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## Spain: Conference addresses the needs of Barbastro's pink tomato

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The selection process carried out with Barbastro's pink tomatoes was recently presented in this municipality by Cristina Mallor, researcher at the Centre for Research and Food Technology of Aragon; Pablo Bruna, of the Centre for Agro-food Transfer of the Department of Rural Development and Sustainability, and David Ferrer and Javier Mur, of the Limited Agricultural Cooperative Association of Barbastro. During the conference, there were talks about the marketing of the seed, which will start next campaign, and also about cultivation techniques for this tomato in the area.

The work to support Barbastro's pink tomatoes started in 2010, in response to the needs of the horticultural sector, both at producer and consumer level. The former demanded a selected plant material that conformed to the historical characteristics of the horticultural varieties under study, while the latter sought organoleptic properties which no product already available had.

In this context, and in order to satisfy both demands, the Government of Aragon brought together a multidisciplinary team formed by CITA researchers and technicians of the Agro-food Transfer Centre. It also counted with the collaboration of growers, traders, associations and consumers from the traditional farming areas, essential to get a holistic view. The first step involved obtaining the initial plant material, which was possible thanks to the Association of Horticultural Producers and Friends of Horticulture of Alto Arag n and to the Limited Agricultural Cooperative Association of Barbastro. Furthermore, the studies made use of the materials preserved in CITA's Horticultural Germplasm Bank of Species.

The researcher of the Horticulture Unit and head of CITA's Germplasm Bank of Horticultural Species, Cristina Mallor, led the improvement team that managed to select a quality seed adapted to the currently demanded standards. The selection programs carried out were based on identifying the best plants from which to obtain individual seeds for the next generation. This method is similar to that traditionally employed by producers for generations; however, the methods used for characterization and genetic improvement allowed us to obtain more information, making the selection process more efficient.

The work with Barbastro's pink tomatoes, carried out in the context of the Rural Development Programme for Aragon, has been funded by the Government of Aragon and the European Union-EAFRD.