The Mediterranean Diet and Traditional Foods

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Traditional Mediterranean diet promotes good health
Mediterranean populations are departing from their traditional eating habits.
The traditional Mediterranean diet is associated with longer survival.

This could be partly attributed to Mediterranean traditional foods which this diet implies.
How can we preserve the traditional Med diet as the dominant dietary pattern at least in the populations that have in the past grown with it?
For the production of traditional foods, local products are generally used.

Cultivation of local products contributes to a sustainable environment and employment of local people, thus promoting the balance between the territory and the people.
STUDY OF TRADITIONAL FOODS

- To provide scientific evidence on the effects of traditional foods on health
- To contribute to the preservation of our cultural inheritance
STUDY OF TRADITIONAL FOODS IN GREECE
(1992 – Present)

Olive, in prehistoric linear Greek writing

- Health aspects
- Cultural aspects
- Economical aspects
STUDIES OF TRADITIONAL FOODS IN EUROPE

www.eurofir.net

www.basefood-fp7.eu
Flavonoid content of green pies (mg/100g) and selected beverages (mg/100ml)

Quercetin: Green pie > Red wine > Black tea > Apple juice
Kaempferol: Green pie > Red wine > Black tea > Apple juice
Myricetin: Green pie > Red wine > Black tea > Apple juice
Apigenin: Green pie > Red wine > Black tea > Apple juice
Luteolin: Green pie > Red wine > Black tea > Apple juice

Trichopoulou et al. Food Chemistry 2000
The flavonol, flavone and flavan-3-ol content of a typical traditional serving of fava complemented with "caper in casserole" sauce

Source: Study of Traditional Greek foods:
Inorganic constituents

- K
- Fe
- Na
- Ca
- Mg
- Zn
- Cu
- Mn

Nutrition claims: a potentially important tool for the endorsement of Mediterranean traditional foods

Investigation of the potential of 194 traditional Greek foods to bear nutrition claims

Mediterranean Journal of Nutrition and Metabolism, 2013
The average number of claims per Greek traditional food was 5

Overall, about 1024 nutrition claims were relevant for the 194 traditional foods studied

Of those claims, 529 were related to vitamins and minerals
Importance of Studying Traditional foods

- Potential health properties
- Promotion of local biodiversity
- Expression of culture, history and lifestyle
- Development and economic sustainability of rural areas
Definition of traditional foods

The term “traditional” is not adequately defined or protected at a legislative level therefore it is often intentionally or unintentionally misused.
• Need for an internationally acceptable definition for “traditional foods” (TF)

• Need to safeguard or reintroduce TF
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION