

Regional Growth Conference 2026

Educational Activities¹

¹ Co-organized by University of Patras and AgriFoodWest, with the support of University of Tuscia, INZEB country coordinator of EU Climate Pact and Europe Direct of the Region of Western Greece

Day 1 | 19 May 2026

Sustainable agriculture and agri-food entrepreneurship as drivers of competitiveness and resilience²

² Co-organized by the Department of Agriculture, University of Patras

09:00 – 13:00 | RGC Opening and Sessions

13:00 – 13:15 | Welcome Speeches

✓**Ioannis Venetis**, Professor, Vice Rector for Academic Affairs and Finance, University of Patras

✓**Andreas Filias**, Deputy Governor, Region of Western Greece

✓**Theofanis Zacharatos**, Advisor Committee Member, Regional Growth Conference (*online*)

13:15 – 13:30 | Keynote Speech

✓**Pantelis Barouchas**, Professor, Chair, Department of Agriculture, University of Patras

13:30 – 14:00 | Lecture | Education & Skills in the New Agri-Food Sector

✓**Spyros Mamalis**, President, Hellenic Agricultural Organization - DIMITRA

14:00 – 14:50 | Panel Discussion | Sustainability as a business strategy in agri-food: competitiveness and resilience

Speakers

✓**Andreas Filias**, Deputy Governor, Region of Western Greece

✓**Achilleas Angelopoulos**, CEO, KYKNOS SA

✓**Dimitris Voloudakis**, Director of Programs, New Agriculture New Generation

✓**Loukianos Kontelas**, Former President – Geotechnical Chamber of Greece (Branch of Eastern Central Greece)

✓**Panagiotis Papadopoulos**, Head & Co founder, Open Farm

Moderator

✓**Pantelis Barouchas**, Professor, Chair, Department of Agriculture, University of Patras

14:50 – 15:05 | Break

15:05 – 16:20 | Research Sessions (15 minutes per lecture)

Removal of Pharmaceutical Compounds from Aqueous Solutions through Adsorption onto Residual Biomass

✓Drosos Konstantinos & ✓Serifi Georgia, Department of Agriculture, University of Patras

Valorisation of Agricultural Biomass for the Development of Novel Products with Environmental Applications

✓Souliou Paraskevi & ✓Straka Maria, Department of Agriculture, University of Patras

Trap-Based Wasp Management Strategies for the Protection of the Honey Bee *Apis mellifera*

✓Mouzakiti Maria-Eleni & ✓Ksonis Konstantinos, Department of Agriculture, University of Patras

Sensory Evaluation Techniques for Olive Oil: The Olive Grove of the University of Patras as a Case Study

✓Notara Nicolleta-Raphaela, ✓Giannakopoulos Evangelos, ✓Salahas George & ✓Papadaki Maria, Department of Agriculture, University of Patras

The Role of Environmental Stressors in Shaping the Physicochemical Characteristics of Wines

✓Belia Sophia, ✓Sotiriou Vasilios, ✓Giannakopoulos Evangelos, ✓Salahas George & ✓Papadaki Maria, Department of Agriculture, University of Patras

16:20 – 17:05 | Research Sessions (15 minutes per lecture)

SoilMET – Creation of a digital repository of precision soil-climatic data

✓Pantelis Barouchas, ✓Dimitrios Tsesmelis & ✓Alexandros Kalarakis, Department of Agriculture, University of Patras

TAGs2 – Enhancing R&I capacities and uptake of advanced technological and business innovation services in agrifood, strengthening LAGs cross-border cooperation networks,

✓Pantelis Barouchas, ✓Dimitrios Tsesmelis & ✓Alexandros Kalarakis, Department of Agriculture, University of Patras

ECOBASE – Eco-Friendly Nature-based Solutions to Mitigate Soil Degradation

✓Pantelis Barouchas, ✓Dimitrios Tsesmelis & ✓Alexandros Kalarakis, Department of Agriculture, University of Patras

Day 2 | 20 May 2026

Food science, technological transformation, and climate responsibility in agri-food system³

³ Co-organized by the Department of Food Science and Technology, University of Patras

10:00 – 10:30 | Keynote Speech | Department of Food Science and Technology: Research Directions and Priorities

✓**Nikolaos Andritsos**, Assistant Professor, Department of Food Science and Technology

10:30 – 10:50| Online Lecture | Exploring AI-Driven Food Waste Monitoring for Restaurants: An Exploratory LLM Study within the PERFETTO Project⁴

✓**Mengting Yu**, PhD Researcher, University of Tuscia, Italy (*online*)

10:50 – 11:25 | Panel Discussion | Sustainability and Circularity: Bridging Science, Industry & Primary Production

Speakers

✓**Ioannis Karabagias**, Associate Professor, Department of Food Science and Technology, University of Patras

✓**Giorgos Ayfantis**, General Director, Ayfantis Group

✓**Dimitris Vasileiou**, CEO, Vasileiou Tyrokomika S.A.

✓**Thanasis Kerasiotis**, Director, GAIA TROFIMA S.A.

✓**Dimitris Nikolaou**, President, Beekeeping Association of Aitoloakarnania

Moderator

✓**Aris Giannakas**, Associate Professor, Department of Food Science and Technology, University of Patras

11:25- 11:40 | Break

11:40 – 12:40| Research Sessions (*15 minutes per lecture*)

Detection of extra virgin olive oil adulteration with cheaper edible oils based on selected physicochemical parameters and multivariate classification

✓**Eirini Intzirtzi**, ✓**Konstantina Tziotziou**, ✓**Dimitrios Lazaridis**, ✓**Andreas Panou**, ✓**Vasileios Triantafyllidis**, ✓**Ioannis Karabagias**, Department of Food Science and Technology, University of Patras

⁴ Supported by the University of Tuscia, Italy

Lean Six Sigma, Green Management, and Industry 4.0 Practices in SMEs: Evidence from Greece

✓**Nikolitsa Goloni** & ✓**Evangelos Psomas**, Department of Food Science and Technology, University of Patras

Human-related quality practices supporting the transition of food companies from Industry 4.0 to Industry 5.0

✓**Eleni Matsioulas** & ✓**Evangelos Psomas**, Department of Food Science and Technology, University of Patras

Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS) in the Agri-livestock Sector in Greece

✓**Grigoris Tsaparelis** & ✓**Kleanthis Katsaros**, Department of Food Science and Technology, University of Patras

12:40 – 13:25 | Panel Discussion | Climate and Agri-Food Systems: Challenges, Commitments, and Solutions under the EU Climate Pact⁵

Speakers

✓**Rania Assariotaki**, Director, Office of Sustainability – Public Affairs; The American College of Greece, EU Climate Pact Ambassador

✓**Maria Voutsina**, Director, Europe Direct, Region of Western Greece; EU Climate Pact Ambassador

✓**Maria Zafiropoulou**, Founder Co2gether

✓**Theofanis Zacharatos**, Adjunct Lecturer, University of Patras; EU Climate Pact Ambassador (*online*)

Moderator

✓**Vasilias Papavasiliou**, European Projects Manager, AgriFoodWest, Region of Western Greece

13:25 – 13:40 | Lecture | Presentation of the Bio-District App, Interreg Greece – Italy

Presenter

✓**Katerina Sotiropoulou**, President of InnoPolis – Centre for Innovation & Culture

⁵Supported by INZEB country coordinator of EU Climate Pact

Day 3 | 21 May 2026

Culture in its diversity as a factor of communication and exchange, development, and creative differentiation⁶

⁶ Co-organized by the Department of Tourism Management, University of Patras

10:00 – 10:30 | Keynote Speech | Regenerative cultural policy, Framework, dynamics and prospects.

✓**Maria Argyropoulou**, Cultural Sociologist, Special Laboratory Teaching Staff, Department of Tourism Management, University of Patras

10:30 – 10:45 | Online Presentation, Topic: Sustainability in Tourism (University of Tuscia)

10:50 – 11:50 | Round Table Discussion | Culture as a mediator of communication, an ambassador of creative differentiation, and a pillar of inventive development.

Speakers

✓**Nun Synklitiki**, Nun of the Holy Monastery of Makellaria

✓**Chrysoula Christia**, Agricultural Technologist, MSc, PhD, Head of the Directorate of Development, Administration & Finance, Local Government Development Organization Korinthiakos S.A. AOTA

✓**Maria Argyropoulou**, Cultural Sociologist, Special Laboratory Teaching Staff, Department of Tourism Management, University of Patras

✓**Agis Marinis**, Associate Professor, Department of Theatre Studies, University of Patras

✓**Pantelis Panteloglou**, Artistic Director of the Olympia International Film Festival for Children and Young People President of the European Children's Film Association — ECFA

✓**Andreas Skartsaris**, President of the Municipal Regional Theatre of Agrinio, Supervisor of Cultural and Artistic Events of the Gymnastics Society of Agrinio, Co-organizer of TEDxAgrinio

Moderator

✓**Petros Papapetropoulos**, Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism Management, University of Patras

11:50 – 12:05 | Break

12:05– 12:50 | Research Session | A project of the Hellenic Diaspora Foundation: The contribution of technology to the creation of large-scale sculptures.

Presentation by:

✓**Maria Argyropoulou**, Cultural Sociologist, Special Laboratory Teaching Staff, Department of Tourism Management, University of Patras

✓**Evangelos Soulintzis**, Head of New Technologies at the Hellenic Diaspora Foundation Student, Department of Computer Engineering and Informatics, University of Patras

Coordination by:

✓**Petros Papapetropoulos**, Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism Management, University of Patras

12:50 – 13:40 | Panel Discussion | Climate Pact and Sustainable Tourism: From Commitment to Action⁷

Speakers

✓**Panagiotis Sakellaropoulos**, Deputy Government, Regional of Western Greece

✓**Athanasios Kalogeras**, Research Director, Industrial Systems Institute, ATHENA Research & Innovation Center

✓**Ioannis Pappas**, President, CEO & Co-Founder, Green-Evolution; EU Climate Pact Ambassador

✓**Dimitris Gkikas**, Lecturer & Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Patras; Lecturer & Research Fellow, Hellenic Open University

✓**Dimitris Karagiannis**, Director, Achaia Chamber's Development Entity

Moderator

✓**Vasilia Papavasiliou**, Manager, European Programs, AgriFoodWest, Region of Western Greece

13:40 – 13:55 | Break

13:55 – 14:45 | Lecture| Applications of Circular Economy in Aquaculture and Fisheries⁸

Speakers

✓**Kosmas Vidalis**, Professor, Department of Fisheries & Aquaculture, University of Patras

✓**Ioannis Fotodimas**, PhD Researcher, Department of Fisheries & Aquaculture, University of Patras

⁷ Supported by INZEB country coordinator of EU Climate Pact

⁸ Co-organized by the Department of Fisheries & Aquaculture, University of Patras