



## **EU-funded project's final event highlights the potential of invertebrate-based solutions to meet market demand**

The EU-funded INvertebrateIT project, which explores the production of invertebrates such as insects and worms to solve challenges in food security and sustainability, held its final event on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019. The event focused on the market viability of the project's research outcomes and promoted investment opportunities for industry leaders in aquaculture and insect production.

Held in Wageningen, The Netherlands, the event brought together almost 40 representatives from SMEs, business, research, government and market organisations, where emerging invertebrate-based solutions for aquaculture were reviewed.

Henk Lommers of The Netherlands' Ministry of Agricultural Affairs of The Netherlands stressed the importance of enhancing collaboration between the stakeholders. Despite researchers demonstrating the production of sea and land-based invertebrates as rapidly growing and innovative sectors, further collaboration between industry, policy and research is required to meet the expanding market demand.

As part of these efforts to further collaboration, the event attendees met with leading Dutch invertebrate and fish producers at their facilities. These facilities included Delta Farms, a producer of polychaete worms for bait, feeds and pharmaceutical products, and Sea Farms, which pioneers sustainable and antibiotic-free turbot production. The trip concluded with a visit to Koppert Biological Systems who are world leaders in producing invertebrates for environmental services, pest control, and crop strengthening products.

INvertebrateIT has spearheaded several initiatives to bridge the gap between research and industry, ensuring lab-based innovations are translated into viable products. This included an open contest, where SMEs competed for funding to expand their cutting-edge invertebrate production solutions into larger scale operations. To close the final event, contest winners and a number of other SMEs pitched their products and services to the attendees. The SMEs included Innovafeed (France), Entogreen (Portugal) and Musflour (Spain).

The event demonstrated how the sector is developing and already supplying promising alternatives to the unsustainable fish-based feeds and products in widespread use, however much work is still needed to move invertebrate-based products to the next stage of development. To strengthen support both from industry and consumers, INvertebrateIT has designed a school project aiming to increase awareness of these solutions and promote vocational careers, and will seek to continue working alongside projects with similar objectives connecting research with market.



Image: The INvertebrateIT partners celebrate the success of their event at the final event in Wageningen, The Netherlands.

### Notes for Editors

The **INvertebrateIT** project finished in March 2019. It was coordinated by Innogate-to-Europe, a Madrid-based SME ([www.innogatetoerupe.eu](http://www.innogatetoerupe.eu)). This project has received funding from the European Union - EMFF under Grant Agreement no. EASME/EMFF/2016/1.2.1.3/02/SI2.751532 (INvertebrateIT).

More information about the **INvertebrateIT** EU project is available on its website: [www.invertebrateitproject.eu](http://www.invertebrateitproject.eu).

If you would like to know more about **INvertebrateIT**, its results, the School Project or potential new projects, please contact Project Managers Luis Lozano or Silvia Sarria Sánchez (E-mail: [llg@innogatetoerupe.eu](mailto:llg@innogatetoerupe.eu) and [sss@innogatetoerupe.eu](mailto:sss@innogatetoerupe.eu)).