

Agro-MAC VET
Multi – Actor Cooperation for Vocational Education and Training
in the Agro-food Sector
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Case study:
Cyprus
Increasing the availability of Vocational Education and
Training in the agro-food sector

1. Description of the organization:

Name: Technical and Agricultural School Avgorou Cyprus.

Address: **Technical and Agricultural School Avgorou**
5515 Avgorou
Famagusta
Cyprus

Activity: Secondary education and professional training

Sector: Plant production

Target group: High-School students of age 15-18
Active personnel – night classes

Geographical coverage: Local

Funding: Public

Special connections: Chamber of Agriculture, companies

Special achievements and testimonies: First price for the last national competition for technological training.

2. Executive summary

The agricultural and food sector of Cyprus is in a state of transition due to the new socio-economic environment created by the accession of Cyprus to the EU. The agro-food sector aims at dealing successfully with the new situation through the modernization of the agricultural sector. High importance is given to the improvement of productivity and competitiveness by reducing production costs and by improving quality of products.

Technical and Agricultural School Avgorou was established in 2004 with the aim to offer technical training with contemporary program of study that fulfil the requirements of European Union and the needs of modern times. The *Department of Plant Production* provides the students the essential background needed in order to deal with the needs of agricultural enterprises of plant production packing, standardization and marketing of rural products, pesticides, fertilizers, and multiplicative material.

Currently the department is organized in:

- Day classes for high school students of age 15-18
- Afternoon classes for population over 18 years old

Both programs last for 3 years and consist of theoretical education and 1 day/week of practical training during the 3rd year of study. Presently there are 35 students attending the high school and 10 students attending the afternoon classes.

Considering the problems, prospects and challenges resulting from Cyprus' accession to the EU and with the objective to contribute to the required modernization and technological transformation of the island's agro-food sector, the *Cyprus University of Technology* has established in 2007, for the first time in Cyprus, a department of Agricultural Sciences, Biotechnology and Food Science. The new department will offer a B.Sc. degree in Agricultural and Food Sciences with specialization in three basic areas: a) Crop Science and Technology, b) Animal Science and Technology (including fisheries and aquaculture) and c) Food Science and Technology.

3. The study

Definition of the Problem:

The availability of educational programs in the Agro-food sector in Cyprus is very limited. Presently, there are only two programs of study offered at secondary and tertiary level: *Technical and Agricultural School* Avgorou and The Department of Agricultural Sciences, Biotechnology and Food Science at *Cyprus University of Technology*

Difficulties:

Existing farmers and employees in the Agro-food sector have to deal with the current EU approaches, technologies and innovation to meet the new standards and the evolving market demand.

Objectives:

To develop a Vocational Education and Training program for the farmers and employees in the Agro-food sector in Cyprus.

Supporting Elements for Decision Makers:

The commitment for continuous learning and the generation of new knowledge are vital to sustainable economic, social and cultural development.

Existing farmers and the employees of the agro-food sector need to update their knowledge and/or to specialize in their area of interest.

Bibliography:

1. Technical and Agricultural School Avgorou – Ammochostos - Cyprus
2. Cyprus University of Technology:
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