

PROTECHMED

Promoting innovative solutions for the Technological Transition
of the Mediterranean horticultural sector



**SMARTER
MEDITERRANEAN**

Newsletter #1 May 2026

Welcome to PROTECHMED

The PROTECHMED project is a transnational cooperation initiative funded under the Interreg NEXT MED Programme, co-funded by the European Union. It brings together research institutions, SMEs, NGOs, and policymakers from across the Mediterranean to address critical challenges facing the horticultural sector — including water scarcity, energy efficiency, and climate change — through innovative and sustainable solutions.

Project Objectives & Expected Results

The project pursues four main objectives: Developing eco-innovative greenhouse solutions adapted to Mediterranean climatic conditions. Training technicians and agronomists in cutting-edge horticultural technologies. Establishing a transnational agricluster alliance for knowledge exchange. Producing sustainable business model roadmaps and best practice guides. Expected results include five pilot solutions deployed across partner countries, 40 SMEs adopting innovations, and a Mediterranean-wide alliance for sustainable horticulture.

Duration & Budget

Duration: 1 August 2025 – 31 July 2028

Total Budget: €2,312,661

Interreg NEXT MED Contribution: 89%

Partner Contribution: 11%

Project Partners

UTH – University of Thessaly – Special Account for Research Grants (Greece) – Lead Partner

SVIMED ETS – Euromediterranean Centre for the Sustainable Development (Italy)

CIHEAM – International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies – Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari (Italy)

AÜ – Akdeniz University (Türkiye)

LARI – Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (Lebanon)

BIAT – Business Incubation Association in Tripoli (Lebanon)

UTAP – Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fisheries (Tunisia)

MAFA - AD – Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights (Malta)

Associated partners include regional chambers, cooperatives, and agri-tech agencies.



Technical Activities Completed - Semester 1

Kick-Off Meeting – Larissa, Thessaly (26-27 November 2025)

The PROTECHMED consortium officially launched its activities with a Kick-off Meeting held in Larissa, Greece in November 2025, hosted by the University of Thessaly. During the first semester, partners completed the Best Practices Capitalization exercise and Gap Analysis, identifying key technological needs and opportunities across the Mediterranean horticultural sector. Preparations were also initiated for the Inception Camp planned in Sicily.



Upcoming Technical Activities - Semester 2

Inception Camp – Ragusa, Sicily (3-5 June 2026)

The Inception Camp will bring together all project partners for an intensive three-day programme of workshops, field visits, and collaborative planning sessions. Hosted in Ragusa, Sicily, the event will focus on finalising pilot designs, aligning technical methodologies, and strengthening cross-border partnerships. Participants will visit local greenhouse operations to observe current practices and identify integration points for PROTECHMED innovations.



WP3
act. 3.2.2 Inception Camp in Sicily
PROGRAM FOR PARTNERS



TRANSNATIONAL EXCHANGE IN SICILY

June 3 – 5 2026



> Sicily Camp in Ragusa

From 3rd to 5th of June 2026, SVIMED in collaboration with MIES - Business Management for Sustainable Economy, will organize a demonstrative tour ("Sicily Camp") in Ragusa designed for comprehensive know-how exchange among partners and stakeholders in the horticultural sector. The camp will share Best practices, technologies, current practices implemented in the Agritech Horticultural District of South East of Sicily. Eco-innovative practices involve diverse cultivation methods (e.g., conventional, organic, soilless, aquaponics, hydroponics, aeroponics, agrivoltaic greenhouses) and are structured around a **Demonstrative tour combined with a Co-design Workshop on technological solutions for project pilot actions.**

Wednesday | JUNE 3 2026
[Ragusa Ibla - Donnalucata]

The opening day is dedicated to internal coordination among PROTECHMED project partners to ensure objectives are aligned before moving to demonstrative activities. The day will open with a Project Meeting session focused on general progress updates and camp methodology, which will take place at "Auditorium Santa Teresa", on 3 of June, from 09:00 to 13:00 in Ragusa Ibla. Following the meeting session, participants will begin the tour of the BMP (Best Management Practices). The first visits include the **MONCADA greenhouse (Ispica)** and the **Causarano greenhouse (Donnalucata)**. This initial field visit will allow for a deep dive into the eco-innovation technologies applied within the Agritech Horticultural District of south-east Sicily.

Pilot Construction, Testing & Monitoring

Following the Inception Camp, partners will begin constructing pilot greenhouse installations across participating countries. Each pilot will integrate eco-innovative solutions identified during the Gap Analysis phase, including smart irrigation systems, renewable energy integration, and biodegradable materials. Testing and monitoring protocols will be established to measure performance against baseline conditions.

Blueprints & Guidelines

The consortium will develop detailed blueprints and replication guidelines to enable other stakeholders across the Mediterranean to adopt the tested solutions. These documents will include technical specifications, cost-benefit analyses, and step-by-step implementation guides tailored to different climatic and economic contexts.



Stay Tuned



www.interregnextmed.eu/project-page/protechmed/about/



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PROTECHMED IS A PROJECT CO-FUNDED BY THE INTERREG NEXT MED PROGRAMME 2021-2027.