

## Easyfruit project extends shelf life of peeled and sliced orange and pineapple

- **Easyfruit Project, funded by the 7th Framework Programme of the European Union, has created an innovative active packaging which extends shelf life of peeled and cut orange and pineapple to 9 and 12 days, respectively.**
- **ITENE, the Packaging, Transport & Logistics Research Center, has coordinated a consortium of companies as Centros Comerciales Carrefour, Spektar, Omniform, Cooperativa Rural San Vicente Ferrer de Benaguasil, Slice Fruit and Nofima in the development of this packaging solution to make eating fruit much easier.**

According to World Health Organization, the low consumption of fruit and vegetables are one of the major risk for mortality. The consumption of fruits is essential to prevent diseases like diabetes, obesity, heart disease or cancer. One of the most widespread recommendations is to consume 5 serving of fruits per person every day, especially amongst children and young people.

However, the consumption of fruits is decreasing daily. Fresh peeled fruit ready-to-eat and easily portable would be a solution for those who find in preparing and cutting this product an inconvenient or those who have difficulties to peel it.

### Results

The main problem is that once fresh fruits are harvested, they are removed from their source of water, minerals and nourishment. This produces deterioration which is accelerated after they are peeled and sliced.

EASYFRUIT project, funded by the 7th Framework Programme of the European Union, has worked to overcome this problem. It has created an active packaging solution for sliced fresh fruit that extends the shelf life of peeled and cut orange and pineapple.

Marta Lara, project Coordinator from **ITENE Research Centre**, explains that *"the packaging consist on an active lead that contains volatile substances that will be release to the fruit in order to extend the shelf-life of the orange and pineapple for nine and twelve days respectively from the seven days that nowadays is achieved by the fruit companies"*.

Gunnar Bengtsson, Senior Research Scientist at **NOFIMA**, says that *"we can extend the shelf life of these products, the fresh cut orange and the fresh cut pineapple, to much more than one week and then the companies can extend their markets geographically"*.

### **Social and environmental benefits**

EASYFRUIT project's results will contribute to open new markets and reduce the loose of deteriorated fruits. In social terms, it will increase the consumption of fresh fruit; and from an environmental point of view, it will allow the reduction of waste generated by the expiration of cut fresh fruit packed.

Mariano Rodríguez, Head of Quality and Sustainable Development at **Centros Comerciales CARREFOUR**, says that *"this solution helps to reduce the amount of losses produced in stores and also at the consumer's home"*.

Ramón Barber, Business Director at the fruit company **Cooperativa Rural San Vicente Ferrer de Benaguasil**, also comments that *"to have a product with more commercial shelf-life and better presentation could cover our demand, especially at international markets"*.

Henriette Holm, R&D manager of **Slice Fruit**, highlights as a benefit all the *"knowledge achieved about packaging and cutting of fresh fruit"*.

Finally, Petar Djordjevic, co-owner and sales manager at the packaging company **Spektar**, comments that Easyfruit project contributes to his company *"in means of having a new product tray plus involvement in the field of fruit packaging were we haven't been before"*.

More information: [www.easyfruit.eu](http://www.easyfruit.eu)