

The Mediterranean Diet and Traditional Foods

Prof. Antonia Trichopoulou MD

Hellenic Health Foundation, Greece
Athens Medical School

October 25-27 2015
Milan Pasta Day



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**

**sustainable environment
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**

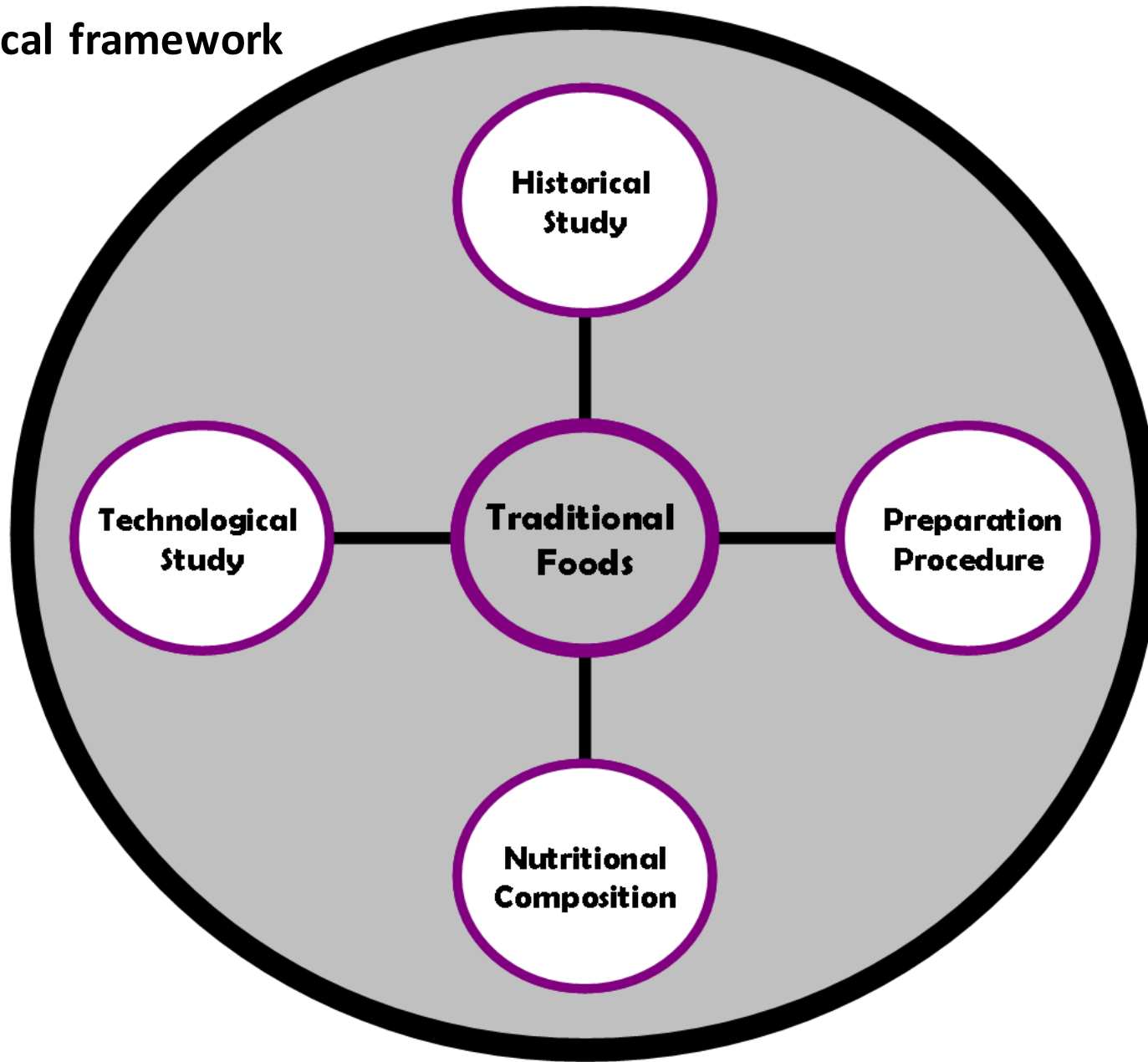
STUDY OF TRADITIONAL FOODS IN GREECE (1992 – Present)



Olive, in prehistoric linear Greek writing

- **Health aspects**
- **Cultural aspects**
- **Economical aspects**

Methodological framework



Systematic Investigation of Traditional Foods



STUDIES OF TRADITIONAL FOODS IN EUROPE



www.eurofir.net

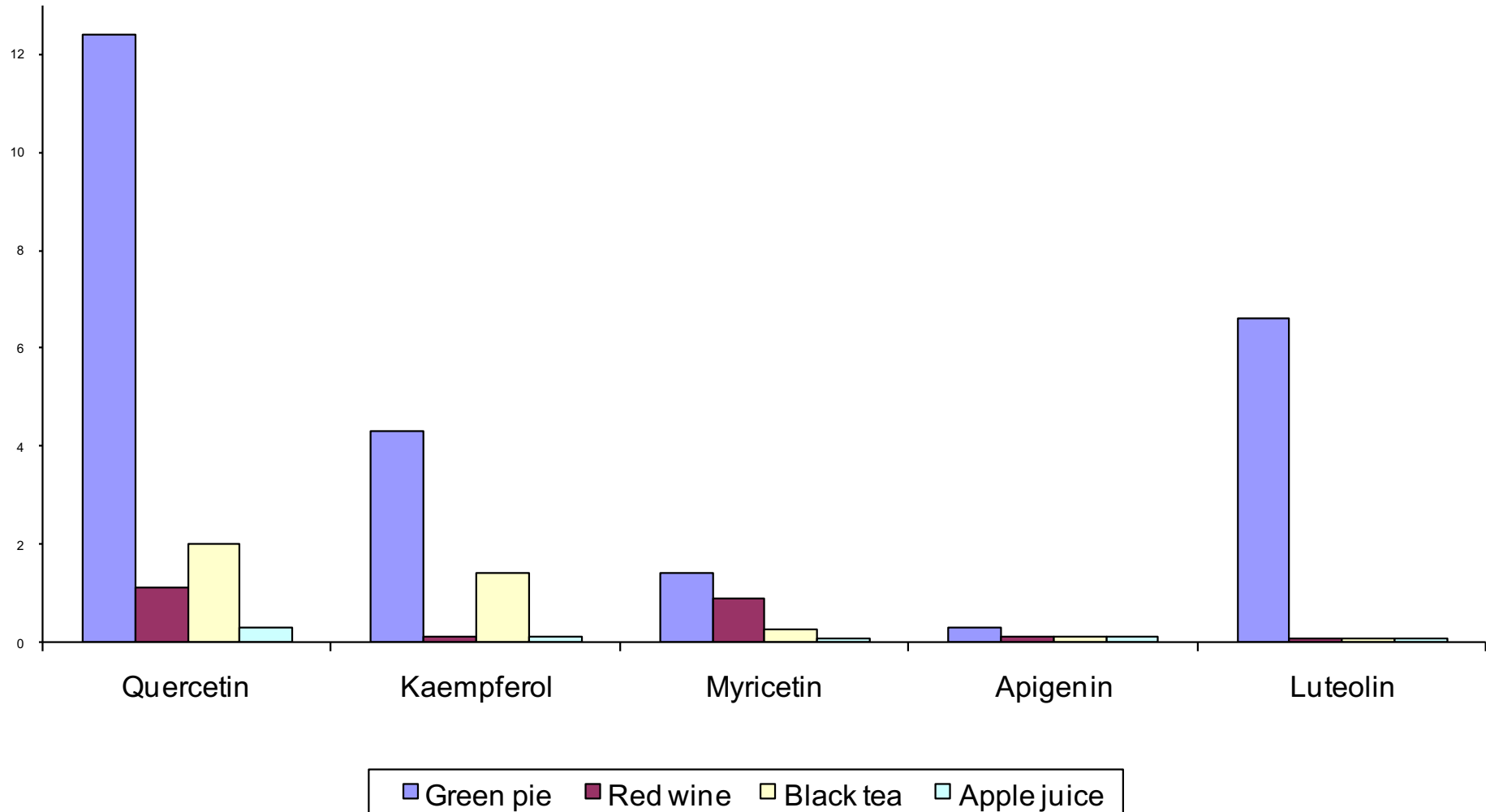


www.basefood-fp7.eu





Flavonoid content of green pies (mg/100g) and selected beverages (mg/100ml)

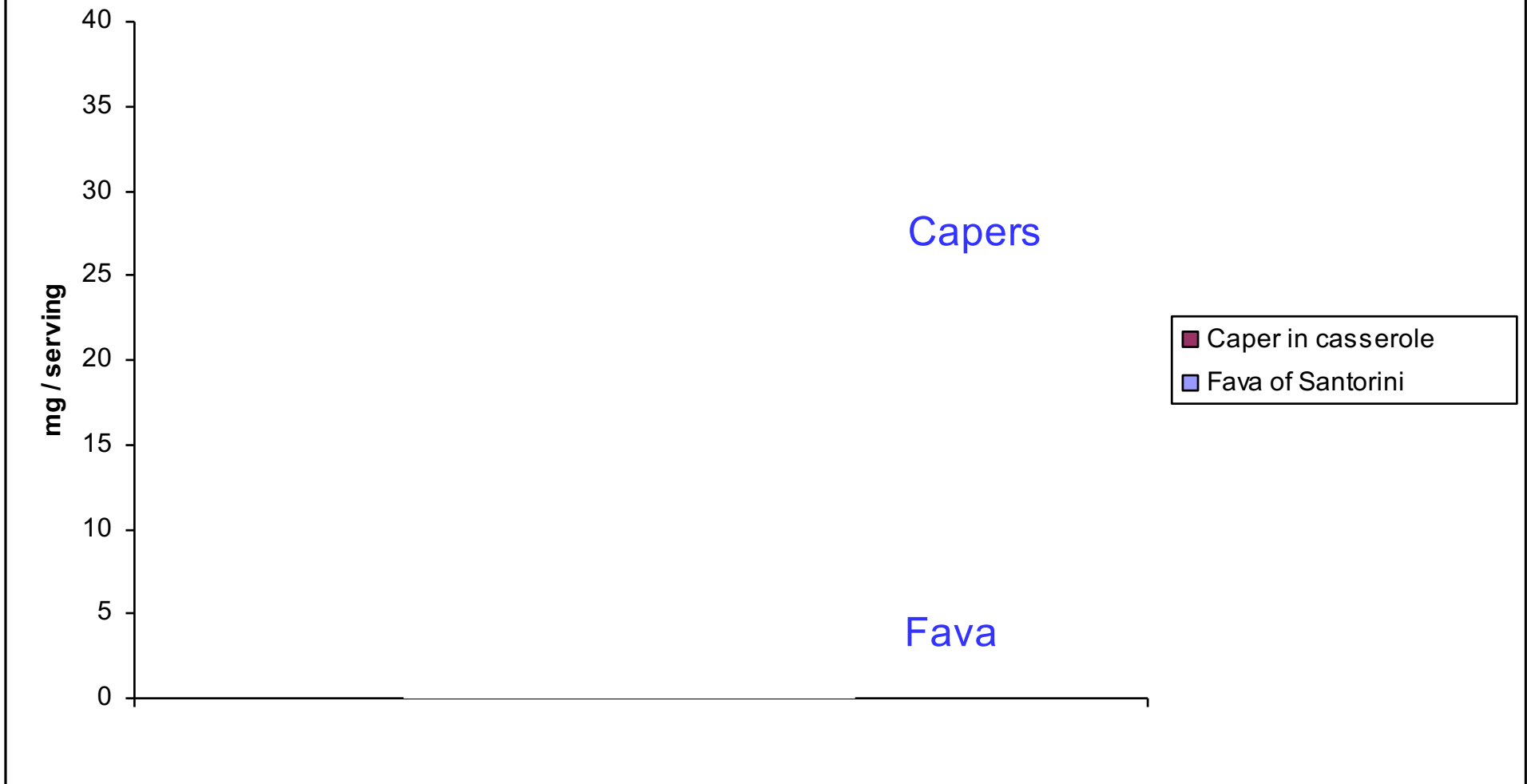








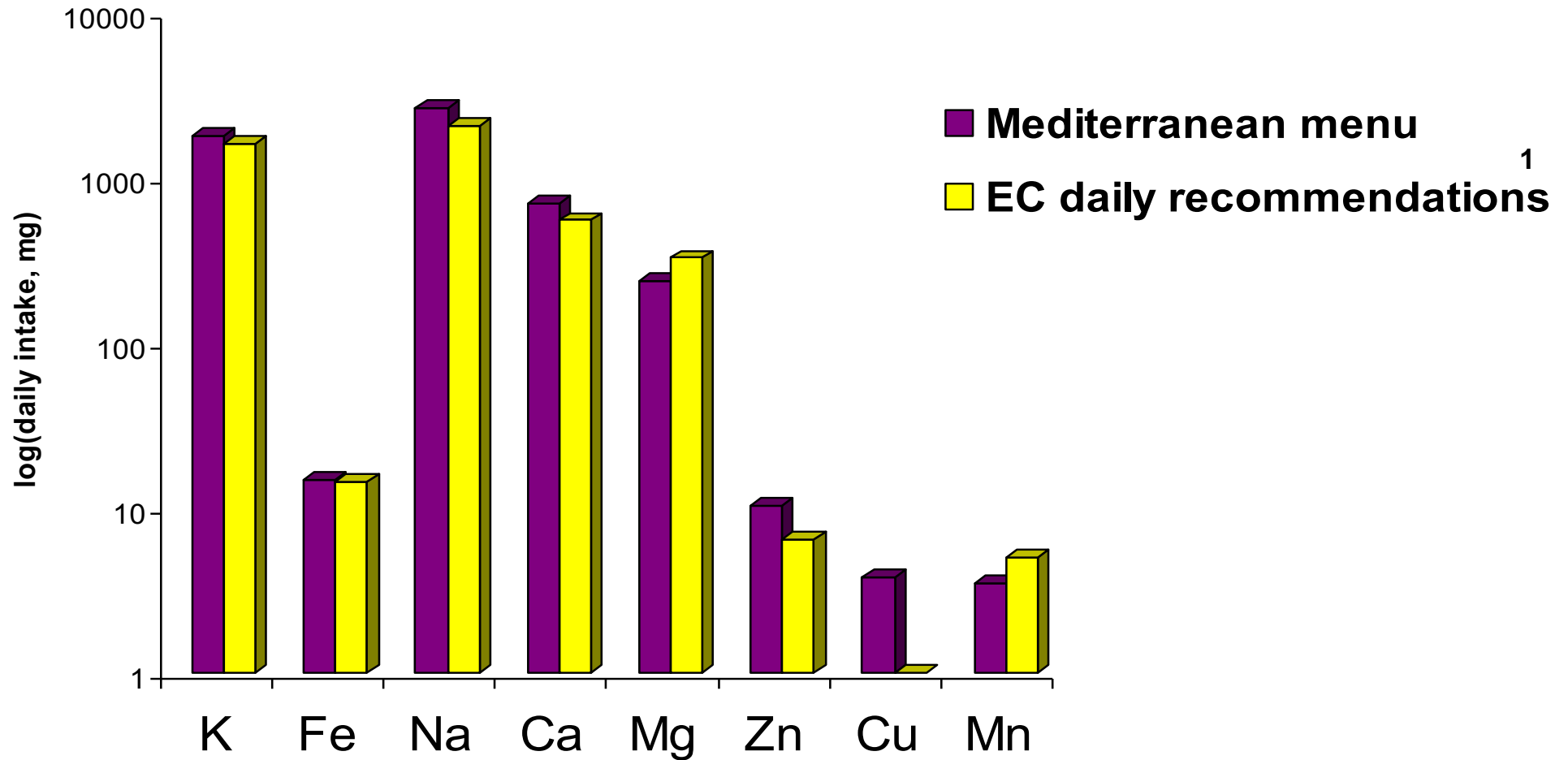
The flavonol, flavone and flavan-3-ol content of a typical traditional serving of fava complemented with "caper in casserole" sauce



Source: Stuy of Traditional Greek foods:



Inorganic constituents



1. Commission of the European Communities. Food-Science Techniques: Reports of the Scientific Committee for Food (Thirty-first series), Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 1993, pp 1-248

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

