

Press Release No 3.

2nd Annual Meeting of FruitCREWS in Seville

FruitCREWS, the COST network dedicated to enhance our understanding in fruit tree water use and irrigation management, successfully concluded its annual meeting held in Seville, Spain, from April 9th to 10th, 2024. The event brought together over 55 members representing more than 18 countries, reaffirming the organization's commitment to fostering international collaboration and knowledge exchange.



2nd FruitCREWS Annual Meeting in Seville, Spain

The two-day meeting was marked by insightful discussions, inspiring key talks, and the presentation of key achievements by the various working groups, as evidenced by the progress made across its working groups:

- Working Group 1 (WG1): Notable progress was reported on datasets collections and reviews, with ongoing work focusing on understanding tree behavior under water deficit.
- Working Group 2 (WG2): Efforts were highlighted in organizing training schools and exploring the integration of mechanistic models into irrigation tools and decision support systems (DSS) and the upcoming COST training school on 'plant sensors and modeling' in Gent, Belgium.
- Working Group 3 (WG3): Significant strides were made in the review process, with presentations showcasing progress and discussions about future steps.
- Working Group 4 (WG4): Valuable insights were shared regarding technical aspects and challenges of incorporating models into DSSs. It was also reported a summary from the survey on the collection of existing DSS for irrigation of fruit trees and the plans to conduct a survey among end-users about what they expect from a DSS, considering the factors influencing farmers' decisions.

- Working Group 5 (WG5): FruitCREWS engaged with DG Agri and made preparations for Living Lab surveys and brochures, to fostering partnerships and promoting innovation in agriculture.

The meeting featured engaging keynote talks by inspiring speakers, including Enrique Fernandez from CSIC, Lorenzo Peppi from UNIBO and Luis Sanchez from DG Agri, who provided valuable insights into sensing capacity in irrigation, the development of new sensors for implementation in DSSs from an engineering perspective and the major opportunities for the Research & Innovation within Horizon Europe, respectively.

In addition to the fruitful discussions and presentations, FruitCREWS outlined its primary activities for 2024, including a workshop at the European Horticulture Congress in Bucharest and a training school at the University of Ghent. These initiatives aim to further advance research and innovation in fruit crop water management and strengthen collaboration within the global scientific community.

During the annual meeting, attendees had the opportunity of visiting the research experimental farm La Hampa, owned by IRNAS-CSIC, which is intended to become one of FruitCREWS' living labs. The visit provided valuable insights into the diverse projects undertaken by the host research group, the Irrigation and Ecophysiology group from IRNAS-CSIC. Participants had the opportunity to learn about ongoing initiatives, including (1) the development of a DSS for irrigating olive orchards; a diverse fruit tree orchard aimed at understanding the physiological response of trees to water deficit with the objective of developing a novel and universal methodology for applying regulated deficit irrigation strategies and assessing the use of novel soil amendments for improving nutrient use efficiency in olive.



FruitCREWS 2nd Annual Meeting attendees visiting the research experimental farm La Hampa

Starting Date: October 2022
Duration: Duration: 48 months

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