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## **Editorial**

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Innovation has become a central topic in the business agenda of companies, and in many cases, it has been recognised as the cornerstone for organisational survival and growth. The competitiveness of a firm is often linked to its ability to innovate. However, as modern competition does not take place between individual companies but between entire supply chains, the emerging challenges have to be faced at the supply chain level. Nowadays, there is a need to construct innovative supply chains, as opposed to single innovative companies. Creating and managing innovations in supply chains will become one of the main differentiating aspects in a world of global competition.

This special issue examines innovation in the food chain that is comprised of various subsectors (e.g., fruits and vegetables, dairy products, beverages, snack foods, flour and bakery products, confectioneries, meat and poultry products, fish and marine products and fats and oils) and where significant differences exist in terms of innovative performance. In addition, over the past few years, many innovations have been introduced in that chain due to market forces and to the globalisation process. Surprisingly, the level of research and development expenditures (which are relevant to innovation) in the food chain, and especially in food manufacturing are rather low compared to total manufacturing. In addition, within the food chain, power imbalances seem also to affect innovation activity. For example, it has been found that retail power decreases innovation by manufacturers.

This special issue aims to address some of these aspects. We are very pleased to include a plethora of papers highlighting various practices and cases representing various sectors, members of the food chain and various countries and continents. In the first paper, Gellynck, Kühne and Weaver examined innovation capacity and the empirical work comprised of data collection with food manufacturers, their suppliers and their customers. Multivariate statistical methods were used for the analysis of various food chains and the authors stress the three different types of innovation processes and the key differences between the chains involved.

In the following paper, Soosay and Fearné analysed the Australian wine industry and with the use of a sustainable value chain analysis, they explored the potential for co-innovation in that industry. Their results highlighted, *inter alia*, the need for further collaboration between chain members and other key stakeholders including policy makers.

Hammervoll and Olsen analysed the concept of governance value analysis within the Norwegian seafood industry. Specifically, these authors looked into the performance implications of undertaking transaction specific investments in food supply chain partnerships. Their findings highlight the key areas where governance value analysis can be more or even less appropriate for explaining innovation between food chain partners.

In the fourth paper, Matopoulos and Bourlakis conducted a comprehensive literature review for the types, classifications and sources of innovation and subsequently, they examined the innovation strategies followed by Greek food manufacturing companies. They found that, in the Greek food manufacturing sector, companies tend to innovate along the dimension of offerings that is more related to the traditional view of innovation.

Olsen applied the concept of resource friction to capture the dynamic interplay between resources and investigates how managers handle resource friction in one specific type of change (incremental innovation). Semi-structured interviews were employed with executives and employees from major food chain members of the Norwegian fish industry and many useful and insightful findings were produced.

In the final paper of this special issue, Steiner and Ali aimed to identify some of the key features that characterise successful food industry clusters. Their work contained various sections/stages including a stage based on two industry surveys with members of the Canadian food sector. These authors came up with a plethora of key findings and policy implications.

Last but not least, the Special Issue Editors would like to express their gratitude to the current Editor of the journal, Professor Ketikidis Panayiotis. The authors would also like to thank all contributors and reviewers of this special issue for their invaluable help and for their speedy responses.