



CRYOPRESERVATION WORKING GROUP REPORT 2024–2025

Miloš Faltus – **CryoConnect** project

*ECPGR Working Group Chairs Meeting
Aranjuez, Spain, 3-4 March 2026*



Objectives

- **CryoConnect: Regional cross-border cryobank initiative (Western Balkans & Caucasus) - Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, North Macedonia and Croatia**
- Aim: establish long-term cryogenic safety back-up for vegetatively propagated fruit genetic resources
- Aligned with ECPGR and AEGIS standards
- Centralized cryostorage at FRI Čačak (Serbia) and capacity building in partner countries

Activities



- Kick-off meeting (Tirana, June 2025) – governance and legal framework agreed

Activities



- Training School in Čačak – hands-on droplet-vitrification and cryo-plate techniques



Activities

- Installation of LN₂ cryogenic storage system



Activities

- 15 Serbian autochthonous plum accessions introduced into *in vitro* culture



Training School on Cryopreservation

- Participants from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, North Macedonia and *Croatia*
- Training covered aseptic cultures, explant preparation and full cryopreservation workflow
- Protocols and technical support provided to partner institutions
- Practical training on full implementation of droplet-vitrification, V cryo-plate and D cryo-plate techniques



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Future priorities and ideas

- Complete introduction of remaining plum accessions
- Optimize and validate cryopreservation protocols
- Preparation and scheduling of additional online training school
- Continued coordination among partners and follow-up technical support to trained partners
- Initial steps toward genotype-based cryostorage data collection
- Cryostorage data collection and AEGIS flagging in EURISCO



THANK YOU
