



ORGANIKO LIFE+

Revamping organic farming and its products in the context of climate change mitigation strategies and health impacts

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Επικεφαλής Εταίρος: Cyprus University of Technology

Συνεργαζόμενος(οι) εταίρος(οι): INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, KYOTO CLUB ITALY



Objectives

The ultimate objective is to strategically demonstrate the comparative advantages of organic versus conventional farming and products using indicators of mitigation efficiency to climate change, agronomic and environmental quality, and possible health benefits due to the organic diet for children.

The specific objectives were:

1. Develop a strategic national plan of mitigating climate change in agriculture through the advancement of organic farming and their products within the Cypriot economy.
2. Demonstrate the comparative performance of organic production using a series of climate mitigation indicators in the field.
3. Demonstrate comparative advantages of selected organic products in decreasing the body burden of organophosphate pesticides in children.
4. Tailor organic farming protocols (apples and barley) of major importance for Cyprus agriculture to the local farm(er) characteristics.
5. Organize the efficient transfer of the results via networking with the scientific community, stakeholders and general public in both Cyprus and Italy.
6. Evaluate the current situation in Cyprus (before and during project implementation) regarding technical stakeholders' bottlenecks and consumer perceptions).



Results/Impact

Back in 2015, Cyprus was at the bottom of the EU list of countries with the smallest percentage of organic agricultural area; the organic farming status in Cyprus slowly develops.

Cypriot consumers are interested in the organic products, but they are skeptical regarding their quality and authenticity.

Expand organic farming sector by 1%

Delivered and implemented improved practices in organic farming.

Demonstrated reduced exposures to pesticides in organic-fed children with improved performance for biomarkers of effect/health.

Increased consumer awareness for organic products.

Improved Cyprus' mitigation to climate change via novel practices in agricultural soils of organic farming.



POLICY

The so far findings were discussed in the Parliament House of Cyprus in early April 2018 via a question made by Senate members (G. Perdikis and Theopemptou) regarding the project's impact.

A member of the project's consortium, Dr. M. Omirou was recently appointed as a member of the Cyprus National Council of Organic Farming.

The EU Parliament event that we organized on 23 May 2018, was very important with five distinguished members of the European Parliament participating in the event.

One of our main targets in terms of policy is to introduce the use of organic products in public places through the implementation of GPP and our efforts focus especially in the incorporation of organic food in schools. The main difficulty is that the organic production in Cyprus isn't very high and there are specific quantities of organic products for a specific period of time.

Discussions with COFA for the provision of organic food in the public tenders often published by the Ministries of Health, Defense and Education and Culture, for hospitals, army camps and schools, respectively.

A letter sent to the Ministry of Education in which the incorporation of organic food in the school canteens was proposed with proper arguments. The Minister of Education and Culture responded to our letter saying that they are expecting for our study results and that for next year the school canteen menus will include organic products.



SUSTAINABILITY, MARKET-UPTAKE

Research will continue in all organizations for climate change mitigation and adaptation

Annual specific training course for organic farming sector

The developed organic management tools will be maintained

The project findings are used by companies and organizations to promote organic products

A pan Cypriot project to assess greenhouse emissions from agriculture will be demonstrated.