

BEST PRACTICES

TURKEY

Title of your case study

125 character limit

Institutional information

Name of contact person: Hayrettin KILIÇ

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Name of institution: Ege University Menemen Research, Application and Production Farm

Region and Country where the case study took place: Aegean Region, Province of İzmir (TR31)
Menemen District; Koyundere, Ulukent ve Seyrek villages

Website: <https://agr.ege.edu.tr/tr->

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Summary

Explain your case in one or two sentences

The farm, which started its activities in 1963, operates on an area of 3400 acres. The main crops which are cultivated on the land are; wheat, corn, feed crops, fruits and vegetables. Additionally, there are 450 cows and 300 sheep in the farm. 3000 liters of milk is produced per day, which is used in making yoghurt, cheese, kefir and butter.

Background information: How was the situation previous to your actions?

Conventional agricultural production continued in the farm until 2000. In this context, wheat is produced on an average of 1500 acres field, cotton in 300 acres, alfalfa in 135 acre, barley & vetch in 185 acres, corn in 320 acres, and the silage as the second crop in the season in 1400 acres.

In 2000, "Organic Agriculture Project" was launched. In this context, research and production activities started. Applied trainings for VET students and for farmers were started. Within the scope of the project, 1100 acre land received organic certificates. Out of 1100 acre; pine nuts are produced on an area of 400 acre, fruits (olive, plum, apricot, mandarin) are produced on 150 acre, grapes are produced on an area of 50 acre (vineyards), vegetables on 50 acre, alfalfa, corn and wheat on 450 acre.

What were the needs you identified?

The project designed to meet the following needs;

- Creation of a facility for applied studies and internship for the university's undergraduate students,
- Creation of a field of practice for the graduate students conducting master's thesis,
- Teaching and introducing the organic farming methods to the regional producers,
- Disseminating the organic farming practices among the farmers in the region,
- Creating the best practice for an organic farm model which is operating with its own inputs for the purpose of maintaining production and research activities by using organic technology and carrying out promotion of organic products to consumers.

What solution you found to cover those needs?

Until 2000, sustainable agricultural practices were not taken place in the farm where conventional production was carried out. In order to achieve the above-mentioned needs, first of all, an agreement was made with a private "organic agriculture control and certification institution", 3 years "transition process" was started on 450 acre field. Research and production parts of the field were determined. Training and implementation plans were made for the regional producers. Practicing fields have been created and allocated our undergraduate students. Finally, master's thesis implementations were started.

At this stage, we encountered a significant low yield in the first years in the soils where chemical fertilizing was abandoned. We experienced significant problems especially in feed crops as well as wheat and corn production. We gave tremendous effort to restore the disturbed natural balance.

What actions did you take to reach the solution?

Research and production activities started with the maturing of farm manure obtained from livestock and applying it to the organic production land suitable with the values obtained from the soil analysis. Organic based agricultural pest control preparations were applied. Soil cultivation was carried out according to organic farming standards. Appropriate alternation planning was achieved. The implementation of long-term research projects were started.

If any, which partners or other organisations did you involve during the process?

- The Governor Office of İzmir,
- Aegean Forest Foundation,
- Provincial Directorate of Agriculture,
- District Directorate of Agriculture

What were the main problems or difficulties you had to face?

We have suffered from the following difficulties;

- Providing monetary resources to research and production applications,
- Recruiting employees who know and accept the principles of organic agriculture,
- Procuring organic certified input to be used in research and production activities,
- Needing for a long time to restore the deteriorated natural balance.

What is the situation now, after your actions?

The recovery of the destroyed natural balance took 8-10 years. With the transition period, yield values obtained from conventional conditions were achieved in all plant species cultivated in the 9th or 10th years.

In order to overcome the above-mentioned difficulties;

-We have concentrated more in organic production activities. Certified Fruit, vegetable, raisin and nut pine are planted.

-We tried to get additional fund by marketing our products. The products obtained from these plants are offered for sale to the public in the stores which are belong to our university. At the same time, they are offered for sale to organic markets. In addition to the mentioned plants, forage crops (alfalfa, corn, vetch, wheat) are produced. The products obtained from these productions are sold/used to the farms as animal feeds on the farm.

-We concentrated in training activities more to develop human resources in organic production. Applied courses were launched to our university undergraduate students. Encourage and promote postgraduate thesis. Carried out training activities and field day events for the regional producers.

Main lessons learned along the way? *

- Realizing how
 - difficult is restoring the destroyed natural balance,
 - important to get experience in organic production,
 - to provide the opportunity to practice to the students,
 - to carry out postgraduate thesis in organic agriculture,
 - to spread out the knowledge of organic production among the producers of the region through farmer training,
- Finding the opportunity to conduct long-term research,
- Bringing organic products and consumers together

Annex:

Max 3 Images

Other related resources

Organic Land and Plants



