Part III.8 - Supplementary information sheet for the notification of an evaluation plan

Member States must use this form for the notification of evaluation plans pursuant to Article 1(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 [1], and in the case of a notified aid scheme subject to a evaluation in accordance with the provisions of the relevant Commission Guidelines.

Please refer to the Commission Staff Working Document 'Common Methodology for State Aid Assessment' [2]for guidance on drawing up an assessment plan.

1. Identification of the aid scheme to be assessed

1) Name of the aid scheme:

Strategic Project for the Recovery and Economic Transformation (PERTE) of the agri-food sector: PERTE agri-food. Axis 1: Industrial strengthening of the agri-food sector.

2) Does the evaluation plan address:

a) ☒ to a scheme subject to the assessment referred to in Article 1(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014?

b) ☐ to a scheme notified to the Commission under Article 108(3) TFEU?

3) Scheme reference (to be completed by the Commission):

.....

4) Mention the existing *ex ante* or impact evaluations corresponding to the aid scheme, and the evaluations or a posteriori studies carried out in the past on predecessors of the aid scheme or similar schemes. For each of these studies, please indicate the following information: a) a brief description of the objectives of the study, the methodologies used, the results and conclusions and b) the specific challenges that may have arisen in the evaluations and studies from the point from a methodological point of view (eg, data availability) that are relevant to the assessment of the current evaluation plan. If applicable, identify relevant areas and issues not addressed in previous evaluation plans that should be the subject of the ongoing evaluation. Attach summaries of such evaluations and studies in the annex and, if available, internet links to the documents in question.

There is no previous evaluation or study corresponding to the aid scheme. There are also no previous experiences of the aid regime or the like, so it is a new type of action.

To identify areas of interest within the Program to Promote Industrial Competitiveness and Sustainability tractor projects, a request for expression of interest (MDI) was launched.

[1] Regulation No. 651/2014 of the Commission, of June 17, 2014, declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (DO L 187 of 26.6.2014, p . 1).

[2] SWD(2014) 179 final, from 28.5.2014.

These types of consultations collect possible areas of action and contribute to providing a broader and more plural vision so that the design of the lines can take into account the diversity and characteristics of the possible projects.

In general, the objective of the MIDI is to ensure that investments and aid are adapted to the needs of the business fabric and citizens. It is intended that the design of public policies and programs be based on precise and direct information provided by companies and social actors.

2. Objectives of the aid scheme to be assessed[3]

2.1 Describe the aid scheme, specifying the needs and problems it intends to solve, and the categories of beneficiaries envisaged, for example, size, sectors, location, indicative number.

The call is part of the program Impetus for industry competitiveness and sustainability, the PERTE corresponding to the agri-food sector, hereinafter PERTE agri-food. Approved by the Council of Ministers on February 8, 2022, its objective is to promote the integrated development of the entire agri-food chain through the digitization of processes and the incorporation of knowledge and innovation. It is about facilitating access to healthy, safe and sustainable food, which meets the needs of an increasingly segmented population and with a greater demand for food with healthy and environmentally sustainable attributes. To do this, the agri-food PERTE will focus on three issues of vital importance to the sector:

- Sustainability
- Competitiveness.
- Traceability and food safety.

Likewise, in a transversal way, it will address the development of new technologies, services and products that allow increasing the export capacity not only of agri-food products, but also of digital technologies and services.

In particular, the aid regime consists of the Program that forms the backbone of the Line of comprehensive actions, corresponding to Axis 1 of the transforming measures of the PERTE Agroalimentario.

Needs and problems to be solved by the PERTE agri-food program. Axis 1

The new condition of the agri-food PERTE. Axis 1., being the first time it has been implemented, constitutes the program as a pilot version, with similar public actions subsequently being necessary to address the resolution of the identified problems. In any case, in this way, the program attends to the main needs and structural problems of the agri-food sector.

The program aims to contribute to the resolution of a set of common problems in the agri-food sector. This program as a whole and, in particular, the food industry, must respond to the growing concern of civil society for the climate and the environment, as well as health and nutrition, which leads to a growing awareness on the environmental, economic and social repercussions of food production and consumption. The main ones are identified below:

[3] In addition to providing an overview of the scheme's objectives and eligibility rules, the purpose of this section is to assess how the scheme's eligibility and exclusion rules can be used to determine the effect of the aid. In some cases, the precise eligibility rules may not be known in advance. In these cases, the best available forecasts must be provided.

- **Economy**

The agri-food industry, considering the entire value chain, constitutes around 10% of Spanish GDP, employing more than 2,500,000 people and accounts for 20% of total exports. These data from the Ministry of Industry show the strategic importance of the agri-food sector for the country.

However, the agri-food industry is at a historical moment of technological transition due to the irruption and generalization of the digitalization of the industry on the one hand, and to respond to the global urgency of fighting climate change by advancing towards decarbonization and the sustainability of the industry. This context requires the introduction of changes and the transformation of profound production processes since the proper functioning of the food chain is essential to guarantee sustainable added value for all operators that contributes to increasing their global competitiveness and that, ultimately, reverses for the benefit of the whole society. One of the essential elements of this regulation focuses on decisive public action in favor of a better balance of the value chain in the agri-food sector so as to ensure a balanced and fair participation of all the actors in the formation of a progressive and weighted value.

- **Sustainability**

The agri-food industry is in the process of transition towards sustainability, given that Spain is the first organic producer in the European Union and the third in the world, according to sources from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. This is a consequence of the responses to environmental demands and in a manner consistent with European approaches (CAP, EAGF, EAFRD, European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, among others) it is necessary to establish objectives and carry out actions to promote sustainable processes , through energy saving, global energy efficiency, the use of renewable energy and the recovery and treatment of waste, among others.

In addition, in a consistent manner with the European Green Deal, which among others establishes the ambitious objective that includes the "Farm to Fork" strategy through which it is intended to accelerate our transition towards a sustainable food system that has a neutral or positive environmental impact. , so the current support tools, or those that will be designed in the future, must be implemented with a proportional intensity. With this approach marked by the Green Pact, the food industries are called upon to intensify the use of renewable energies, the use of new and more efficient technologies in manufacturing processes, the design of healthier foods produced with more sustainable criteria, greener transport networks, etc.

- **Social cohesion and demographic challenge**

Given the very configuration of the Spanish agri-food sector characterized by a highly atomized, dispersed and settled productive fabric in rural areas. The industry has an undeniable strategic value due to its social aspect and social cohesion, since its activity is spread throughout the Spanish territory, having an enormous impact on rural and unpopulated Spain. In this sense, it is considered a key sector to balance the distribution of the population in Spain and to contribute to the demographic challenge and environmental preservation.

The involvement of numerous actors, both public and private, distributed throughout the national territory, will contribute to reducing the gap between regions. It is also a key sector for territorial development and for its cultural importance. To this end, it is vitally important to contribute through public actions such as this program to guarantee the generational change in agricultural activity in Spain, allowing new professionals to join the agricultural activity, as owners of more competitive, technified and efficient. Similarly, public action aims to contribute to reinforcing the role of women throughout the value chain of the agri-food sector, strengthening family farming and farms under shared ownership.

For all of the above, the PERTE Agroalimentario seeks to contribute to addressing the problem of social and territorial cohesion in the country.

Beneficiaries:

- Direct: members of the value chain of the agri-food sector:
    - Final product manufacturers (meat and fish industries, preparation and preservation of fruit and vegetables, etc.)
- Indirect: Spanish society in general through the creation of employment, creation of quality employment, increase in the wealth of the country and improvement of the environment.

2.2 Indicate the objectives of the scheme and the expected effects, both at the level of the beneficiaries who are the object of the aid, and with regard to the objective of common interest.

To address the problems described above, the PERTE agrifood program. Axis 1, sets out the different objectives:

General objectives

1. Improve the competitiveness of the agri-food sector in Spain
2. Improve the sustainability of the agri-food sector in Spain
3. Improve traceability and safety in the agri-food sector in Spain

Final goals :

- Contribute to GDP growth.
- Promote the creation of employment in the group of beneficiary companies of the Program.

The achievement of the above objectives through the aid of the program is intended to be achieved from the generation of the following effects:

Expected result 1. Improved competitiveness by boosting the productivity of the value chain of the agri-food sector.

The improvement of competitiveness from the promotion of the productivity of the value chain of the agri-food sector is based on the achievement of: i) the development of the automation of processes; ii) the increase in sensorization of processes and massive data collection and processing; iii) the introduction of robotics; iv) the implementation of artificial vision systems in production processes; v) innovation in supply management and the company's internal logistics; vi) increased integration through digitization to improve process efficiency; vii) the incorporation of the design of joint decision-making mechanisms based on digitization; viii) the optimization of maintenance throughout the value chain of a product.

Expected result 2. Improvement of the sustainability of the agri-food sector in Spain.

Improving the sustainability of the agri-food sector in Spain is approached from: a) the implementation of energy saving actions in the plant; ii) the reduction of resource consumption; iii) the implementation of renewable energy and self-consumption facilities; iv) the implementation of sustainable supply systems; v) the introduction of water reuse and purification systems; vi) the introduction of new packaging materials and designs taking into account aspects such as recyclability and compostability ; vii) joint environmental management; viii) the adoption of global commitments to reduce the environmental footprint of a product; ix) the development of proposals for the design of the integral life cycle of a product.

Expected result 3. Improved traceability and safety in the agri-food sector in Spain.

The improvement of traceability and safety in the sector is approached from the design and implementation of a Comprehensive Traceability and Food Safety Plan (PITSA) that each tractor project develops.

In addition to the expected results, the agri-food PERTE presents and collects the estimates of the expected final results:

Expected end results

Expected final result 1. Program effectiveness. Economic growth and its contribution to GDP.

Economic growth is measured through the estimation of multiplier coefficients made by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism.

As stated in the Descriptive Report of the agri-food PERTE, this line of aid has some endowed with a total of €510 million correspond to the MRR, of which €310 million in the form of subsidy and €200 million in the form of loan without interest. In addition, there will be a possibility of increasing the amount of aid in the form of loan up to €200 million additionally.

The impact forecasts stand at an additional €700-960M in terms of GDP (representing between 2.8% and 3.7% of the sector's GVA).

In order to obtain these results, various studies have been used, which have led to **establishing for this analysis a multiplier effect of investment in the sector that could be between 1.8 and 2.4 in terms of GDP.**

This would translate in absolute terms into an increase in Spain's GDP of between 1,980 and 3,264 million euros.

The multiplier effect calculated is that **for each euro of public investment, between 1.74 and 2.4 euros of private investment will be activated** .

Again, this means estimating at the beginning of the period what the private investment is going to be and whether this estimate is met at the end of the period.

Expected final result 2. Program effectiveness. Job creation.

Continuing with the data offered by the PERTE agri-food descriptive report, in terms of job creation, it would be **a net creation of between 12,250 and 16,300 jobs (which represents between 3.2% and 4.3% of employment in the sector).**

Additionally, it is assumed that **each million euros of investment translates into a net creation of around 17 jobs.**

This implies that, for each tractor project, depending on the global investment, the employment that must be generated must be estimated and its contribution verified by following the multipliers exposed.

Expected final result 3. Appropiateness.

The appropiateness of the Program will be measured based on the following indicator:

Number of enterprises participating in projects not linked to agri-food manufacturing / Total number of enterprises participating in projects.

Expected final result 4. Proportionality.

The proportionality of the Program will be measured based on the following indicator: (Subsidy received by the company + loans received by the company from the tractor project) / (Investment from the tractor project)

2.3 Indicate possible negative effects on the beneficiaries of the aid and on the economy in general that could be directly or indirectly associated with the aid scheme [4].

There have not been identified relevant negative effects for this programme.

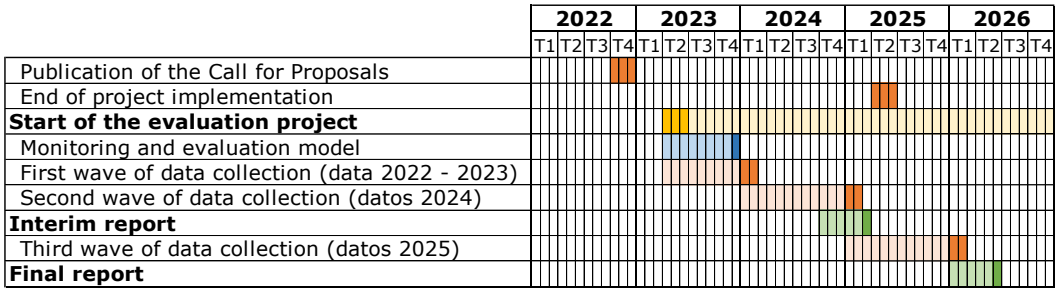
2.4 Indicate:

a) the annual budget programmed under the regime:

Ambit	Public investment	Private investment
Axis 1: Industrial strengthening of the agri-food sector	€ 510M with the possibility of increasing the amount of aid in the form of loan by an additional €200M The sum of the subsidy and the grant equivalent of the loan is 392.565.168 euros.	€700M

b) The intended duration of the scheme[5]

The expected duration in the implementation of the measures corresponds to the period 2022-2026. Below is a schedule that includes the main milestones of the program. However, it should be considered as an estimate of the times that must be reviewed and contrasted as events evolve:



c) aid tools:

The aid instruments of the agri-food PERTE are collected in two groups: transforming measures and facilitating measures. The Aid Regime on which the document focuses consists of one of its transforming measures. Specifically, Axis 1. Industrial strengthening of the agri-food sector.

- **Axis 1. Industrial strengthening of the agri-food sector.**

[4] Examples of negative effects are regional and sectoral biases, and the expulsion of private investment induced by the aid regime.

[5] The aid schemes defined in article 1, paragraph 2, letter a), of Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 are excluded from the scope of application of the Regulation six months after its entry into force. After examining the evaluation plan, the Commission may take a decision to extend the application of the Regulation to such schemes. Member States are invited to indicate precisely the intended duration of the scheme.

This axis consists of the granting of subsidies, loans without interest or a combination of both, managed by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, for projects focused on improving processes in one of these three blocks, which reflect the most important aspects in the development of the agri-food industry.

- competitiveness
- Sustainability
- Traceability and food safety

The projects must include actions at the individual level in two of the three blocks, one of them being obligatorily traceability and food safety, and in each of them projects must be carried out in which there is effective cooperation between the participating agents.

d) eligible costs

Those that satisfy the provisions of article 31.1 of Law 38/2003, of November 17, General Subsidies, and fall into any of the categories detailed in the following sections, will be considered fundable expenses:

1. For each primary project categorized in the **Research, Development and Innovation Line** , as indicated in article 16 of the Bases Order, the following expense items will be included:
    i. Staff costs.
    ii. Costs of instruments and inventoriable material.
    iii. Contractual research costs, know-how and patents acquired or licensed from external sources at arm's length.
    iv. General expenses, understood as the expenses of the project in R&D&i, but which due to their nature cannot be attributed directly because they cannot be individualized.
2. For each primary project categorized in the **Line of Innovation in Sustainability and Efficiency** , the following expense items will be eligible for aid:
    i. Production devices and equipment: acquisition of material fixed assets linked to production and project objectives. Foreign transport elements are excluded.
    ii. Building and facilities: material investments for the adaptation of industrial warehouses, as well as their facilities and equipment not directly linked to the production process.
    iii. Intangible assets: investments in assets linked to the transfer of technology through the acquisition of patent rights, licenses, "know-how" or non-patented technical knowledge.
    iv. External collaborations: external collaborations necessary for the design and/or redesign of processes directly linked to investments linked to protecting the environment or increasing the level of energy efficiency. Any form of civil engineering or consultancy associated with the management and processing of the requested financing is expressly excluded.
3. As set out in article 15 of the Bases Order, primary projects that fail to comply with the principle of "not causing significant damage" (DNSH) are excluded from consideration of fundable expenses:
    i. Investments related to fossil fuels (including subsequent use), except for projects related to the generation of electricity or heat using natural gas, as well as the related transport and distribution infrastructure that meet the conditions set out in Annex III of the Technical guidance on the application of the “do not cause significant harm” principle under the Recovery and Resilience Mechanism Regulation.
    ii. Activities under the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) for which the greenhouse gas emissions they will cause are not expected to fall below the relevant benchmarks in the year of completion of the project.

iii. The compensation of the indirect costs of the ETS.
iv. Activities related to waste dumps, incinerators and mechanical-biological treatment plants. This exclusion does not apply to investments in: actions undertaken in plants dedicated exclusively to the treatment of non-recyclable hazardous waste, or to existing plants, when said actions are intended to increase energy efficiency, capture exhaust gases for storage or use, or recover materials from incineration ashes, provided that these actions do not entail an increase in the plants' waste treatment capacity or the extension of their useful life. Likewise, the exclusion does not apply to existing mechanical-biological treatment plants, when said actions are aimed at increasing energy efficiency or their reconditioning for separate waste recycling operations, such as composting and anaerobic digestion of biowaste, provided that such actions do not entail an increase in the plants' waste treatment capacity or an extension of their useful life.
v. Activities in which the long-term disposal of waste can cause long-term damage to the environment

4. In accordance with article 16 of the Bases Order, the primary projects framed in the Line of innovation in sustainability and efficiency may finance the following concepts and in the terms specified below: the concepts of expenditure, to be considered fundable, they must be detailed individually both in the report and in the application questionnaire. Likewise, they must be allocated to the corresponding item in the application questionnaire. Only those concepts that undoubtedly respond to the nature of the activity to be financed and are strictly necessary, based on the description of the actions provided in the application report, may be considered eligible for financing.

   To be eligible for funding, the imputed costs shall be additional investment costs necessary to go beyond the applicable Union standards in order to increase the level of environmental protection related to the production process or in the absence of Union standards, or to achieve a higher level of energy efficiency of the production process.

5. The following rules are applicable to the concepts of fundable expense:
   i. The physical equipment associated with the eligible budget must be provided with the corresponding CE marking or declaration of conformity and serial number.
   ii. The acquisition costs of second-hand fixed assets will not be eligible for financing.
   iii. For the expenses of external collaborations, consulting or engineering, the tasks carried out by the same supplier cannot be divided.
   iv. In the event that there may be operations with persons or entities linked to the beneficiary, these being understood in accordance with the provisions of article 68 of the Regulations of Law 38/2003, of November 17, General Subsidies, approved by Royal Decree 887/ 2006, of July 21, only those investments that have express authorization by the management body and are made in accordance with normal market conditions, in accordance with the provisions of article 29.7 of Law 38/2003, will be admissible. of November 17.
   v. The acquisition of companies is not eligible for financing.
   vi. Indirect taxes are not considered fundable expenses.
   vii. When the amount of the expense exceeds the amounts established at any time in article 31.3 of Law 38/2003, of November 17, the beneficiary must request at least three offers from different suppliers prior to contracting the commitment to the work, the provision of the service or the delivery of the good, unless due to its special characteristics there is not a sufficient number of entities in the market that perform, lend or supply them.

viii. The choice between the offers presented, which must be provided in the justification, or, where appropriate, in the application, will be made in accordance with efficiency and economy criteria, and the choice must be expressly justified in the application report when it does not fall on the proposal. most advantageous economy.

ix. With regard to inventoriable assets, the provisions of sections 4 and 5 of article 31 of Law 38/2003, of November 17, shall apply.

x. In no case will the financial expenses derived from the deferred payment of investments or for other reasons, investments in land, premises and civil works, infrastructure deployment expenses for the provision of services, promotion and dissemination expenses of the project be eligible for financing.

e) Summarize the eligibility criteria and the methods of selection of the aid beneficiaries. In particular, describe the following:

a) the methods used to select beneficiaries (such as scores),

Characteristics of applicants

The characteristics of the applicants can be seen from two regulatory areas:

The Order of Regulatory Bases (Order ICT/738/2022), and what is fundamentally regulated in articles 5, 9, 10, 15, 16, 30 and 31. The requirements that companies must meet in order to be beneficiaries of the aid , established in the program, are summarized in the following table:

REQUIREMENTS BENEFICIARY COMPANIES **Characteristics that the group must meet**
The group must be **organized around the agri-food industry sector** with a combination **of at least four different legal entities** that do not belong to the same business group, nor be companies controlled by any of the entities that are part of the group. If more than four entities participate, the additional entities may form part of a group to which another participating entity belongs. The maximum number of entities permitted per group is sixty.
At least **75% of the budget of the tractor project must be allocated to the activities of the CNAE 10, 11, 12 or activities in the field of the agri-food industry** consisting, among others, in the calibration, classification, handling, transformation, conservation and packaging of food products that, despite involving an industrial activity, are not included in the previous CNAE 2009.
Among the four entities that must at least make up the group, at least **one will be a large company, and it must also be made up of a minimum of 3 small and medium-sized companies (** hereinafter SMEs). Alternatively, those groups made up solely of SMEs will also be valid, provided that two of them are medium-sized companies.
They must be established in a geographical area that encompasses **at least two regions.** For these purposes, actions that are subcontracted will also be taken into account.

In line with the previous articles, in Annex II of the Bases Order, eligible activities for industrial promoters are established, those that can be framed in any of the following modalities:

- Activities of elaboration, production or transformation of food, as well as the manufacture of beverages and the tobacco industry framed within Section C Divisions 10, 11 and 12 of the National Classification of Economic Activities (CNAE 2009) approved by Royal Decree 475/ 2007, of April 13.

- Activities carried out in the field of the agri-food industry consisting, among others, in the calibration, classification, handling, transformation, conservation and packaging of food products that, despite involving an industrial activity, are not included in the CNAE 2009 defined above.
- Other activities not included in the previous sections, but which are unavoidable in industrial processes in the agri-food field, or to carry out the necessary activities of the tractor project, or are part of the value chain of the agri-food industry.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, activities carried out by logistics operators, those carried out by the distribution sector, as well as those corresponding to the primary sector or the channel of Hotels, Restaurants and Cafeterias (HORECA channel) may not be eligible.

- Order by which the Call corresponding to the year 2022 is made for the granting of aid for industrial strengthening actions in the agri-food sector, according to which, each member of the group will assume one of the following roles:
  - **Industrial promoter**: each one of the participants of the Group.
  - **Interlocutor with the Administration:** entity designated within the Group responsible for channeling with it the relations and communications indicated in the call in each of the phases of the concession procedure. The interlocutor has the obligation to transfer to the rest of the participants all the notifications or communications that the awarding body notifies through the electronic means established in the call. In each Group there will only be one interlocutor with the Administration.

In summary, the companies must participate as groups of at least 4 companies, belong to at least 2 different autonomous communities.

In addition, they must belong to a certain branch of activity according to CNAE.

Therefore, **some eligibility criteria are defined that will determine the ability to participate.**

Subsidy criteria and selection methods for aid beneficiaries

These grants will be awarded on a competitive basis, in accordance with the principles of publicity, transparency, objectivity, equality and non-discrimination. The allocation of the programme is based on an eligibility threshold, which is defined on the basis of the assessment criteria defined in the Orden ICT/738/2022 for each project.

Specifically, the following scoring system and criteria are established for each tractor project (Article 30. Application evaluation criteria):

Criteria of tractor projects
A) Adaptation of the grouping agreement to the established requirements. (EXCLUSIVE)
B) Adequacy of the structure of the proposal to the content of the minimum of axis 1 PERTE Agrifood. (EXCLUSIVE)
C) Global economic viability of the group .
D) Contribution of the proposal to the ecological transition.

E) Degree of representativeness of the tractor project within the framework of the agri-food industry.
F) Total weighted score of primary projects.
G) Criteria of impact and contribution to the industrial transition .
g.1) Driving effect on SMEs in the value chain of the Agrifood sector
g.2) Impact on employment
g.3) Interconnection and digital integration of the tractor project

b) Indicative budget available for each group of beneficiaries.

There is not, as such, a budget for each group of beneficiaries. The beneficiaries will form groups and it will be these that will receive the budget and not individually, there is no budget assigned by type of beneficiary.

What is predetermined in the Call is the minimum budget of fundable concepts for each primary project based on the blocks, which is reflected below:

The minimum eligible budget will be 10 million euros per tractor project. The corresponding call specifies the minimum for each of the primary projects that are integrated into said tractor project, as we present in later lines. In any case, the limits set forth in Regulation (EU) number 651/2014 of the Commission, of June 17, 2014, will be respected.

In this sense, as indicated in article 9 of the Call, the minimum fundable budget for each primary project will be 100,000 euros, with the exception of those primary projects that are part of any of the actions reflected in the following table, for those for which there will be no minimum threshold:

Block	**Performance**	**Minimum fundable budget in each primary project (euros)**
competitiveness	Design of joint decision-making mechanisms	no threshold
	Optimization of maintenance throughout the value chain of a product	no threshold
Sustainability	Joint environmental management	no threshold
	Adoption of global commitments to reduce the environmental footprint of a product	no threshold
	Proposals for the design of the integral life cycle of a product	no threshold
Traceability and food safety	Preparation of a Comprehensive Traceability and Food Safety Plan	no threshold

The minimum percentage of the total amount to be granted (grant plus loan), in the form of loans, will be:

Project Types	Minimum % of the total amount to be financed in the form of a loan		
	Non-SME companies	**Medium businesses**	**Small and micro businesses**
Industrial research projects	No minimum percentage	No minimum percentage	No minimum percentage
Experimental development projects	10.00%	No minimum percentage	No minimum percentage
Innovation projects in terms of organization and processes	10.00%	No minimum percentage	No minimum percentage
Environmental protection projects	10.00%	No minimum percentage	No minimum percentage
Energy efficiency projects	20.00%	10.00%	No minimum percentage

c) the probability that the budget will be exhausted for certain groups of beneficiaries:

The probability is unknown because it is a novel type of action. Based on the data collected by several MDI (Expressions of Interest) carried out by the Ministry of Industry and with the consultation made to the different associations and federations of companies representing the agri-food industrial sector, it is expected that the budget will be exhausted. In any case, a second call could be studied in the event that a budget remains unexecuted.

d) the scoring rules, if used in the scheme and f) criteria that the granting authority will take into account when evaluating applications.

Scores and criteria for the evaluation of the global application

The evaluation score of the tractor project will be normalized in the range between 0 and 130 points, and will be carried out in accordance with the following criteria, which are established in article 30.4 of this Order of Bases.

Criterion	**Maximum score**	**score threshold**
A) Adaptation of the grouping agreement to the established requirements.	Exclusionary criterion	
B) Adequacy of the structure of the proposal to the minimum content of axis 1 PERTE Agrifood.	Exclusionary criterion	

C) Global economic viability of the group	30	fifteen
D) Contribution of the proposal to the ecological transition.	fifteen	no threshold
E) Degree of representativeness of the tractor project within the framework of the agri-food industry.	30	no threshold
F) Total weighted score of primary projects.	30	fifteen
G) Criteria of impact and contribution to the industrial transition.	25	no threshold
g.1) Driving effect on SMEs in the value chain of the Agrifood sector.	17	
g.2) Impact on employment.	3	
g.3) Interconnection and digital integration of the tractor project.	5	

Scores and criteria for the evaluation of primary projects:

The evaluation will be carried out based on the criteria specified in Annex VI of the Call Order. The total score of the evaluation will be normalized in the range between 0 and 30 points. In cases where score thresholds are established, it will be necessary to reach them in order to be eligible for aid.

Criterion	**Maximum score**	**score threshold**
A) Adaptation to the blocks, the lines of action and the beneficiaries established in the order.	**Exclusionary criterion**	
B) Compliance with the principle of "not causing significant damage".	**Exclusionary criterion**	
C) Incentive effect of the aid	**Exclusionary criterion**	
D) Technical feasibility of the proposal	twenty	12
d.1) Demonstrable quality/experience of the entity(ies) and the work team in the field of the project presented	5	
d.2) Quality of the work plan and technical feasibility of the proposal	12	
d.3) Appropriate time schedule of the project	3	
E) Criteria for impact and contribution to industrial transition	10	no threshold

e.1) Collaboration with other participants	4	
e.2) Contribution of the primary project to the digital transition	3	
e.3) Contribution of the primary project to the ecological transition	3	

The selection of the primary and tractor projects that may be beneficiaries is carried out by assigning scores to the projects. As stated in the Order of Bases of the Call in its article 31, applications will be subject to an evaluation procedure whose execution is entrusted to the Evaluation Committee . The Evaluation Commission will be administratively integrated into the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism and will be chaired by the head of the DGIPYME, the procedure's instructor body. It will be made up of the following members:

- The Subdirectorate General for Industrial Sector Policies
- That of the Subdirectorate General for Management and Execution of Programs
- That of the General Subdirectorate of Industrial Areas and Programs
- That of the Subdirectorate for Digitalization of Industry and Collaborative Environments

It will also have an official occupying a job at level 30 in each of the following bodies:

- Technical Office of the Undersecretariat of the Department
- Technical Office of the General Secretariat of Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises

In addition to a Secretary being an official of the General Directorate of Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises, who will not be considered a member of the aforementioned commission, and who, therefore, will have a voice but no vote, in accordance with the provisions of Article 19.4 of Law 40/2015, of October 1.

Appointments must have a balanced presence of women and men, unless this is not possible for well-founded and objective reasons duly motivated.

e) aid intensity thresholds

As indicated in Article 22.7, the maximum aid intensities per type of project correspond to the thresholds set by Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 for R&D projects, as well as for innovation in environmental protection and energy efficiency. These intensities may be increased in the case of industrial research and development projects by 15% if the conditions defined in article 25.6.b) of the aforementioned regulation are met. In the case of environmental protection or energy efficiency projects, the intensities may be increased by 5% or 15% in the case of projects in certain areas, in accordance with articles 36.8 and 38.5 of the aforementioned regulation.

f) Mention specific restrictions or risks that could affect the implementation of the scheme, its expected effects and the achievement of its objectives.

From the point of view of the evaluation, one of the main risks identified is that of not being able to count on enough applicant companies that are not beneficiaries to be able to form the comparison group.

For this reason, it is proposed to address their identification in an alternative way independent of their participation in the Call.

Specifically, the following is proposed:

As there is no set of companies that have not been beneficiaries (which would be the first option to consider to obtain the comparison group), based on the CNAE of the companies that have been beneficiaries and their most relevant characteristics, determine the population that meets these characteristics of each of the companies of each of the associations, to then randomly select each of the companies that match the required characteristics.

The sample design must be carried out based on the characteristics observed among the companies of the groups that do benefit, in order to be able to limit the universe of companies that we would be interested in addressing.

Given that at the moment these characteristics are not known, the variables that should be considered to carry out the sample design are set out below:

- CNAE of the company
- Number of employees
- Location (CCAA)

Additionally, when proposing the tool for collecting information related to the results matrix, the incorporation of the following questions is proposed:

- If your activity is related to the agri-food sector, or you perform services for it (if not, your participation would be ruled out for the analysis).
- Knowledge of the program and call.
- If you considered participating in the call, but finally ruled out the option and reasons.
- Assessment of the characteristics of the program and call.

Once the company/s that would form the comparison group had been chosen, the methodology for evaluating the impact to be followed would be applied, the difference-in-differences method.

Risks which could affect the implementation of the scheme

As regards the risks that could affect the implementation of the scheme, the main one is the possibility that the number of applications for aid may not allow the entire budget to be implemented.

In order to try to reduce this risk, the call for proposals has sought to make some obligations and requirements more flexible, especially in relation to Spanish aid regulations, but there are still potential risks that due to the complexity of the scheme and the requirements imposed by the Next Generation Mecanism on the types of eligible projects. It is considered that due to this, roject participation may be discouraged and as a result, it may not be possible to execute the entire budget.

3. Evaluation Questions

3.1 Indicate the specific questions to be addressed in the evaluation by providing quantitative evidence of the impact of the aid.

According to the European Commission Staff Working Document: Common methodology *for State aid assessment*, questions should focus on the impact of the scheme and can be classified according to the following three levels:

- **Direct impact on aid beneficiaries**[6]

Direct impact on aid beneficiaries
has the aid increased the investment of the beneficiaries in agri-food technologies? (incentive effect) . Have aid beneficiaries been affected differently? (Depending on size, location or sector) The object of the programme focuses more directly on the problem of modernizing the production systems of agricultural manufacturing enterprises, attributing to this the problem faced by enterprises in the sector. The causal relationship between the improvement of production systems and a significant effect on the variability in the behavior of the beneficiaries of the program, can be established by linking competitiveness, sustainability and traceability, and therefore the modernization of production systems and its impact on improving the future forecasts of companies: improvement of its income statement (based on its sustainability), organic growth (increase in the number of employees due to the growth in demand based on the cheapening of products caused by the modernization of the production system), growth in its splitting, generating facilities in different locations, both national and international, due to its competitive improvement in the different markets (improvement in the quality of its products and little variation in the prices referred to its competition in each of the markets), improvement of confidence in its products due to traceability and therefore of its future expectations with sustainable brand image. More exhaustively, it is included in the indicators that measure the evaluation questions on the direct impact of aid to beneficiaries, while being included in the table of indicators developed to measure the impact of the modernization of the production system based on competitiveness, sustainability and traceability.
To what extent has the aid had the expected effects? Has the aid had an effect on the situation of the beneficiaries? • Has the company's competitiveness improved thanks to the aid? • Has the sustainability of the production of the participating companies been improved from the realization of the projects? • Have the traceability and safety of the food produced in the participating companies been improved since the completion of the projects?
EFFECTIVENESS: Has the aid had the expected effects (number of jobs generated and contribution to GDP)?

[6] These questions should be included in a separate subsection Does it serve with how it has been divided?

EFFICIENCY: How has been the relationship between the number of jobs generated and the contribution to GDP?

- **Indirect impact of the aid scheme**

Indirect impact of the aid scheme
positive impacts
Do the companies that receive support thanks to the aid scheme increase their efforts in innovation?
Has the construction of strategic alliances with other agents of the ecosystem been favored throughout the integral life cycle of a product thanks to the project?
Has the consumption of renewable energy and self-consumption increased thanks to the aid scheme?
negative impacts
Has the contribution of CO2 from companies increased?
Has the number of tons of waste generated increased?
Has the manufacture of single-use packaging increased?
Has energy consumption increased?
Has the consumption of non-reused water increased?

- **Proportionality and appropiateness of the aid scheme**

The evaluation questions considered to address the remaining areas are set out below:

Appropriateness of the aid instrument
Was the most effective aid instrument chosen?
Would other aid instruments or types of intervention have been more appropriate to achieve the objective?
Proportionality of the aid
Is the gross financing intensity of the investment in line with the established limits?

4. Outcome indicators

4.1. Use the table below to describe the indicators that will be developed to measure the results of the scheme, as well as the relevant control variables, including data sources, and how each indicator corresponds to the evaluation questions. In particular, mention: a) the evaluation question in question, b) the indicator, c) the source of the data, d) the frequency of data collection (e.g. annual, monthly, etc.) .), e) the level at which the data is collected (e.g. at company level, establishment level, region level, etc.), f) the population covered in the data source (e.g. , aid beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries, all companies, etc.).

Font: The data source is companies. The companies will provide the information for the evaluation through the instruments that are finally defined by the DGIPYME (questionnaires, direct interviews, etc.).

Frequency: The information collection frequency is annual.

Level: Company level.

Population: The population for the collection of information will be all the requesting companies, both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

Classification of the indicators based on the evaluation questions:

Direct impact on aid beneficiaries	Associated Indicators
Has the aid increased the investment of the beneficiaries in agri-food technologies? (incentive effect)	Loan received by the company / total project investment
Have aid recipients been affected differently? (Depending on its size, location or sector)	According to the order of bases, it would be measured by: the linear relationship (regression line) between the indicators corresponding to the Automation of processes and those corresponding to the Sensorization of processes and massive data collection and processing. Number of primary project companies carrying out non-compulsory primary projects / Number of companies with primary projects Number of tractor projects that carry out non-mandatory projects / Total tractor projects
To what extent has the aid had the expected effects? Has the aid had an effect on the situation of the beneficiaries? • Has the competitiveness of the company improved thanks to the aid? • Has the sustainability of the production of the participating companies been improved as a result of carrying out the projects? • Have the traceability and safety of the food produced in the participating companies been improved since the completion of the projects?	Efficiency indicator Appropiateness indicator Competitiveness indicator traceability indicator

EFFECTIVENESS: Has the aid had the expected effects (number of jobs generated and contribution to GDP)?	GDP Indicator Employment indicator. These two indicators are estimated by the Government of Spain, the impact forecasts are an additional €700-960M in terms of GDP (representing between 2.8% and 3.7% of the sector's GVA15) and net creation that would be between 12,250 and 16,300 jobs (representing between 3.2% and 4.3% of employment in the sector). In order to obtain these results, several studies have been used16, which have led to the establishment for this analysis of a multiplier effect of investment in the sector that could be between 1.8 and 2.4 in terms of GDP. Additionally, it is assumed that every million euros of investment translates into a net creation of around 17 jobs. They are exposed in the PERTE Agri-food Report. February 2022.
EFFICIENCY: How has the relationship been between the number of jobs generated and the contribution to GDP?	Efficiency indicator Indicator of employment generation / Indicator of GDP generated. Data on both employment and GDP are obtained from the Effectiveness indicator

Indirect impact of the aid scheme	**Associated Indicators**
positive impacts	
Do the companies that receive support thanks to the aid scheme increase their efforts in innovation?	Innovation in supply management and the company's internal logistics Indicator for Carrying out R&D&i projects for new packaging materials Competitiveness Indicators
Has the construction of strategic alliances with other agents of the ecosystem been favored throughout the integral life cycle of a product thanks to the project?	Number of companies participating in the elaboration of the different PITSA (Integral Food Safety and Traceability Plan (PITSA)) that must be elaborated according to what is established in the Bases Order. Number of primary projects presented in a group. Number of participating companies not belonging to the agri-food industry.
Has the consumption of renewable energy and self-consumption increased thanks to the aid scheme?	Indicators of Implementation of renewable energy and self-consumption facilities
negative impacts	
Has the contribution of CO2 from companies increased?	CO2 emissions from machines that use new fuels/ CO2 emissions from all the company's machinery

Has the number of tons of waste generated increased?	Indicator Reduction in resource consumption Indicator of Design and implementation of waste reduction mechanisms in the production and use of packaging Quantity of product produced packaged using more sustainable materials/ Quantity of product produced packaged
Has the manufacture of single-use packaging increased?	Indicator In packaging processes, introduction of new materials and packaging designs, taking into account aspects such as recyclability and compostability
Has energy consumption increased?	Indicator Energy saving actions at the plant
Has the consumption of non-reused water increased?	Indicator of the use of reused water in the parts of the company in which said measure is viable

Appropriateness of the aid instrument	**Associated Indicators**
Was the most effective aid instrument chosen?	Appropriateness indicator
Would other aid instruments or types of intervention have been more appropriate to achieve the objective?	Appropriateness indicator

Aid proportionality	**Associated Indicators**
Was the regime proportionate to the problem it was intended to solve? Could the same effects have been obtained with less or with a different form of aid? (e.g. loans instead of grants) Is the gross financing intensity of the investment in line with the established limits?	Proportionality indicator As this is a new programme, and we don´t have results with which to compare them, they are analyzed from the existing applicable regulation of both Spain and the EU subject to the objective that is intended, which is to improve based on the financing received by agricultural manufacturing companies, it is a posteriori when both its proportionality and appropiateness can be analyzed. The proposed indicator is one of the possible ones and it is a posteriori when the appropiateness of the funding can be measured. Subsidy received by the company + loans received by the tractor project company/ Investment of the tractor project.

4.2. Explain why the chosen indicators are the most relevant to measure the expected impact of the regime.

The Program to Promote Competitiveness and Sustainability in the agri-food industry: PERTE agri-food. Axis 1: Industrial strengthening of the agri-food sector proposes a set of expected results and impacts, oriented according to its objectives.

The indicators have been built based on some dimensions of results that are aligned with those proposed in the program mentioned in the previous paragraph, with the expected results and

objectives of the object of evaluation. The indicators that make up each result dimension try to respond to the main aspects considered in each block.

5. Methods envisaged to carry out the evaluation

5.1 Based on the evaluation questions, describe the methods that you plan to use in the evaluation to determine the causal impact of the aid on beneficiaries and to assess other indirect effects. In particular, explain why those methods have been chosen and others rejected (eg for reasons related to scheme design) [7].

The key to identifying the causal impact of a public policy or program is to find a valid comparison group to estimate the counterfactual and answer their question of interest.

What is the impact or causal effect of a certain program or public policy on the results? Are the effects observed, in the beneficiaries of the intervention, a product of the implementation of the program or of the public policy in question?

To answer these questions, the impact evaluation resorts to the comparison between groups, applying experimental designs. Through this comparison, we will approximate what would have happened in the absence of the program, that is, the counterfactual (being the factual that the program has taken place). Knowing the consequences of not applying the program, we will be able to know what the net effects of its application have been.

The choice of evaluation method depends on the policy or program being evaluated and the available data. To the extent that the operating rules of the program are well defined, valid comparison methods can be found and will facilitate the identification of the most appropriate method to evaluate the program.

The operating rules that allow us to design the evaluation, in our case, are those that determine the type of company that is eligible for the program and how it is selected. The comparison groups come from companies that, being eligible, cannot join the program for different reasons (for example, companies that, having applied to be beneficiaries, finally do not turn out to be, because they do not adequately meet the objective and subjective criteria related to the evaluation of their projects).

Determination of the method from the operating rules

In designing prospective impact evaluations, the answer to the operational questions largely determines the most appropriate impact evaluation method for a given program.

- Available Resources: *Does the program have sufficient resources to be implemented at scale and serve all eligible beneficiaries?*
- Eligibility Criteria: *Who is eligible to receive program benefits? Is the program allocation based on an eligibility threshold, or is it available to everyone?*
- Implementation schedule: *Do potential beneficiaries enroll in the program all at the same time or in phases?*

The rules for enrolling participants in a program will be the main parameter to consider when selecting the impact evaluation method. Therefore, the design of the method must be adapted to the context of the operating rules of the program.

[7] Please refer to document SWD(2014) 179 final of 28.5.2014.

On this occasion considering that:

- The program has limited resources.
- Eligibility criteria for beneficiaries have been defined.
- This is an immediate implementation. (Please note that if the grant is granted at different times (e.g. in the case of a second call), a DiD with staggered adoption may be more appropriate.) As established in the Order of bases the implementation is immediate, in any case, the observation is taken into account, in case the suggested implementation occurs.

The impact evaluation method that is proposed to be used for this evaluation is the Difference-in-Differences (DD) method with matching:

- The DD method uses the change in outcome over time in a group of nonparticipants to estimate what the change in outcome would have been for a group of participants, in the absence of a program, taking into account all unobservable variables. that can influence the program.
- The matching method for each program participant finds the most similar unit in the group of non-participants. The variables that will be likely to be used to perform the match will be those that correspond to the indicators for which information is available for the previous 3 years.
- The comparison group is made up of units that did not participate in the program (for whatever reason) and for which data were collected before and after the program.
- The key assumption to consider is that, if the program did not exist, the results of the groups of participants and non-participants would have evolved in parallel over time (assumption of common or parallel trends).
- Finally, it requires baseline and outcome monitoring data and other characteristics for both participants and non-participants.
- Disadvantages DD: If the two groups had developed differently in the absence of the program, there is a selection bias. The match builds an identical group on observable features before the program.

Methodology Differences in differences

In the first place, it is important to point out that we are dealing with a non-random allocation of treatment and, therefore, the beneficiaries are selected based on certain criteria.

Quasi-experimental methods require more assumptions in order for the comparison group to provide a valid estimate of the counterfactual. In the case of the method proposed in this Plan, the DD method, relies on the assumption that changes in outcomes in the comparison group provide a valid estimate of the counterfactual's change in outcomes in the treatment group.

The DD method contrasts differences in outcomes over time between the treatment group and the comparison group.

It combines the difference of the results before-after the treatment group (the first difference), considering constant factors over time for said group, since the group is compared with itself. However, there would still be external factors that vary over time. One way to observe these variable factors over time is to measure the before-after change in the results of a comparison group that, without being a beneficiary of the program, was exposed to the same environmental

conditions (the second difference). By removing the first difference from other time-varying factors affecting the outcome of interest by subtracting the second difference from it, the main cause of bias in simple before-after comparisons will have been removed.

For the difference-in-differences method to be valid, the comparison group must represent the change in outcomes that the treatment group would have experienced in the absence of the program. To apply differences in differences, it is only necessary to measure the results of the group that receives the program (the treatment group) and the group that does not receive it (the comparison group) before and after the program.

The logic of the difference-in-differences method and how to formulate it is as follows:

$$DD = (B - A) - (D - C)$$

where;

B= indicator value for year 1 (after participation) for the treatment group

A= value of the indicator for year 0 (before participating) for the treatment group

D= indicator value for year 1 (after the program) for the comparison group

C= indicator value for year 0 (before the program) for the comparison group

The estimated impact of the program would be computed as follows:

- First, the difference in outcome (Y) between the before and after situations for the treatment group (B − A) is calculated.
- Second, the difference in outcome (Y) between the before and after situations for the comparison group (D − C) is calculated.
- Finally, the difference between the difference in the results of the treatment group (B – A) and the difference of the comparison group (D – C) is calculated.

What would be intended with DD is to compare the evolution over time (before and after) and how this evolution has occurred, that is, the trend between registered and non-registered. It is understood that the value of the DD result, if it is equal to 0 or close to ±0, indicates that the impact of the program is non-existent or very small. The further away from ±0, the greater the impact since the difference in evolution or trend is greater for the treatment group compared to the comparison group.

This method tries to assume that the observed characteristics and the non-observed characteristics of the units that make up the groups (treatment and comparison) are constant or invariable over time, or failing that, that they evolve the same for both groups. throughout the implementation of the program.

In order to generate a valid estimate of the counterfactual, it must be assumed that there are no differences that may appear over time between the treatment and comparison groups, which would bias the estimate.

This means assuming that in the absence of the program the differences in outcomes between the treatment and comparison groups would have to evolve in parallel, that is, without the treatment, the outcomes would increase or decrease at the same rate in both groups; or what is the same, that the results reflect the same trends in the absence of treatment.

As this is impossible to know, in order to verify the assumption of equality of tendencies, that is, to be able to reject the null hypothesis H_0 of equality of tendencies and that the program has indeed had an impact on the treatment group, it is proposed to carry out the following procedure :

Compare the behavior of the treatment and comparison groups before the program

To do this, there will be **annual data from 2019** (inclusive) on the key information for the analysis of all applicant companies. **Said information will be requested from the Call itself. and they must have provided it at the time of making the request.**

With this information, the trend followed by both groups in that period prior to the program is compared. If the results are similar, or if the trend is the same or similar, we could say that the difference after the program is valid and the change in trend in the treatment group is due to the program.

Therefore, it is proposed to analyze the trend of the indicators in those three years (2019, 2020 and 2021) to find out if their evolution has been approximately parallel, or what is the same if the rate of variation of the indicators of the group of treatment has been approximately the same as that of the comparison group.

If the trends of the companies that make up the comparison group (non-beneficiaries of the program) were not parallel to that of the treatment group (beneficiaries of the program) before the call, the comparison group should be reconsidered and its definition chosen based on of the selection of a representative random sample of the companies of the CNAE that are the object of the selected subsidy and carry out a survey that allows collecting information related to the 3 years prior to the call. This monitoring of the parallel trends will be carried out year after year, in order to be able to estimate if there are differences in the evolution and, where appropriate, to take the appropriate measures with the companies in the comparison group that evolve differently. The decision rule in this case will be to remove the company from the comparison group and continue with the rest.

Control of observable differences

As set out in the Commission Staff Working Document entitled *"Common Methodology for the Assessment of State Aid"*, it is necessary to reflect the differences between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries when comparing the results between both groups. .

The most common way to account for observable differences is to use linear regression. Linear regression seeks to control the influence of the variables observed on the results obtained for each of the endogenous variables (competitiveness and sustainability).

Through regression, an analysis of variance should be carried out in both groups, treatment and comparison, in order to be able to observe how they evolve and if they follow similar or parallel trends. To do this, the heteroscedasticity (the variance of the error is different for each value of x) and homoscedasticity (the variance of the error is the same for each value of x) of the models must be observed, to compare and assess the trends of both groups.

Therefore, multiple regression will explain the behavior of the endogenous variables of the model (competitiveness and sustainability), using the information provided by the values taken by the set of explanatory or exogenous variables (individual or joint actions, mandatory).

Specifically, for each of the groups, the following lines must be estimated:

TREATMENT GROUP

- At the initial moment (using the information from the 3 years prior to the Call):

$$Y_{T,\ t=0,\ COMPETITIVENESS} = B_1 X_{1t} + B_2 X_{2t} + B_3 X_{3t} + U_t$$

X_1 = Process automation

X_2 = Sensorization of processes and massive data collection and treatment

X_3 = Integration through digitization to improve process efficiency

$$Y_{T,\ t=0,\ SUSTAINABILITY} = B_1 X_{1t} + B_2 X_{2t} + B_3 X_{3t} + B_4 X_{4t} + U_t$$

X_1 = Energy saving actions at the plant

X_2 = Reduction in resource consumption

X_3 = Joint environmental management

X_4 = Adoption of global commitments to reduce the environmental footprint of a product

- In the last year of data collection (using the information from the 4 years after the Call):

$$Y_{T,\ t=n,\ COMPETITIVENESS} = B_1 X_{1t} + B_2 X_{2t} + B_3 X_{3t} + U_t$$

X_1 = Process automation

X_2 = Sensorization of processes and massive data collection and treatment

X_3 = Integration through digitization to improve process efficiency

$$Y_{T,\ t=n,\ SUSTAINABILITY} = B_1 X_{1t} + B_2 X_{2t} + B_3 X_{3t} + B_4 X_{4t} + U_t$$

X_1 = Energy saving actions at the plant

X_2 = Reduction in resource consumption

X_3 = Joint environmental management

X_4 = Adoption of global commitments to reduce the environmental footprint of a product

COMPARISON GROUP

- At the initial moment (using the information from the 3 years prior to the Call):

$$\text{and } C,\ t=0,\ \text{COMPETITIVENESS} = B_1 X_{1t} + B_2 X_{2t} + B_3 X_{3t} + U_t$$

X_1 = Process automation

X_2 = Sensorization of processes and massive data collection and treatment

X_3 = Integration through digitization to improve process efficiency

$$\text{and } C,\ t=0,\ \text{SUSTAINABILITY} = B_1 X_{1t} + B_2 X_{2t} + B_3 X_{3t} + B_4 X_{4t} + U_t$$

X_1 = Energy saving actions at the plant

X_2 = Reduction in resource consumption

X_3 = Joint environmental management

X_4 = Adoption of global commitments to reduce the environmental footprint of a product

- In the last year of data collection (using the information from the 4 years after the Call):

$$\text{and } C,\ t=n,\ \text{COMPETITIVENESS} = B_1 X_{1t} + B_2 X_{2t} + B_3 X_{3t} + U_t$$

X_1 = Process automation

X_2 = Sensorization of processes and massive data collection and treatment

X_3 = Integration through digitization to improve process efficiency

$$\text{and } C,\ t=n,\ \text{SUSTAINABILITY} = B_1 X_{1t} + B_2 X_{2t} + B_3 X_{3t} + B_4 X_{4t} + U_t$$

X_1 = Energy saving actions at the plant

X_2 = Reduction in resource consumption

X_3 = Joint environmental management

X_4 = Adoption of global commitments to reduce the environmental footprint of a product

Form of application of the impact evaluation method

Through the impact evaluation, the aim is to find out the effects of the program on the two main impacts considered:

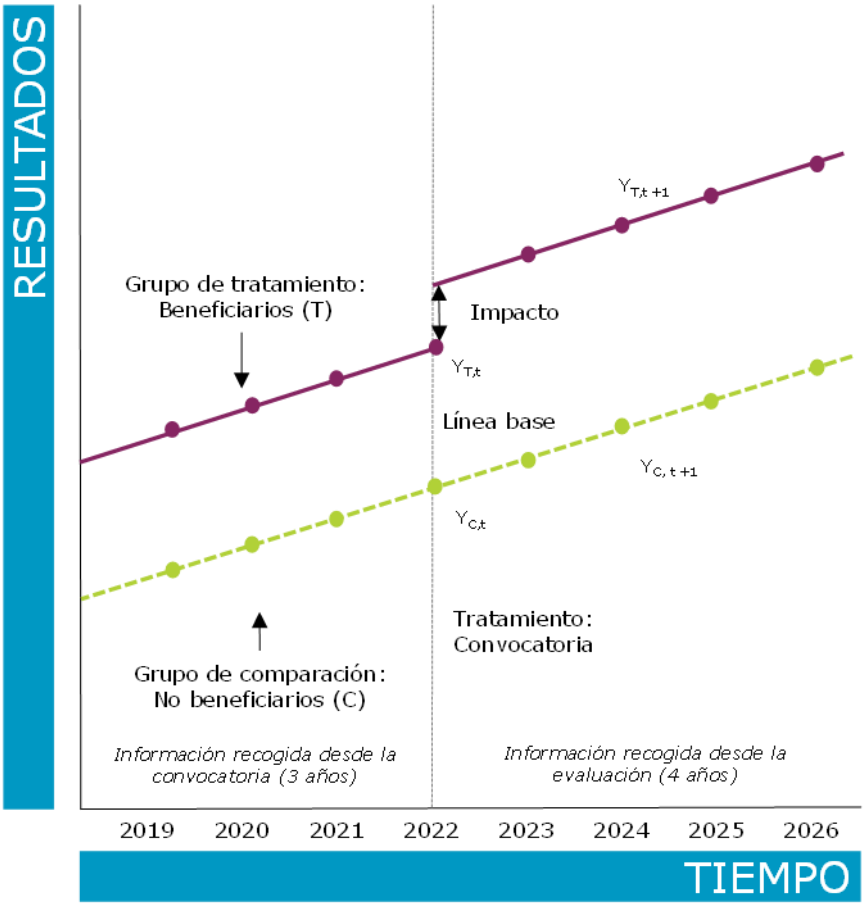
- Impacts on improving competitiveness: The companies that are beneficiaries of the program will see their competitiveness boosted.
- Impacts on the improvement of sustainability: The companies that are beneficiaries of the program improve their level of economic, environmental and social sustainability.

The DD method compares the treatment group against the comparison group before and after the intervention. In addition, in this case the differences between the variables will be observed

throughout the 4 years of evaluation in order to be able to analyze the evolution of the differences.

To do this, the difference in the values resulting from the regressions of the two variables of interest between the value of Y at t=4 and at t=0 for each of the treatment and control groups is calculated. Finally, the difference between these two regressions is obtained. For example, in the first wave of evaluation there will be, on the one hand, information relating to previous years (2019, 2020 and 2021) and, on the other, information from the first year of the companies after the call has taken place.

- The information prior to the Call will serve to contrast whether the results in the treatment and comparison groups have evolved in a similar way during the previous 3 years.
- The information collected during the subsequent 4 years will allow us to analyze the evolution of the variables of interest in both groups.



Calculations needed for impact assessment

Estimation of the counterfactual:

$$(Y_{T,\,t=0,\,\text{COMPETITIVENESS}} - Y_{T,\,t=4\,\text{COMPETITIVENESS}}) - (Y_{C,\,t=0,\,\text{COMPETITIVENESS}} - Y_{C,\,t=4,\,\text{COMPETITIVENESS}})$$

$$(Y_{T,\ t=0,\ SUSTAINABILITY} - Y_{T,\ t=4\ SUSTAINABILITY}) - (Y_{C,\ t=0,\ SUSTAINABILITY} - Y_{C,\ t=4,\ SUSTAINABILITY})$$

where;

- Baseline 2023: t_0 *(although the call is expected to happen in the final of 2022 or the beginning of 2023, the resolution will not happen until final 2023)*
- 2027: t_4 *(4 years after the baseline, it will also allow knowing the result of the justification process and being able to assess the effects on the companies after some time has passed since the execution of the actions)*

The increase that occurred between t_0 and t_4 will be the effect produced by the call in each of the groups and its difference will allow us to quantify the impact, that is, what the program has produced among the beneficiaries.

On the other hand, the analysis of the differences that occurred year after year for each group will also be of interest for the evaluation. The improvement transferred over time will collect the variables considered as results within the same political and economic context, and therefore will represent the difference in the trend of both groups thanks to the improvement produced by the call.

Calculations required for variance analysis:

Impact evaluation year 4:

Situation treatment group: $(Y_{T,\ t1} - Y_{T,\ t2})$; $(Y_{T,\ t2} - Y_{T,\ t3})$; $(Y_{T,\ t3} - Y_{T,\ t4})$

Comparison group situation: $(Y_{C,\ t1} - Y_{C,\ t2})$; $(Y_{C,\ t2} - Y_{C,\ t3})$; $(Y_{C,\ t3} - Y_{C,\ t4})$

Therefore, based on the information collected for the evaluation of results, the impact evaluation will be carried out.

In order to facilitate carrying out the proposed analyses, it is proposed to carry out an analysis of the impact of the Call around two of the main results considered (competitiveness and sustainability). The evaluation may be based on the values obtained for each of the partial indicators built from the mandatory actions in order to be able to draw conclusions or even adapt the model if necessary:

- Competitiveness: Automation of processes and sensorization of processes and data collection (individual) and integration through digitalization to improve the efficiency of processes (joint).
- Sustainability: Energy saving actions at the plant and reduction of resource consumption (individual) and joint environmental management and adoption of global commitments to reduce the environmental footprint of a product (joint).

The simultaneous application of different statistical techniques and evaluation methods will allow estimating the results.

Once the evaluation team explores the characteristics of the program and the available data sources, the proposed methodology should be reviewed to assess its suitability.

Finally, it should be noted that the techniques on which we have focused the Evaluation Plan are mainly quantitative, with the aim of building the counterfactual of a basically quantitative nature. In order to improve the robustness of the impact evaluation, the evaluation project may be complemented by using qualitative techniques (in-depth interviews or focus groups). The added value that its use can provide is to improve knowledge about the context in which the program has passed, the perspectives of its beneficiaries and other elements that will make it possible to understand the reason for the impact (or its absence).

5.2 Precisely describe the identification strategy for the assessment of the causal impact of the aid and the assumptions on which the strategy is based. Describe in detail the composition and relevance of that group.

In order to be able to measure the impact of the program on the selected companies, beneficiaries, it is necessary to compare them with those that are as similar as possible and that are not beneficiaries of the program.

In this sense, the choice of the comparison group becomes an issue that can be approached from the point of view of Decision Theory. For this, it is necessary to generate a set of decision rules on compliance or non-compliance with the stated requirements. The case we are dealing with is complex since the program is the first time it has been implemented, and therefore there is no information on the composition of the associations, tractor projects, that can be presented, as well as the number of associations that can be expect, making it extremely difficult to determine, a priori, the methodology for choosing the comparison group. This increases the difficulty of selecting the methodology that allows us to choose the elements of the comparison group, before beginning the implementation of the program with the data that we could obtain from it. To do this, we are going to generate decision rules that exhaustively collect all the possible cases that may arise when choosing the comparison group at the time of program implementation.

Given this casuistry, we must anticipate adverse scenarios such as the situation in which no one shows up for the program, and, therefore, it makes no sense to evaluate its impact. In this case, what should be looked at is the evaluation of its design and, above all, the design of the implementation, paying attention to the necessary requirements set forth both in the Order of Bases and in the Order of the Call. Before this hypothetical situation, it would be necessary to carry out a survey on a representative sample obtained by selecting the elements of the population that make up the companies that meet the CNAE (National Classification of Economic Activities) set in the Bases Order. This would allow us to carry out a good analysis of what has gone wrong and what to do in order to carry out the program in successive calls.

From the previous point of view, a first option of the decision rule would be "if there is no association with which to implement the program, the design of the program and especially the design of the implementation must be evaluated". For this, a representative sample must be designed based on the CNAE, established in the Order of Bases, and failing that in the Order of the Call, addressing first the knowledge of the existence of the program, if the percentage of

ignorance exceeds that of knowledge group, the main problem would be determined. Given this scenario, an insufficiency in the advertising of the program could be diagnosed.

On the contrary, in the event that the percentage of knowledge of the program exceeds that of ignorance, a survey based on the characteristics of the program would be considered, especially the characteristics of the design of the implementation, directing our evaluation towards determining the difficulty, due to the requirements, to participate in the program.

The sample design for the analysis **in the event that no group is presented to the call** , must be designed as a minimum based on the three main CNAE that are considered mandatory to form the group within group C:

- **10 Food industry**
- **11 beverage manufacturing**
- **12 tobacco industry**

Taking into account the information provided by the INE in the Central Directory of Companies, the number of companies corresponding to the year 2021 for each of the groups and the distribution of the sample would be as follows:

	National total number of companies **2021**	**Sample size** *
10 Food industry	25,108	2,300
11 beverage manufacturing	5,152	1,700
12 tobacco industry	54	54
Total	30,314	4,054

**For the calculation, a confidence level of 99% and a margin of error of +-2.5% are considered for each of the branches of activity. For the total set of companies, the maximum error for a confidence level of 99% would be 1.59%.*

This distribution must be updated based on the data available for each of the sectors at the time of the evaluation. Likewise, the need to include additional sectors to the study should be considered based on the interests of the General Directorate of Industry and of SMEs, in the event that no group is presented to the call.

Given this situation, it would not make sense to talk about impact assessment.

The following case that is contemplated, according to the proposed decision rule, would be that all the groups that appear are beneficiaries of the program. Given this situation, since there is no set of companies that have not been beneficiaries (which would be the first option to consider to obtain the comparison group), based on the CNAE of the companies that have been beneficiaries (Group C 10,11 ,12) and its most relevant characteristics, the population that meets these characteristics of each of the companies belonging to each of the associations should be

determined, to then select each of the companies that match the characteristics required.

In the event that **no group is not a beneficiary of the call** , the sample design must be carried out based on the characteristics that are observed among the companies of the groups that are beneficiaries, in order to be able to limit the universe of companies that we would be interested in addressing.

Given that at the moment these characteristics are not known, the variables that should be considered to carry out the sample design are set out below:

- CNAE of the beneficiary company
- Number of employees
- Location (CCAA)

Additionally, when proposing the tool for collecting information related to the results matrix, the incorporation of the following questions is proposed:

- If your activity is related to the field of the agri-food industry, such as, for example, sizing, classification, handling, transformation, conservation and packaging of food products.
- They are part of the value chain of the agri-food industry.
- Knowledge of the program and call. (*)
- If he considered participating in the call, but finally ruled out the option and the reasons for this discard.(*)
- Assessment of the characteristics of the program and call.(*)

(*)These three required characteristics should be removed because in order to obtain this information, a questionnaire should be sent to the companies selected by the sample for them to reply.

Once the company(ies) that would form the comparison group had been chosen, the methodology for impact evaluation would be applied.

Following the decision rule, in the event that there are groups that have not been beneficiaries of the program, they could be considered as a comparison group. To do this, what must be done in the first place is to see if the number of non-beneficiary companies is less than, equal to, or greater than the number of beneficiary companies. In the first case, the first thing would be to check if the characteristics of the non-beneficiary companies coincide with any of the beneficiary companies. In that case, the matching company or companies would be included in the comparison group. As their expected number is less than that of the beneficiary companies, they should be complemented with companies obtained by determining the population that meets the characteristics of the beneficiary companies in each case.

This applies to the case in which the number of non-beneficiary companies is equal to the number of beneficiaries, except in the case in which the characteristics of the non-beneficiary companies fully coincide with those of the beneficiary companies.

Lastly, in the contemplated scenario in which the number of non-beneficiary companies is

greater than the number of beneficiary companies, the methodology to be applied is the same as that proposed up to this point, the characteristics of the beneficiary companies would be studied and the characteristics of the of non-beneficiary companies. In the event that there is an equal number of non-beneficiary companies with the characteristics of the beneficiary companies, they would form the comparison group, in the situation in which the number is lower, we would be in the casuistry exposed in the decision rule of the previous paragraph. In the event that the number were higher, those companies that form the comparison group would be chosen randomly. The method for randomly choosing the components of the comparison group can be any of the standard, for example, numbering them and using a table of random numbers, choosing them.

Therefore, the choice of an appropriate basis for comparison depends on the companies involved and will be crucial to the validity of the assessment. At the time of preparation of the Evaluation Plan, the specific characteristics of the companies likely to participate are unknown, and therefore, it will be essential for the evaluation to analyze the characteristics of the companies that finally present themselves. The scenarios proposed above serve to guide future evaluation, but they may be modified depending on how the reality of the program unfolds.

In summary, there are several possibilities to carry out the impact study depending on the situations that arise:

Situation 1: No pool is present

In this situation, an impact assessment would not be necessary, and therefore, a counterfactual would not have to be selected.

Situation 2: There are no non-beneficiary groups, all are beneficiaries

- Treatment group: beneficiary companies of the program (participate in one or more groups)
- Comparison group: companies not participating in the program whose activity is carried out under the CNAE to which it is directed and whose relevant characteristics are as similar as possible to those of the beneficiary companies.

Situation 3: There are beneficiary and non-beneficiary groups

- Treatment group companies that benefit from the program (participate in one or more groups)
- Comparison group: non-beneficiary companies, have requested to participate, but have been excluded.

Additionally, it should be noted that:

- If the comparison group is defined from the non-beneficiary companies, but, due either to their particular characteristics or to the volume of companies they represent, they do not allow an adequate matching with the beneficiary companies, or there is not enough information available, It would be decided to build the comparison group among companies not participating in the program with similar characteristics to the beneficiaries.

- If the comparison group does not participate adequately in the successive collections of information, the "pairs" that do not provide data would be discarded and the impact would be calculated based on the pairs of valid information. To mitigate the effect of non-response throughout the evaluation project among the participants, both the Bases Order and the Call Order specify the obligation to provide information for the evaluation.

The fact that a methodology is available for choosing the members of the comparison group should not make us forget another problem that is probably decisive in carrying out the impact evaluation, the motivation for the participation of the members of the comparison group. . It is part of a group of companies that, although both in the Order of Bases and in the Order of the Call warn them of the necessary participation in the evaluation, providing all the necessary information even if they are not beneficiaries of the program, that does not guarantee their participation, since there is no special motivation, with the problems that arise, especially if it is during the period of validity of the program, due to the complication of looking for a new element for the comparison group that meets all the requirements and that, in addition, want to participate. More complicated is the case in which the elements of the comparison group come from sample selections, since in this case the probable lack of knowledge of the program and their non-attachment to it makes their participation difficult due to lack of motivation. In both cases, it will be necessary to provide a method that prevents this from happening, stimulating the attraction of those chosen to be members of the comparison group.

In the event that it is not possible to obtain information on the indicators from primary sources, that is, through the direct participation of the companies in the sector, the following is proposed:

- Calculate the impact by comparing how the outcome variables were presented before the implementation of the program and how they were presented after. This method must be taken into account that it does not consider the influence of other external factors in addition to the intervention when measuring the impact. The results that are observed when the program has finished do not necessarily have to be the effect of its implementation.
- Use secondary sources of information that allow the evaluation to approach the reality of the program's result indicators, mainly GDP and employment, through the construction of theoretical models. This exercise alone is not enough to judge the effectiveness of the program and its impact.

5.3 Explain how the intended methods address possible selection bias. Can it be said with sufficient certainty that the observed differences in the outcomes of aid recipients are due to the aid?

The methodological proposal of the Evaluation Plan considers approaching the evaluation of the impact through quasi-experimental methods since the allocation of the treatment is not random. Groups and companies are subject to a series of selection criteria in order to be eligible for aid.

Having two groups that are similar in all respects ensures that the estimate of the counterfactual is close to the true value of the outcome in the absence of treatment, and that once the program has been implemented, the impact estimates are not selection biased.

On this basis, identifying a suitable comparison group will be key to controlling selection bias. To do this, it is proposed to analyze the information related to different parameters compared to the treatment group during the years prior to the call (since 2019). When the rate of variation

of the indicators is not the same between the treatment and comparison groups, the comparison group must be reformulated.

Through regression, an analysis of variance should be carried out in both groups, treatment and comparison, in order to be able to observe how they evolve and if they follow similar or parallel trends. To do this, the heteroscedasticity (the variance of the error is different for each value of x) and homoscedasticity (the variance of the error is the same for each value of x) of the models must be observed, to compare and assess the trends of both groups.

5.4 If applicable, please explain how the envisaged methods intend to address the specific challenges related to complex schemes (eg those that are implemented in a differentiated way at regional level, or those that use several support instruments).

The projects have different aid limits depending on their characteristics, although at the moment it is unknown how they will be distributed since it will depend on the type of proposals that the companies finally present.

From the evaluation, these possible differences must be observed and the performance of independent analyzes will have to be assessed based on the final heterogeneity of the projects.

Another aspect that makes the aid regime under evaluation complex is the very heterogeneity of the sector to which it is directed. From the evaluation, the need to carry out independent analyzes of the information based on the impacted subsectors should be assessed.

6. Data collection

6.1 Report on the mechanisms and sources for the collection and processing of data on the beneficiaries of the aid and the anticipated comparative hypothesis [8]. Describe all relevant information regarding the selection phase: data collected on aid applicants, data submitted by applicants, selection results. Also explain any possible difficulties related to data availability.

Common to the different types of evaluation that this comprehensive conception has (design evaluation, results evaluation and impact evaluation), each information need is associated with a specific data collection. However, in general terms, the following information collection milestones are proposed:

- At the time of the application for the program, scheduled for the end of **2022 or the begginig od 2023**, information will be required from both the beneficiary and non-beneficiary companies of the Program, belonging to the last 3 years, specifically the information related to the years **2019, 2020 and 2021** . These data will serve to carry out the analysis of the evolution of the comparison group with the group of beneficiaries of the program.
- From the beginning of the program, it is planned to obtain the necessary data on an annual basis. All the required information will be collected at the same time in all groups of informants.

In accordance with this, we will use the following values of the variable t in the formulas for calculating the indicators with respect to these time milestones:

The value t=0 corresponds to the beginning of the implementation of the Program. At this time, the end of the year 2022, we will collect the data corresponding to the previous years 2019, 2020, 2021.

For t=1, it corresponds to the data corresponding to the end of the first year of implementation of the program scheduled for the end of the year 2023, the information of the previous year will correspond, specifically the information of the year 2022.

Similarly, in successive years:

For t=2, it corresponds to the second year of execution of the program, during the end of 2024, providing the information and data for 2023.

For t=3, it corresponds to the third year of program execution, during the end of 2025, providing the information and data for 2024.

For t=4, it corresponds to the fourth year of programme implementation, at the beginning of 2026, providing information and data from 2025.

Data collection as a starting point

[8] Bear in mind that the evaluation could require obtaining both historical data and data that will become progressively available during the implementation of the aid scheme. Identify the sources of both types of information. Both types of data should preferably be collected from the same source to ensure consistency over time.

Once the information has been collected from the primary project companies and tractor projects, it is necessary to process the data to generate the information required by the Evaluation Plan for the development of the results and impact evaluations.

In this sense, as shown in *Annex I: Complete table of indicators* and at the times defined in the *Evaluation Plan*, the information provided by the primary project companies and tractor projects corresponds to the first level indicators.

On these data we will operate to build other indicators with information from higher levels until we are able to measure the scope of the Program towards the achievement of the final objectives.

In this sense, in order to compare the data collected by the primary companies and tractor projects, it is necessary to initially carry out their statistical normalization. A greater level of detail can be consulted in the document in *Annex I: Complete table of indicators* .

Data normalization

Normalization is a process used in statistics to compare data from different samples or populations and is expressed as the number of standard deviations that a given value takes with respect to the mean of its sample or population.

To do this, from the values X_j^i e y_j^i -we will use as an example from now on X_j^i -obtained directly by the primary project companies and, where appropriate, by the tractor projects, with mean μ and standard deviation σ, obtained from the data collected at t=0, it is calculated by subtracting the mean from the value collected and dividing the result by the standard deviation, as follows:

$$\mathrm{N} = \frac{X_j^i - \mu}{\sigma}$$

The result will be a dimensionless value between 0 and 1 that will allow us to compare and operate with indicators of a different nature, necessary for the evaluation.

Data quality management

Once the implementation of the Program is completed, we will carry out an analysis of the quality of the data in order to verify the information provided by the companies.

In this analysis we will use two main techniques: i) systematic sampling and ii) comparison of the information offered by the companies with the information provided by the Mercantile Registry.

With regard to systematic sampling, we will select a representative sample of the group of companies, both beneficiary and non-beneficiary, and we will conduct an interview with each of them, to contrast the data provided.

With regard to the comparison of the information provided by the Mercantile Registry, during the process of constructing the indicators, these have been designed in such a way that they are comparable with the information reported by the companies to the aforementioned registry, all with the aim of having a means of contrasting the information provided by the companies. To do this, a random selection will be made based on the size of the sample and the total population, and a comparison of the variables whose data are available in said body will be carried out.

The anticipated comparative hypothesis

For the establishment of the anticipated comparative hypothesis, the objective is to identify a comparison group that is as similar to the beneficiaries of the program as possible, within the non-beneficiaries.

In this sense, we will establish various possibilities to carry out the impact study depending on the situations that arise:

Situation 1: *No pool is present*

In this situation, an impact assessment would not be necessary and therefore a counterfactual would not have to be selected.

Situation 2: *There are no non-beneficiary groups, all are beneficiaries*

• Treatment group: beneficiary companies of the program (participate in one or more groups)

•Comparison group: companies not participating in the program whose activity is carried out under the CNAE to which it is directed and whose relevant characteristics are as similar as possible to those of the beneficiary companies.

Situation 3: *There are beneficiary and non-beneficiary groups*

•Treatment group companies benefiting from the program (participate in one or more groups)

•Comparison group: non-beneficiary companies, have requested to participate, but have been excluded.

Additionally, it should be noted that:

•If the comparison group is defined from the non-beneficiary companies, but, due either to their particular characteristics or to the volume of companies they represent, they do not allow an adequate matching with the beneficiary companies or there is not enough information available, It will be decided to build the comparison group between companies not participating in the program with similar characteristics to the beneficiaries.

•If the comparison group does not participate adequately in the successive information collections, the "pairs" that do not provide data will be discarded and the impact will be calculated based on the valid information pairs. To mitigate the effect of non-response throughout the evaluation project among the participants, both the Bases Order and the Call Order specify the obligation to provide information for the evaluation.

The fact that a methodology is available for choosing the members of the comparison group should not make us forget about another problem that is probably the most decisive to carry out the impact evaluation, the motivation for the participation of the members of the group. of comparison. Remember that you are part of a group of companies that, although both in the Order of bases and in the Order of the call warn them of the necessary participation in the evaluation, providing all the necessary information even if they are not beneficiaries of the program, that does not guarantees it, since there is no special motivation, with the problems that it causes, especially if it is during the period of validity of the program, due to the enormous complication of looking for a new element for the comparison group that meets all the requirements and who also wants to participate. More complicated is the case in which the elements of the comparison group come from sample selections, since in this case the probable lack of knowledge of the program and their non-attachment to it, makes their participation difficult due to the probably total lack of motivation. In both cases, it will be necessary to provide a method that allows this not to happen, that manages to attract enough of those chosen to be members of the comparison group.

Data relating to the selection phase

Since the call has not yet taken place, no information is available regarding the participants.

Possible data availability difficulties

With regard to the possibility of difficulties in the availability of data, as we have previously stated, not only is the possibility that there is a lack of information provided by companies not beneficiaries of the program contemplated, but it may also happen that it has not been possible to create the comparison group. Under this scenario, it would entail a reconfiguration of the establishment of the comparison group, resorting to companies not participating in the program whose activity is carried out under the CNAE to which it is directed and whose relevant characteristics are as similar as possible to those of the beneficiary companies. Additionally, the proposed methodology may be reviewed and the choice to apply an evaluation methodology that does not require the identification of a comparison group (such as before and after) or even the obtaining of information from the review of sources may be considered. secondary that allow establishing models of results.

6.2 Report on the frequency of data collection relevant to the evaluation. Are observations available at a sufficiently disaggregated scale, ie at the level of individual companies?

As stated in *Annex I Table of Indicators* and in the *Evaluation Plan document*, the frequency of data collection is annual and the level of data collection is the company.

6.3 Please indicate whether access to the data needed to conduct the assessment could be hampered by laws and regulations governing data confidentiality, and how these difficulties would be addressed. Mention other possible challenges in relation to data collection, and how they might be overcome.

In Law 9/2017, of November 8, on Public Sector Contracts, which transposes into the Spanish legal system the Directives of the European Parliament and of the Council 2014/23/EU and 2014/24/EU, of 26 November February 2014, the need for both contracting Public Administrations and companies to comply with Organic Law 3/2018, of December 5, on the Protection of Personal Data and guarantee of digital rights is reflected.

This is the legal framework in which it will act, therefore there is no problem of access to the necessary data since the constructed indicators comply with the aforementioned regulations.

Other potential data collection challenges.

As we have mentioned before, possible difficulties have been considered in the collection of data by non-beneficiary companies, with which we establish the comparison group. In this sense, as stated in the Call Order and Regulatory Bases, it is mandatory to provide the information requested, in addition, we have proposed the following actions:

•If the comparison group is defined from the non-beneficiary companies, but, due either to their particular characteristics or to the volume of companies they represent, they do not allow an adequate matching with the beneficiary companies or there is not enough information available, It will be decided to build the comparison group between companies not participating in the program with similar characteristics to the beneficiaries.

•If the comparison group does not participate adequately in the successive information collections, the "pairs" that do not provide data will be discarded and the impact will be calculated based on the valid information pairs. To mitigate the effect of non-response throughout the evaluation project among the participants, both the Bases Order and the Call Order specify the obligation to provide information for the evaluation.

6.4 Indicate if studies of aid beneficiaries or other companies are planned, and if it is intended to use complementary sources of information.

Studies of aid beneficiaries or other companies are not planned. However, the use of complementary sources of information is planned, specifically, in the data quality comparison procedure, comparing the information provided by the companies with the relevant data from the Mercantile Registry.

In the event that the participation of non-beneficiary companies is not achieved, secondary information sources may be used.

7. Evaluation schedule proposal

7.1 Indicate the planned timeline for the evaluation, including milestones for data collection, interim reports and engagement of the various stakeholders. If applicable, include an annex detailing the proposed schedule.

In the last point of the document, the phases foreseen for the development of the evaluation project proposed for axis 1 of the PERTE Agroalimentario, dedicated to the industrial strengthening of the sector, are indicated.

Taking into account the deadlines foreseen for the development of the actions, in a basic outline the approach of the evaluation would be the following:

PHASE 1: METHODOLOGICAL PREPARATION	2023

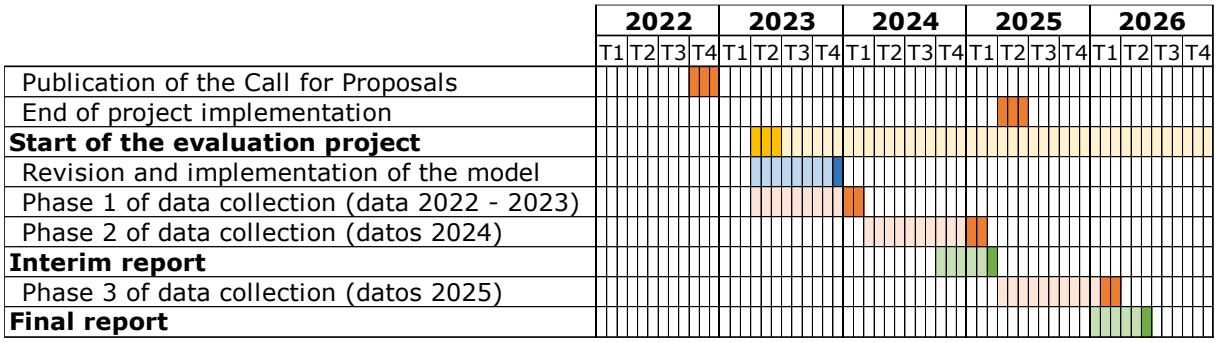
- Based on this Evaluation Plan, as a first phase of the project, a review should be carried out to establish the final methodology to be used according to the results of the Call, taking into account the cases described.
  This Final Evaluation Plan will be worked on and agreed upon with the managers involved.
  For the construction of the final monitoring and evaluation model, it would be convenient to take into account:
  - The public documentation related to the development of the line of action (plan, bases, call, etc.)
  - The registration information of the participants in the call that must be provided by the managing body (databases of participants, projects presented, etc.)
  - Other documentation generated within the framework of the project (dossiers, published summaries, news related to the implementation of the line of action or the development of the projects by the beneficiaries, etc.)
- Additionally, and as a fundamental element for the correct development of the evaluation, the **monitoring and evaluation model will be implemented among the different agents involved** from the holding of meetings. In the implementation meetings, all the profiles that are related to the development of the aid will be summoned. Both the managers and the beneficiaries themselves will be taken into account, in this way they will be able to learn and become familiar with the indicators, the purpose of the evaluation and its phases.
- The duration of this work of formulating and implementing the monitoring and evaluation model is open to the rate at which the grants are developed.

PHASE 2: EVALUATION OF RESULTS AND IMPACT (3 WAVES)	2023 - 2025

- **Information collection:** Annual information will be collected in three different waves corresponding to the activity carried out by the entities.
- The following reports will be produced:
  - **Interim report,** date: 31 March 2025

o **Final evaluation report,** date: 30 June 2026	
PHASE 3: DISSEMINATION OF EVALUATION RESULTS	2027
• It is proposed to carry out a communication of the results of both internal and external evaluation. In the same way, the publicity of the final results report will be of interest.	

Below is a schedule of the main milestones indicated:



Note: this is an estimate of the times that should be reviewed and contrasted as events evolve.

Possible alterations in the implementation of the Program could necessitate a new rescheduling of the evaluation.

Partial annual information reports may be submitted. They will serve to guide the evaluation of results and final impact, but they are proposed as optional depending on the information analysis needs that are identified.

7.2 Please indicate the date by which the final evaluation report will be submitted to the Commission at the latest.

As stated in the evaluation planning calendar, a final milestone is established in 2027, where the final deliverable for the evaluation of results and impact will be prepared.

7.3 Mention the factors that could affect the planned schedule.

Possible delays in the beginning of the execution of the Program or some type of alterations in the implementation of the Program could necessitate a new rescheduling of the evaluation.

Possible difficulties in defining the comparison group, since it does not contain enough elements, could alter the development of the initially planned evaluation. In section *5. Methods envisaged to carry out the evaluation* , this casuistry is analyzed in greater detail.

8. Body in charge of carrying out the evaluation

8.1 Provide specific information on the body that will carry out the assessment or, if not yet selected, on the timing, procedure and criteria for your selection.

The evaluation will be external and will be carried out by a consulting team through an open and competitive procedure.

The Contract will be tendered by Open Procedure and will be awarded in accordance with *Law 9/2017, of November 8, on Public Sector Contracts, which transposes the Directives of the European Parliament and of the Council 2014/23 into the Spanish legal system /EU and 2014/24/EU, of February 26, 2014* , expected in January 2022.

In accordance with the previous regulations, quantifiable selection objective criteria will be established for the economic report, which will represent 51% of the total score, and a technical report, whose assessment may represent 49% of the score.

8.2 Report on the independence of the body that will carry out the evaluation, and how possible conflicts of interest will be avoided in the selection process.

It is proposed to carry out an external evaluation that guarantees the independence and quality of the results, conclusions and recommendations.

Possible conflicts and interests ensure their overcoming from the application of current Spanish regulations, especially *Royal Legislative Decree 1/2020, of May 5* , which approves the consolidated text of the *Bankruptcy Law and Law 9/ 2017, of November 8, on Public Sector Contracts, which transposes into the Spanish legal system the Directives of the European Parliament and of the Council 2014/23/EU and 2014/24/EU, of February 26, 2014* .

8.3 Indicate the relevant experience and skills of the body conducting the assessment or how their availability will be ensured in the selection process.

It is proposed that an **evaluation be carried out by an external organization** (or a body that is at least functionally independent of the aid granting authority). You must have the necessary and proven qualifications and duly qualified personnel to carry them out. Considering these issues will favor independence and quality in the results, conclusions and recommendations. In addition, a timetable, procedure and criteria for their selection must be fixed in advance.

Regarding the calendar, since it is an evaluation of results and impact, it is important to bear in mind that the evaluation works must be considered throughout the entire process of the call, although the completion of the execution of the projects will determine the possibility of to be able to observe the expected changes in the companies and in the environment.

Early involvement of the body conducting the assessment, for example at the time the scheme is conceived, is important to the success of an assessment as it ensures that the scheme can be assessed as proposed and that the necessary data will be collected.

8.4 Indicate what mechanisms the granting authority will adopt to manage and supervise the performance of the evaluation.

The granting authority is responsible for supervising and directing the tasks to achieve the objectives based on the specifications of the evaluation.

To this end, the identification of a coordinator by the successful bidder organization is planned who will be in charge of carrying out dialogue with the Administration and specifically with the person responsible for the contract.

In compliance with the foregoing, the granting authority will be responsible for the contract by the Administration and to whom it corresponds to ensure compliance with the work required and offered in these specifications, supervise its execution, adopt the decisions and issue the instructions necessary to ensure the correct performance of the agreed provision, these being mandatory compliance by the successful bidder.

The functions of the person in charge of the contract by the Administration will fall on the granting authority and will be, in general, those derived from the direction, verification, report and monitoring of the correct performance of the work, as well as giving conformity to the invoices. presented and will act as the sole interlocutor on the part of the Administration with the technical coordinator or person in charge of the contract designated by the successful bidder.

8.5 Please provide information, even if only indicative, on the necessary human and financial resources that will be made available to carry out the assessment.

The human resources required

The work team required to carry out the evaluation must be made up of people with experience and knowledge in the analysis of public policies (design, monitoring and evaluation), especially in impact evaluations, with experience and specific knowledge about the process. of evaluation and all the agents that must be taken into account in it.

They must have experience in projects related to public administrations and especially in the policies of the industry sector, new technologies and business digitization and innovation.

Specifically, the work team required for the evaluation project must be made up of a team of consultants who together ensure the following criteria:

- Experience in design, formulation and evaluation of public policies.
- Experience in the monitoring and follow-up of public policies or programs, as well as in the preparation of monitoring indicators.
- Experience in the design of methodologies and tools for collecting quantitative information, as well as in obtaining, managing field work, processing and analyzing information: surveys and databases.
- Experience in the design of methodologies and tools for collecting qualitative information, as well as in obtaining, managing field work, processing and analyzing information: in-depth interviews and documentary sources.
- Experience in the application of econometric models for impact assessment, sampling and data processing with the use of statistical tools.
- Experience in writing final reports, drawing conclusions, recommendations, good practices and lessons learned.
- Experience in the application of the gender approach in the evaluation of public policies and programs.

Specifically, it is proposed to have the following profiles within the work team:

Project Manager (1): The main functions to be performed are:

- Responsible for project management.
- In charge of coordination, dialogue and liaison with the General Directorate.
- Maintaining relationships with other external agents.
- Planning of the project in all its aspects.
- Identification of the appropriate team members for the successful completion of each project task.
- Responsible for strategic and situational decision making.

- Review and final validation of project deliverables.

Project manager profile:

- Training:
  - Bachelor's or Master's Degree in Political Science, Sociology or Engineering.
  - Valuable additional qualification of Doctorate.
  - Valuable additional experience as a university professor in the field of public policies and/or the evaluation of public policies and programs.
- Experience and knowledge:
  - Demonstrable experience, of at least 5 years, in the direction and development of consulting activities associated with the design, formulation and evaluation of public policies or programs, especially in the industry sector, new technologies and digitalization and business innovation .
  - Experience in management, planning, coordination of work teams and monitoring of project execution in the field of public administration.
  - Experience in the monitoring and follow-up of public policies or programs, as well as in the preparation of monitoring indicators.
  - Experience in the design of methodologies and tools for collecting quantitative and qualitative information.
  - Experience in the application of econometric models for impact assessment, sampling and data processing with the use of statistical tools.
  - Experience in drawing conclusions, recommendations, good practices and lessons learned.
  - Experience in the application of the gender approach in the evaluation of public policies and programs.

Consultant team (4): It will be made up of 2 senior consultants and 2 junior consultants.

Senior consultant profile:

- Training:
  - Bachelor's or Master's Degree in Political Science, Sociology or Higher Engineering.
  - Valuable additional degree in data analysis and social research.
- Experience and knowledge:
  - Demonstrable experience, of at least 3 years, in the development of consulting activities associated with the evaluation of public policies or programs, especially in the industry sector, new technologies and digitalization and business innovation.
  - Experience in the monitoring and follow-up of public policies or programs, as well as in the preparation of monitoring indicators.
  - Experience in the design of methodologies and tools for collecting quantitative information, as well as in obtaining, managing field work, processing and analyzing information: design of questionnaires, management and monitoring of surveys, management of databases, processing of data and statistical analysis of data.
  - Experience in the design of qualitative information collection methodologies and tools, as well as in obtaining, managing fieldwork, processing and analyzing information: designing interview guides, conducting in-depth interviews, discourse analysis and from documentary sources.

- Experience in the application of econometric models for impact assessment, sampling and data processing with the use of statistical tools.
- Experience in writing final reports, drawing conclusions, recommendations, good practices and lessons learned.
- Experience in the application of the gender approach in the evaluation of public policies and programs.

Junior consultant profile:

- Training:
  - Bachelor's or Master's Degree in Political Science, Sociology or Higher Engineering.
- Experience and knowledge:
  - Demonstrable experience, of at least 1 year, in the development of consulting activities associated with the evaluation of public policies or programs, especially in the industry sector, new technologies and digitalization and business innovation.
  - Experience in obtaining, managing field work, processing and analyzing quantitative and qualitative information.
  - Experience in writing final reports, preparing executive summaries and preparing presentations.

Financial resources

The estimated value of the evaluation project will depend on the information needs identified based on the final configuration of the comparison group and the evolution of the implementation of the call. A tentative scenario is estimated, considering the 5 years of the project, with a partial dedication of resources and variable fieldwork costs depending on the applicants and beneficiaries of the aid:

TOTAL BIDDING BUDGET	**€1,232,900.00** (Without VAT)

The detailed information can be consulted in *Annex III: Details of human and financial resources.*

9. Publicity of the evaluation

9.1 Describe how the evaluation will be made public, for example by posting the evaluation plan and the final evaluation report on a website.

One way to increase the potential usefulness of evaluation results is to make them known to people, groups and institutions that may be interested in their results.

The communication and dissemination of the results will be carried out once the justification period has ended and the data corresponding to the year 2026 has been compiled.

The communication strategy must at least contemplate the publication of a final report in which the main results of the industrial strengthening program of the agri-food sector within the PERTE Agri-food are collected.

9.2 Indicate how stakeholder involvement will be ensured. Indicate whether the organization of public consultations or other activities related to the evaluation is planned.

Other possible forms of communication are:

- **Communication events** with representatives of interest groups, networks of experts, business organizations, etc. Usually the team that has carried out the evaluation can participate, so that they can present the results.
- **Specific communication events by interest group** , since it allows delving into specific interests related to the evaluation and its results.
- **Publication on institutional web pages** , where in addition to the final evaluation report, additional explanatory material more oriented to communication can be included. For example, videos, infographics or interviews can accompany the publication of the report.
- **Work meetings** with the team commissioning the evaluation, where doubts that may arise about the results of the evaluation can be clarified.

9.3 Specify how the results of the assessment are intended to be used by the granting authority and other bodies, for example, for the design of successors to the scheme, or in similar schemes.

The subsequent use of the information contained in the evaluation may be used in accordance with current Spanish regulations, especially *Law 37/2007, of November 16, on the reuse of public sector information , Organic Law 3/2018, of December 5, on the Protection of Personal Data and guarantee of digital rights* and *Law 19/2013, of December 9, on transparency, access to public information and good governance* .

9.4 Indicate whether the data collected or used for the purpose of the evaluation will be made available for further study and analysis, and if so, under what conditions.

The evaluation by subsequent studies and analyzes may be available under the conditions permitted by Spanish legislation, especially Organic *Law 3/2018, of December 5, on the Protection of Personal Data and guarantee of digital rights* .

9.5 Indicate if the evaluation plan contains confidential information that should not be disclosed by the Commission.

Nope

10. Other information

10.1 List below any other information that you consider pertinent for the evaluation of the evaluation plan.

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10.2 Please refer to all documents attached to the notification and provide hard copies of the documents in question, or direct Internet links to them.

Annex I: Complete table of indicators

The complete table of indicators is available in Excel format given its dimensions.

Annex II: Details of human and financial resources

Human Resources	During the 5 waves of the project (one per year)				
Number of years: 5	Months of work per year		5		
Hours available per year: 1800		total BASE hours	3750	Hours	
Profile	**assigned HR**	**Dedication (%)**	**total hours**	**Rate (without VAT) €**	**Totals (without VAT) €**
Project Manager / Director	1	40%	1500	€70.00	€105,000.00
Senior consultant	two	100%	7500	€60.00	€450,000.00
Junior consultant	two	100%	7500	€35.00	€262,500.00
Total HR (excluding VAT)					**€817,500.00**
Outsourcing field work					
	Unit cost	Number of companies * (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries)			
online survey	€2.00	1,000	€10,000.00		
Telephone survey (CATI)	€20	4,054	€405,400.00		
scenario cost			**€415,400.00**		
BUDGET SURVEYS (without VAT)					**€415,400.00**

*The number of companies that will present themselves to the Call and of possible beneficiaries is unknown

TOTAL BIDDING BUDGET	**€1,232,900.00** (Without VAT)