



EU4Algae

a collaborative European stakeholders forum on algae

Press Release

August 2022

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WG 3 - Algae for food

EU4Algae program aims to promote and develop the algae sector. In the food sector, algae are already used, and the interesting nutritional properties have recently highlighted their importance in human nutrition and health although blockages prevent wider consumption. From September to December, in videoconferences, the board of the food group of EU4Algae platform invites every person implicated in the algae food sector to contribute to the development of avenues to promote algae consumption.

Why Algae? – Algae appears to be one of the solutions to sustainable development for humankind as determined by the United Nations. Indeed, algae can contribute to a greater or lesser extent to the 17 objectives fixed by the organisation. They provide oxygen by capturing CO₂, can absorb excessive pollution, and can substitute to fossil fuel dependant biomass (production of food colloids, proteins, and oil without using synthetic agrochemicals nor arable land). Moreover, algae sector contributes to job and value creation: worldwide 300 000 jobs related to the seaweed and microalgae sector in the world (FAO) and in Europe the global market was estimated at 594 million euros in 2018 and is projected to reach 1,131 million euro in 2027.

Why Algae for Food? – Algae are already used in human nutrition as food (fresh, fermented, dried, or frozen, either whole or milled into differently sized flakes, granules, or powders) or as food additives, ingredients, and supplements. They are source of new tastes with the umami taste. Besides, algae have interesting nutritional proprieties which have recently been high- lighted which could play a role in food security and fighting malnutrition. Algae are also natural source of micro-and macro- nutrients, as well as trace elements, which have their interest in human health. On the top, they are landless food production rich in nutrients compared to land grown plants.

Why this push? – Despite these benefits, blockages (lack of knowledge in algae and their integration in recipes, organoleptic proprieties, contamination) still exist preventing a wider consumption of algae in Europe. The aim of the food group of the EU4Algae program is to accelerate the process of formation of a sustainable European Algae Industry by identify barriers/ blockages, education focuses to develop the consumption of algae in human nutrition. Every actor of the sector is therefore welcomed to contribute to identify leverages to promote algae in food.

About EU4Algae – Algae are produced and consumed throughout the world for centuries. They are especially appreciated in Asian cuisine for their high nutritional value and distinct salty or umami taste. In recent years they are becoming a stander ingredient in vegan dishes in the West. Outside of the culinary realm, algae have turned into a go-to feedstock for sustainable industrial applications such as biodegradable plastics. Moreover, their production helps improve ocean health by reducing carbon dioxide, phosphorus and nitrogen in marine ecosystems. They are also a nursery and hide-out for many marine animals, promoting underwater biodiversity.

Despite all the above, the uptake of algae production and consumption in Europe is slow. In comes the EU4Algae Forum! Together with all relevant stakeholders within the European algae sector, we aim to scale up a regenerative, resilient, fair and climate friendly algae industry, as well as bring more novel algae species to the market.

The platform is a unique space for collaboration among European algae stakeholders, including algae farmers, producers, sellers, consumers, technology developers as well as business-support organisations, investors, public authorities, academia, researchers, and NGOs. It also acts as a single information hub on algae funding calls, projects, business-related information, intelligence, and best practices.

Contact – The board is composed of Vitor Verdelho Vieira (Portugal - Facilitator), Jörg Ullmann (Germany – Chairman; joerg.ullmann@algomed.de) and Florence Dufreneix (France – secretary; florence.dufreneix@ceva.fr). Please contact the latter two for more information.

