Cyprus

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Cyprus

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REGULATORY ASPECTS

Legislation was approved on 31 December 2001 harmonized with EU regulations. The competent authority for data collection is the Agricultural Research Institute. Certification is done by Lacon (Cyprus) company and all inspection personnel is local.

The Rural development scheme supports O.F. There are legislations on products quality as well.

Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming

The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment, since the joining of Cyprus with EU has promoted the Agriculture Development Scheme 2004-2006 (A.D.S.). The A.D.S support Organic Plant Production two fold:

1. Financial support for farmers adopting crop rotation instead of monoculture
2. Financial support for farmers joining the Organic Farming Scheme

In the case of irrigated trees and Vines, grown organically, the subsidy is 93 Euro, while for rainfed crops, forages and trees is 63 Euro per 1000 m^2.

For Organic Animal Production the financial support for goats is 47 Euro per animal, for sheep 41 Euro per animal and for fattening calves, 115 Euro per animal.

STRUCTURAL ASPECTS

Statistics of Organic Farming in Cyprus (table 1).

Table 1. Trend of growth of the organic area and farm number (2002-2004)

Year	Number of farmers	Area (ha)	% of total cultivated
2002	45	166.5	0.12
2003	85	301.0	0.22
2004	150	500.0	0.44

60% of farms deal with olive production
40% of farms deal with: vegetables, herbs, grapes, fruit
No processing units are present, except one for herbs
Farmers are all local; there is one producers´ association (President: Costas Isaias, Tel. 0035799494011).

MARKET ASPECTS

Selling point: Small shops

RESEARCH, TRAINING AND EXTENSION

- Research: Agricultural Research Institute (ARI)
- Extension: Department of Agriculture (DA)
- Training: ARI and DA

Scientist carrying out research on organic Food and Farming

Dr Ioannis Papastylianou
Farming Systems Specialist
Head Department of Vegetables and Ornamentals
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Dr Nicos Ioannou
Plant protection and soil solarization specialist
Head Department of Plant Protection

Mr Sofocles Gregoriou
Potato Specialist

Mr Nicos Vouzounis
Weed Control Specialist

Mr Menelaos Stravrinides
Biological Control of insects

Ms Stefanie Zarifi (Temporary staff)
Studies on Organical control of *Phytophthora infestans*

Dr Maria Jerzykiewicz (Temporary staff)
Compost production

Dr Gordon Couper (Temporary staff)
Biological role of compost in crop production

Publicly funded Research

Organic Production of Potatoes

Organic potato production is studied in a holistic approach, examining weed control, organic nutrition, cultivar selection, control of potato late blight using resistant cultivars and plant protection products permitted in organic agriculture.

Research is conducted in fields, specially prepared the organic way, using rotation of vetch-potato-wheat. Parallel Laboratory work is also conducted.

Organic Production of Tomatoes

Four local varieties and three commercial hybrids are grown under three fertilizer regimes: in containers 3x 0.5x 0.5m filled with soil, commercial compost, compost extract and fertigation with commercial fertilizers. The same varieties are also tested in insect-proof screen houses. The project aims at selecting cultivars suitable for organic production with acceptable productivity and desired fruit quality.

Organic Production of Leafy Vegetables

The project aims at examining factors, which are associated with organic production of leafy vegetables such as: Lettuce, and Cabbage, and other vegetables such as Broccoli and Cauliflower grown in open field during winter (November April).

Biological Control of Insects

A culture of the predatory mite *Phytoseiulus persimilis* has been established with the context at the use of beneficial insects for the control of arthropod pest in organic vegetable production systems. The project aims at the identification of the optimum time and rate of release of the predatory mite for the control of two-spotted spider mites, and the evaluation of different mass-production methods of the predatory insect.

Biological Control of Weeds

The project aims at replacing weedicide use with cultural methods and use of machinery in row-crops grown organically. Crop rotation takes into consideration selecting crops and adopting management in order to avoid weed seed setting and spreading from year to year.

Sustainable Farming Systems

The project aims at examining the role of vetch (*Vicia sativa*) harvested for hay or used as green manure for the subsequent production of organic cereals or potatoes, respectively.

Compost Production and Evaluation

Simple methods of composting, which can be practiced by farmers are applied for composting various agricultural by-products. The compost quality is examined by chemical analysis and by the effects on vegetable seed germination and plant growth.

Resistance of Crops Grown Organically

The potential of compost in promoting disease resistance in plants is examined by testing the hypothesis that beneficial microbes may be present in leaf tissue. Local and hybrid tomato varieties are grown in pots and in the field under various rates of compost and fertilizer. Fruit yield and all pests and diseases are recorded throughout the growing season. Sap extract is examined in the Laboratory for the presence of microbes.

Trans-national Collaborative Research

Leonardo da Vinci

The project leader is, M. Loisides from an NGO in Cyprus. Participants are from Greece, Italy, Cyprus and Malta. The project aims at creating an organic farming training manual that will be used for educating farmers in organic agricultural production under Mediterranean conditions. The project was initiated in 2003 and will be completed in 2005.

Organics

The project is funded by the Dutch ministry of agriculture. The project leader is Dr Wijnand Sukkel. The other participants are from Poland, Slovak Republic, Cyprus and Czech Republic. The objectives of the project are:

1. Improvement of research and knowledge transfer on organic vegetable production
2. Improvement of farming methods
3. Harmonization of certification guidelines

The project will be conducted during the 2003 to 2006 period

CHANNEL

The CHANNEL project is coordinated by Professor Laszlo Radics (Hungary) with 24 participants from EU countries. The objectives of the project is to assess and analyze which development stages these countries have achieved to open communication channels on different levels, necessary for starting the harmonization and equalization process in organic agriculture.

The results of the project will be presented to EU politicians and others for a strategic planning on organic farming. The participants will articulate a group for new projects in the future. The project starts November 2004.

Co-ordinating national programmes

Promotion/adoption of Organic farming could be successful when basic management problems are

solved. For acceleration of know-how development, co-ordinated research among EU countries is very important. Three areas of research are considered fundamental.

a. Biological control of pest and diseases
b. Organic fertilizer (compost) production
c. Selection of varieties suitable for organic production