

Building an eco-friendly fly trap

 Hungary

 Turkey

Agrofood

Blood-sucking horse flies can wreak havoc on farms, inflicting painful bites on cows, horses and other animals. Besides being a nuisance, the insects disturb animals' natural grazing patterns and cause severe daily blood loss, leading to reduced meat and milk output. They can also pose dangers to humans.

Keeping the bugs at bay poses a challenge for organic farms that shun pesticides. But help is on the way: A small Turkish plastics maker is developing an environmentally friendly bug trap as part of an EU research project it learned about from the Enterprise Europe Network.

TabaNOid, as the FP7-funded project is called, is led by MFKK, a private research institute in Budapest. Looking for research collaborators it got in touch with Enterprise Europe Network project manager Judit Félhelyesné Zubonyai. She's based in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Győr-Moson-Sopron County in northwestern Hungary.

With close to 600 partner organisations in 48 countries, the Network is uniquely qualified to help entrepreneurs plug into EU funding and find research partners.

"We have always been impressed by the Network's high level of cooperativeness and commitment," says Miklos Zoltai, CEO of MFKK.

MFKK's request caught the eye of Serdal Temel, Network project manager at EBIC-EGE in Izmir, Turkey, who encouraged a client to apply despite having no previous EU research experience. The client, Lenis Global, makes plastic parts for household appliances, medicine tubes and pipe fittings.

"We helped our client prepare a successful application," says Temel. Still in the early stages, the trap will be made out of biodegradable plastic resistant to severe weather conditions and attract horse flies from any open-air field with highly polarised light.

Aided by the Network, the Turkish company has embarked on at least two other international research projects. Notes Lenis Global CEO Hatice Kocalp Yilmaz: "The Network opened our eyes to the world of opportunities for small companies."