

## How the EU helps make food safer

The European Commission will highlight the importance of food safety with information sessions in Nicosia, Kyrenia and Famagusta on “How the EU helps make food safer”. The information sessions will take place on 10 September in Nicosia at the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce, on 11 September in Kyrenia at Villaggio Templos Restaurant and on 12 September in Famagusta at Bandabulya from 17:00 to 19:30. The EU food safety policy, good practices in the EU for consumer protection, EU support to improve food safety in the Turkish Cypriot community and local implementations on food safety standards will be discussed.

Since the commencement of the EU Aid Programme in 2006, a variety of actions have been implemented in the agriculture sector with a particular focus on improving standards related to food safety.

Overall, a total of €28.7 million has been allocated to rural development grant scheme projects to support investments on farms and in rural communities. An amount of €21.7 million has been allocated to provide technical assistance, training and capacity building to improve husbandry practices, veterinary services, analytical capacity of food laboratories and the planning of rural development initiatives. Approximately €8 million has been allocated to the supply of equipment to improve veterinary and food safety laboratories, establish a system for the management of animal by-products and strengthen agricultural extension services.

More specifically, current assistance is being delivered to livestock producers to improve animal production and health and to veterinary services, in order to control and eventually eradicate contagious animal diseases and zoonosis. .

Support is being provided for the preparation and implementation of a Farm Advisory Services Strategy, including the training of local farm advisors and the delivery of advice directly to farmers on reaching standards, improving husbandry practices, business planning and project preparation and implementation.

Investment support is currently available to SMEs operating in the food sector and a new rural development grant scheme with a budget of €5 million will be announced soon to assist farmers in improving production standards.

### Background:

The European Commission aims to assure a high level of **food safety** and **animal & plant health** within the EU through coherent **farm-to-table** measures and adequate monitoring, while ensuring an effective internal market.

The EU's food safety policy/standards cover food from farm to fork. It is designed to guarantee:

- safe, nutritious food & animal feed
- high standards of animal health & welfare & plant protection
- clear information on the origin, content/labelling & use of food.

The EU food policy comprises:

- comprehensive legislation on food & animal feed safety & food hygiene
- sound scientific advice on which to base decisions



- enforcement & checks.

Where specific consumer protection is justified, there may be special rules on:

- use of pesticides, food supplements, colourings, antibiotics or hormones
- food additives such as preservatives & flavourings
- substances in contact with foodstuffs, e.g. plastic packaging
- labelling of ingredients that may cause allergies
- health claims such as 'low-fat' or 'high-fibre'.

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