oak Express Sequence Tags – ESTs, aiming at building a chip, which will be an essential tool in the understanding of phenomena, such as the response of the cork oak to environmental factors, its sensitivity to plagues and diseases, and the cork growth mechanisms.

Future perspectives in the Agri-Med research:

The Portuguese Government's *Commitment to Science for the future of Portugal* points to the rapid scientific and technological development of the country as a national priority, defining targets and outcome criteria for this development. In the specific domain of agriculture, the policies defined by MADRP are oriented towards a sustainable development and the improvement of quality and safety of the food production chain. A specific program for Rural Development (2007-2013) – ProDer, although it excludes funding for research, recognizes the crucial rule of "knowledge dissemination", as a factor of rural development.

Contact Points for information

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