



YOUR HEALTH IS important

Food safety is about safeguarding the food production and supply chain from hazardous organisms (e.g. bacteria, viruses, parasites), chemical agents (e.g. antibiotics, hormones, pesticides, heavy metals), non-approved food additives or food-contact materials, or physical items (e.g. metal, wood, hair, glass, insects).

Food is unsafe when it contains harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites, contaminants or other hazardous agents. According to the World Health Organization, unsafe food causes 600 million cases of foodborne diseases and 420,000 deaths annually worldwide. Food-related deaths and illnesses significantly drop when food safety is given sufficient political and public attention, as well as resources to raise industry standards.

In the Turkish Cypriot community, most food products of animal origin do not currently meet EU requirements. This EU-funded project will improve core components of the food safety system in the Turkish Cypriot community, bringing them closer to EU standards.

COMMITTING TO SUCCESS

This EU-funded project will train industry stakeholders on how to effectively implement food hygiene and food safety standards, ensuring the safety of products produced in the Turkish Cypriot community.

For the project to achieve the expected results, Turkish Cypriot producers must be ready to adopt and apply EU-aligned standards.

Cooperation will be established across different sectors and consumer awareness on food safety shall increase. Together we will create an environment that will work towards, advocate and support safer food for all.

Parallel to our industry-based work, the EU will survey the actual burden of foodborne diseases in the Turkish Cypriot community and make the results available to the public. The project will also support the monitoring of improvements and making progress reports available to the public.

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FROM FARM TO FORK SAFE FOOD for all

You are what you eat; a healthy diet is the first step towards longer life and better living.

We all look at the food we buy in the supermarket but what's behind the ingredient-lists? Do you know where your cheese came from and under what conditions it was made? When you buy a kilo of kofte mince, do you know what the inside of the factory looked like, or if your lamb was fed the wrong kind or amount of antibiotics?

In 2021, the EU started to implement a new, three-year, €3.2m project to improve food safety and crisis-preparedness throughout the Turkish Cypriot community.

This EU-funded project will bring together international and Turkish Cypriot community experts to improve food safety and support sustainable production, which are both essential to protecting health and ecosystems.



FAST FACTS IN THE TURKISH CYPRIOT community

•LIVESTOCK*

- ▶ 11,378.915 million broiler chickens, 313,326 laying hens, 173,440 breeding poultry
- ▶ Approximately 300,000 sheep and goats on 6,391 farms
- ▶ 69,917 cattle on 903 farms
- ▶ 27,025 beehives (648 beekeepers), producing around 450 tonnes of honey every year

•INDUSTRY*

- ▶ Every year, the Turkish Cypriot community produces 144.3 million litres of raw milk, which is processed to cheese, yoghurts, UHT milk, etc:
 - 139.4 million litres of cow's milk
 - 4.9 million litres of sheep & goat's milk
- ▶ 488 fishing vessels - with 111 eligible to take part in EU/Green Line trade
- ▶ 207 feed producers (7 commercial and 200 in-farm)
- ▶ 66 dairy processing establishments (14 for export & 52 for local market)
- ▶ 14 large dairy plants, processing over 5 tonnes of milk per day
- ▶ 14 meat-processing establishments
- ▶ 3 meat-cutting establishments
- ▶ 2 poultry abattoirs

*Data from January 2022

WHERE THE MONEY will go

The EU supports the improvement of food safety in the Turkish Cypriot community.

This project will:

INFORM & TRAIN: Food safety is not just about buildings, equipment and laboratories. This project will develop the understanding, skills and capacities of food businesses, policymakers and citizens on food safety risks and risk-mitigation practices.

ASSESS & ANALYSE: This project will set the baselines to identify present issues and obstacles for food safety and to measure improvements throughout the project.

INVOLVE & CONTRIBUTE: The project will engage, help and motivate businesses in the Turkish Cypriot community to implement EU-aligned food safety standards all along their production processes.

As well as supporting producers, the project will build capacities of controllers to verify that food producers are complying with relevant requirements on food, feed and animal health.

MONITOR, MEASURE, COMMUNICATE: The project will feature a campaign highlighting improvements in food safety, as well as showcasing how food businesses and consumers are benefiting from the EU-funded project throughout its implementation.



SPECIAL FOCUS on dairy

The EU is standing by to support the Turkish Cypriot community to improve the food safety. In the period 2006-2020, €35 million was provided under the Aid Programme related to animal and public health, food safety and alignment with EU standards.

Additional €40 million under 2021-2024 period is planned to support Turkish Cypriots in achieving compliance with the EU acquis on animal health and food safety.

This project will give extra support to producers of Halloumi/Hellim.

This will be achieved through the establishment of requirements, implementing control and verification procedures all along the milk production line, from the farm to the final product.

By the end of the project, we endeavour to have at least 5 large dairy operators who can prove they can implement EU food hygiene and food safety standards and can objectively guarantee the safety of their products.

Other key outcomes include:

- ▶ Local producers and control bodies will be better equipped to respond to the increased consumer demand for safe food.
- ▶ Local producers will be more aware of food safety risks, as well as be able to implement standards and measures to mitigate such risks.
- ▶ Progressive reduction of the use of veterinary medicines in food-producing animals. This will decrease antimicrobial resistance in the Turkish Cypriot community.
- ▶ Livestock farms will improve the implementation of hygiene and animal health requirements, with the aim of meeting global benchmarks for milk production.