

PRESS RELEASE

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TUI Field to Fork Cyprus project Launch Event

The launch event of the TUI Field to Fork Cyprus project took place on Friday, March 28 2025, at the Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation. This program is a significant initiative that aims to promote regenerative agriculture in Cyprus through education and by linking regenerative organic products and farmers to Cyprus tourism sector. Over 40 people attended the event including representatives from the hospitality, agriculture, and research sectors, the tourism industry, as well as representatives from international media outlets.

The event kicked off with introductory speeches by *Mr Giorgos Clerides*, Officer A' from the Department of Agriculture, on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Environment, *Ms Sofia Matsi*, Executive Director of the Cyprus Environment Foundation, and *Mr Andreas Theodorou*, Director of the Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation. Mr Clerides emphasized that the Ministry recognizes the importance of regenerative agriculture as a critical factor in reducing environmental impact, preserving natural resources, and strengthening sustainable food production and management systems. In this context, he mentioned relevant measures and incentives being implemented through the Common Agricultural Policy and applauded the project's aims and actions.

Attendees had the opportunity to learn about the work of the TUI Care Foundation and the TUI Field to Fork initiative from *Manuel Ferreira*, Senior Partnership Manager at TUI Care Foundation. Mr Ferreira highlighted the pivotal role the tourism industry can play in establishing a sustainable system for food production, consumption, and management. Ms Matsi presented the goals and key actions of the project, emphasizing the importance of supporting local producers and strengthening the link between agriculture and tourism – a bond with significant environmental and socio-economic benefits. *Dr Dimitrios Sarris*, Director of the School of Environmental Studies at KES College, spoke about the role of regenerative organic agriculture in adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change, stressing that "*Desertification in Cyprus is progressing – we have no choice but to immediately shift and implement sustainable agricultural practices.*" The event concluded with a presentation by *Mr Andreas Koch*, CEO of Tourythm, who discussed the positive synergies that can develop between regenerative agriculture and tourism. As he pointed out, the collaboration between the two sectors can serve as a catalyst for a more resilient and sustainable development path for Cyprus.

After the completion of the presentations the audience had the opportunity to interact with the event's speakers through questions and comments. Present in this section was also *Mrs Maria Valerga*, founder of Valerga Consultancy and Training in Hospitality. Present at the event were 8 journalists from 7 different countries: Germany, Austria, UK, Ireland, Denmark, Portugal and France. Following the presentations, a tour of the Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation's facilities was realised, showcasing the actions planned for implementation and the regenerative organic agriculture methods applied so far at the center.

The event concluded with a farm visit at one of the project's regenerative agriculture partners, [Strakka Estate](#). The project's team and event's guests were toured on the farm by Strakka's director, *Mr Antonis Papantoniou*. The guests had the opportunity to witness some of the oldest olive trees in the area while Mr Antonis emphasized how the property has had a continuous history of olive oil production since the Venetian rule in Cyprus, more than 500 years ago when the estate was founded. The farm's director demonstrated the no-till practices implemented on the farm and commented on

how replacing ploughing with weed cutting has helped them reduce the farm's needs in resources, both human-labour and machinery fuel, while cutting down on irrigation needs. The farm applies holistic pest management techniques by hosting barn owl nests. The nests are monitored by the team of [Birdlife Cyprus](#). Mrs Antaia Christou, Conservation Projects Officer at Birdlife Cyprus, commented how a single pair of barn owls can consume between 2,000 to 5,000 rodents every year. This helps not only keep their populations of rodents within the farm under control but also saves the farmer from continuously having to replace damaged irrigation pipes due to rat attacks. The event's guests were toured in the Estate's contemporary olive mill facilities ending with an 'Authentic Experience' where they got to taste a genuine Cypriot breakfast with Strakka Estate's products: fresh organic orange juice, regenerative organic olive oil and 6 different types of table olives.

The TUI Field to Fork Cyprus project is an initiative that addresses the urgent need for adopting more resilient agricultural practices in Cyprus. It aims to strengthen organic farming and promote regenerative agriculture practices and its products in Cyprus through farmers' education and support, networking and fostering collaborations between farmers applying regenerative practices and hotels in Cyprus, as well as the participation of individuals from vulnerable groups in the program's activities. The project aspires to create long-term positive impacts on the local community and the environment while laying a strong foundation for more resilient agricultural and tourism practices in Cyprus.

The program is implemented by the *Cyprus Environment Foundation* in collaboration with *KES College* and the *Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation* with the support of *Tourythm* and *Valerga* and with funding from the *TUI Care Foundation*. For more information, please visit the project's website: <https://cyprusenvironment.org/grants/tui-field-to-fork-cyprus>.