

# Collaborative research means maximum benefit for **MUSHROOM INDUSTRY**

## MushTV

Research and Development is the cornerstone of a sustainable, competitive and viable mushroom Industry in the British Isles where technologically advanced, highly mechanised, modern production systems offer the most beneficial contribution to the agricultural economy. Sustainability is assured through the use of waste raw materials with low fertiliser inputs to produce wholesome, healthy and nutritious food while at the same time supporting strong employment in rural communities. The success of the mushroom Industry has been attributed to the entrepreneurial spirit of key stakeholders - growers, compost suppliers, marketers and producer organisations - and is evidenced in their innovativeness, willingness to collaborate and investment in research to remain competitive.

### Maximising Research Capabilities

Active collaborations across three organisations - Teagasc (Ireland), Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (Northern Ireland) and East Malling Research (England) have been developed over many years, where independent teams specialising in areas of mushroom research – pathology, agronomy, molecular diagnostics – have formed a closely knit alliance to deliver maximum benefit and minimise duplication of effort.



Professor Peter Gregory (EMR) & Mairéad Kilpatrick (AFBI) discuss recent collaborations in the EU FP7 MushTV project

### National Funding

All three organisations have received funding from their respective government departments responsible for Agriculture:- Defra in Britain, DARD in Northern Ireland and DAFM in the Republic of Ireland. In addition AHDB Horticulture in Britain, which collects a statutory levy from the industry, has also funded mushroom research. On several occasions there has been collaboration between organisations on specific research projects, fostering close links between the researchers and industries.

### All Ireland and UK Mushroom Conference

The inaugural All Ireland and UK Mushroom Conference was held in 2013 at in the Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan, Ireland. This was an exciting new collaboration between the British and Irish Industries, offering a unique opportunity for discussion and networking in order to sustain a dynamic, competitive and technologically advanced Industry. Following the unprecedented success of this event a second conference is now planned for October 2015.



### International Networks

From local collaborations, grew international partnerships. 'MushTV' is an excellent example of one such strategic alliance fostering close links between researchers and Industry in a €2.5m EU funded project, uniting interested parties from Ireland, United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium and Poland. This network of scientists, composters, producers and associated businesses, including competitors in the mushroom market place, have worked together to resolve common problems pooling scarce resources for targeted research with a sense of collaboration and mutual respect.

Industry involvement has helped shape and prioritise the research programme to address key industry challenges. It has also ensured that the mushroom industry has direct access to the results and best practice publications for sustainable mushroom production.

# www.mushtv.eu

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