CYPRUS
AGRI-FOOD
FORUM
2025

Uniting Communities Through Knowledge, Innovation and Shared Growth

11-13
November
2025

eunite
AgriBusiness

+90 548 829 24 23
eunite-cyprus.eu

This publication was funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of GIZ International Services and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

Implemented by
giz International Services
Sustainable Food Systems Ireland
A partnership of Irish Government agencies

About Us

eunite:AgriBusiness is a strategic initiative funded by the European Union, aimed at fostering economic growth, innovation, and sustainable development within the agricultural, fishing and rural sectors of the Turkish Cypriot community. Recognizing the unique local challenges and opportunities, the project seeks to promote a more resilient, competitive, and innovative industry through the development and strengthening of Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS).

At its core, **eunite:AgriBusiness** emphasizes the importance of collaboration, knowledge development and knowledge sharing to address key issues such as climate change, resource efficiency, improved trade, standards and technological advancement. This initiative also aims to bridge economic, environmental and social gaps and align local practices with EU standards and policies, opening pathways for increased funding, trade, cooperation, and the integration of innovative approaches.

Ultimately, **eunite:AgriBusiness** aspires to empower the Turkish Cypriot agricultural, fisheries and rural communities to seize new opportunities, adopt sustainable practices, and contribute to the broader goals of rural development and economic resilience across the island.

Background

The event *"***Cyprus Agri-Food Forum 2025***: Uniting Communities through Knowledge, Innovation and Shared Growth",* aims to foster a dynamic dialogue among technical stakeholders from Cyprus and beyond, promoting the exchange of knowledge, innovative practices, and establishment of new partnerships. Over 2.5 days, participants will explore key strategies to create sustainable, climate-resilient agriculture, fisheries, and rural sectors, while showcasing cutting-edge technologies, business models, and best practices.

The agenda is structured around three main pillars: *Knowledge, Inclusion, and Sustainable Development*, *Resilient and Sustainable Food Systems* and *Market Competitiveness, Innovation and Green Line Trade*. These pillars will guide discussions on climate-smart agriculture, market integration, digital transformation, and inclusive growth, amongst others, providing a comprehensive framework for collaboration. Sessions will feature success stories, lessons learned from Cyprus and the EU, and fostering of partnerships to advance sustainable development in the agri-food sector.

Aim of the Event

- **Facilitate dialogue** and **knowledge exchange** among technical stakeholders across Cyprus and beyond.
- **Showcase** innovative interventions, technologies, business models and best practices
- **Promote** sustainable, climate-resilient practices within agriculture, fisheries, and rural sectors.
- **Foster** partnerships and collaborative initiatives.

Target Audience

- Technical stakeholders such as development agencies, research institutions, NGOs.
- Farmers, fishers and associate cooperatives.
- Private sector representatives, including agro-entrepreneurs and technology providers.
- Academia and innovation hubs.
- Women and youth groups involved in rural development.

Expected Takeaways

- **Enhanced** knowledge exchange and dissemination of best practices.
- **Strengthened** cross-community collaborations.
- **Increased** awareness of innovations and sustainable practices.
- **Development** of joint actions plans or project proposals.
- Policy recommendations to **support** sustainable rural development

Contact Us

For further information please contact us on one of the following:

Agenda

Day 1 – Tuesday, 11 November 2025

14:00	Registration
14:30	**Opening ceremony** - Welcome note eunite:AgriBusiness representative - Address DG REGIO representative
14:45	**Setting the scene** - Objectives, who is in the room, how we will work together, etc. - *Dr. Mark Redman*
15:00	**Keynote presentations** • **Resilient and Sustainable Food Systems** - *Dr. Hüseyin Değirmenci* • **Competitive Agri-Food Markets and Innovation** - *Dr. John Rae* • **Knowledge and Inclusive Growth** - *Dr. Styliani Petroudi*
15:45	Coffee/tea break
16:00	Panel Discussion
17:00	Round-up of Day 1 and bridge to Day 2
17:45	Reception and Networking

Day 2 – Wednesday, 12 November 2025

08:30	Registration
09:00	Opening – Day 1 summary + Day 2 programme
Session 1 - Knowledge, Inclusion, and Sustainable Development (Knowledge & Inclusive Growth)	
10:00	**Presentations** • **Knowledge as an Enabler**: *"Unlocking Transformative Power in Agri-Food Systems" - Christo Andrea* • **Driving Inclusive Growth**: *"Empowering Smallholders, Women, Youth, and Marginalized Groups" - Özlem Ratip* • **Pathways to Sustainable and Inclusive Growth**: *"Building Capacity, Partnerships, and Long-Term Vision" - Donald Aquilina*
11:00	Coffee/tea break
11:30	Partnership and Co-Creation Workshop
13:00	Lunch break

Session 2 – Resilient and Sustainable Food Systems (Climate Change & Resilience)	
14:00	**Presentations** • **The Climate Crisis & Agriculture:** *"Understanding Impacts and Charting a Path Forward" - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Menelaos Stavrinidis* • **Building Resilient Agriculture:** *"Innovative Practices and Technologies for Climate Adaptation" - Assoc. Prof. Dr. İbrahim Kahramanoğlu* • **Policies and Innovation for Climate-Resilient Food Systems** - *Aysun Önet İleri* • **Sustainable Seafood Supply Chains for Cypriot Small-Scale Fisheries.** *"Are They Achievable?" - Dr. Robin Snape*
15:30	Coffee/tea break
16:00	Partnership and Co-Creation Workshop
17:30	Round-up of Day 2 and bridge to Day 3

Day 3 – Thursday, 13 November 2025

08:30	Registration
09:00	Opening – Day 2 summary + Day 3 programme
Session 3 – Market Competitiveness, Innovation and Green Line Trade	
09:30	**Presentations:** • **Harnessing Innovation and Genetic Advances for a Competitive and Sustainable Animal Industry with a focus on Dairy** - *Ignacio Mullin* • **Unlocking Green Line Trade:** *"Advancing Plant Origin Opportunities and Overcoming Barriers for Animal Products" - Prof. Dr. Vadims Bartkevics* • "**Driving Competitiveness:** "*Innovation, Value Addition, and Branding in Agri-Food Markets*" - *Dr. Yiorgos Gadanakis* • **Trade and Policy Environment**: "*Influencing Market Access and Competitiveness*" - *Çağlar Türk*
11:00	Coffee/tea break
11:30	Partnership and Co-Creation Workshop
13:00	Lunch break
Session 4 - Building Bridges through Collaboration and Partnership	
14:00	**Closing the Gap Between Research and Practice** - Presentations followed by discussions:

	• Introduction to the need and support available for "*interactive innovation*" (**EIP-AGRI - CAP-funded OGs** + **Horizon Europe** multi-actor projects) highlight existing levels of uptake, specific opportunities available, support of each instrument - *Dr. Mark Redman* • **Horizon Europe** - who and how one can benefit? Creating networks, further opportunities for cooperation, locally and abroad. • **Practical Roots, Digital Growth**: "*A Fermenter's Journey into Smart Technology*" - *Greta Skemaite* • **The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) -** a knowledge and innovation community - EIT Food • **Making It Possible Together**: "*Support for Island-Wide Partnerships*" - *Donald Aquilina*
15:00	**"Marketplace of New Ideas"** - *from insights to action.* This session provides an opportunity for participants to share key issues, needs, and ideas gathered from the previous discussions (Sessions 1, 2, and 3). We will then connect these insights with tangible action opportunities, including potential funding sources, technical advice, and cross-border collaborations ("island-wide partnerships"). We'll also highlight specific facilities and support available through, eunite:SME and eunite:AgriBusiness, EU-Funded Food Safety Project, One Stop Shop and EIT Network that include SME support programs, innovation roadmaps, Green Line trade, B2B platforms, amongst others. Participants are invited to bring fresh ideas relevant to the value chains associated with the call for Operational Groups, namely dairy, beekeeping, fruit trees, protected cropping, and more.
16:30	**Plenary session**: Summary from main discussions, key takings from the 1st Forum, what's next?
17:00	Closing remarks/reflections - European Commission and eunite:AgriBusiness
17:30	Reception

Biographies

Opening Ceremony

Welcome Notes

Donald Aquilina

Donald Aquilina holds a degree in agriculture and rural development and currently serves as the Module Leader for the eunite:AgriBusiness project. He has extensive experience in developing strategic documents, evaluating EU rural development programs, and supporting institutional reforms across the EU and candidate countries. Skilled in policy analysis, legal harmonization, and designing support schemes, he also specializes in project management, capacity building, and the implementation of EU-funded initiatives. As the Director of an advisory services company operating in Malta and internationally, he provides expert technical support in agriculture and rural development. Previously, he led Malta's Managing Authority for the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development and the National Rural Network. He has contributed to numerous projects across Malta, Cyprus, North Macedonia, Albania, Uzbekistan, and beyond, focusing on establishing, restructuring, and implementing advisory services and Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS). Outside work, he maintains an olive grove, reflecting his passion for farming and sustainable agriculture.

Opening Remarks

Jutta Pomoell-Segurola

Jutta Pomoell-Segurola is an EU affairs specialist and Deputy Head of Unit at the Cyprus Settlement Unit, European Commission. With over 20 years of experience and a legal background, she has worked extensively on governance and security issues across the EU. Her expertise supports high-level policy development and institutional engagement in complex political contexts. Jutta is passionate about Cyprus and deeply committed to its reunification.

Key Note Presentations

Key Note Speaker
"Resilient and Sustainable Food Systems"
Dr. Hüseyin Değirmenci

Dr. Hüseyin Değirmenci is a senior specialist in Food Safety and Microbiology and an academician at the Faculties of Health and Tourism. With over 22 years in food safety and domestic food production, he has advised institutions and local bodies on public health, sanitary inspections, and regulatory frameworks. His academic work has been published in various journals. Hüseyin holds a PhD in Bioengineering and is passionate about advancing domestic agriculture and standardizing food production quality in Cyprus.

Key Note Speaker
"Competitive Agri-Food Markets and Innovation"
Dr. John Rae

John Rae serves as Project Manager at Ireland's Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), where he oversees a diverse portfolio of initiatives under Sustainable Food Systems Ireland (SFSI). SFSI is a consortium comprising Ireland's leading agri-food State agencies, established to share Ireland's core expertise with international partners in building sustainable, safe, and efficient agri-food value chains.
With a strong background in agri-food value chains, international collaboration, innovation, and food industry development, John brings deep sectoral insight to his role. He holds a PhD in Industrial Microbiology from University College Dublin and has extensive experience managing cross-sectoral partnerships between government agencies, research institutions, and the private sector.

Key Note Speaker
"Knowledge and Inclusive Growth"
Dr. Styliani Petroudi

Dr. Styliani Petroudi is the Director of the Innovation Department, at the CYENS Centre of Excellence, where she coordinates strategic actions and leads innovation and entrepreneurship initiatives in the fields of artificial intelligence, machine learning, and technology transfer, with applications in health, smart cities, culture, and education. A graduate of the University of Oxford with a DPhil in Information Engineering and a Fulbright scholar, she combines high-level expertise in data science with strong experience in developing innovative solutions. As the EIT Community Officer for Cyprus, she strengthens the innovation ecosystem by connecting start-ups, universities, and industry - bridging communities, supporting and promoting entrepreneurship. She also leads the marketing and educational activities of CYENS, developing training and citizen science programs that empower young people and entrepreneurs, promoting sustainable development, and cultivating the next generation of innovation leaders.

Session 1

Knowledge, Inclusion, and Sustainable Development

Knowledge & Inclusive Growth

Knowledge as an Enabler:
"Unlocking Transformative Power in Agri-Food Systems"
Christo Andrea

Christo Andrea is the CEO of CERTIFYBIO a multinational certification and inspection body focused on EU and international food standards including Animal welfare and ESG policies. He has worked with various countries advising governmental and non-governmental institutions on agricultural projects and is also part of the EU Informal Working Group on Halloumi/Hellim. Christo has a passion for the agricultural sector and has been involved in farming from childhood.

Driving Inclusive Growth:
"Empowering Smallholders, Women, Youth, and Marginalized Groups"
Özlem Ratip

Özlem Ratip is the Academy Coordinator for the Turkish Cypriot Women Entrepreneurs Association (GİKAD), where she leads programmes that empower women through training, mentorship, and education. She played a key role in introducing entrepreneurship into secondary education in the Turkish Cypriot community, helping young people—especially girls—build confidence and leadership skills early on. With a background in business administration from İstanbul University, Özlem has worked in finance and HR in İstanbul and the UK. In her twenties, she became an entrepreneur in the male-dominated manufacturing sector, producing paving slabs traded across the Green Line, and also ran her own restaurant. She currently serves as the Women's Football Team Manager for a football club, promoting gender equality in sports leadership. Özlem is passionate about entrepreneurship, education, and building a more inclusive and sustainable future.

Pathways to Sustainable and Inclusive Growth:
"Building Capacity, Partnerships, and Long-Term Vision"
Donald Aquilina
(See bio on page 1)

Session 2

Resilient and Sustainable Food Systems

Climate Change & Resilience

The Climate Crisis & Agriculture:
"Understanding Impacts and Charting a Path Forward"
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Menelaos Stavrinidis

Dr. Menelaos Stavrinides is an Associate Professor at the Cyprus University of Technology (Department of Agricultural Sciences, Biotechnology and Food Science). Doctoral/post-doctoral studies at the University of California, Berkeley in Environmental Science, Policy and Management. MSc in Biological Control at Imperial College, UK and BSc in Agriculture, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. Coordinated / partner in more than 15 projects in Europe and the US. Thirty invited talks at professional groups and scientific conferences. Served as an external expert to the European Food Safety Authority. He has published more than 50 papers in high quality peer-reviewed scientific journals. Work presented in close to 50 scientific conferences in the US and Europe.

Building Resilient Agriculture:
"Innovative Practices and Technologies for Climate Adaptation"
Assoc. Prof. Dr. İbrahim Kahramanoğlu

İbrahim Kahramanoğlu is an Associate Professor specializing in horticulture and postharvest biology and technology. Before his academic career, he served as the Managing Director of Alnar Pomegranates Ltd. where he controlled the production, packaging, and export of fresh pomegranate fruits, as well as the manufacture of 100% natural, freshly squeezed pomegranate juice. In parallel, he managed over 100 projects across his areas of expertise supported by various international and local bodies. His academic research focuses on physiology, quality management, and innovative preservation techniques of fresh horticultural produce. With a strong publication record in Web of Science and Scopus, İbrahim actively contributes to international collaborations and scientific projects.

Policies and Innovation for Climate-Resilient Food Systems
Aysun Önet İleri

Aysun Önet İleri is an economist and Secretary General of the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce. With over 10 years of executive experience, she specializes in economic and trade policy development, focusing on strengthening business relations, enterprise competitiveness, entrepreneurship, and sustainability. Aysun is recognized for her strategic leadership in advancing regional economic growth and fostering cross-border trade collaboration.

Sustainable Seafood Supply Chains for Cypriot Small-Scale Fisheries:
"Are They Achievable?"
Dr. Robin Snape

Dr. Robin Snape is a conservation biologist and Director of Programmes at SPOT Marine Life. His research has advanced understanding of Cypriot fisheries and their sustainability. With global consulting experience, he has supported sustainable seafood supply chains and conducted fieldwork with marine mammals, seabirds, and sea turtles across Africa, Antarctica, the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean. Robin has also played a key role in building conservation capacity in Cyprus. He is passionate about protecting marine ecosystems through science-based action and international collaboration.

Session 3

Market Competitiveness, Innovation and Green Line Trade

Harnessing Innovation and Genetic Advances for a Competitive and Sustainable Animal Industry with a focus on Dairy

Ignacio Mullin

With a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Management and postgraduate degrees in Agribusiness and Executive Development, Ignacio Mullin works at Sheep Ireland as a Technology Transfer & Breeding Program advisor.
With more than 20 years of expertise in Uruguay, he worked as the Chief Coordinator of the National Strategic Plan for the Sheep Sector, also as the Chief Coordinator of the Uruguayan Ovine Technology Centre, and as a University lecturer in sheep production. As an expert in management and technology transfer, published articles in the technical journals of the Uruguayan Wool Secretariat and the Uruguayan Agricultural Planning Institute. With an Irish and Spanish family background, born and raised in Uruguay, he is currently living part-time in Ireland and Uruguay.

Unlocking Green Line Trade:
Advancing Plant Origin Opportunities and Overcoming Barriers for Animal Products

Prof. Dr. Vadims Bartkevics

Prof. Dr. Vadims Bartkevics is a leading Food Safety Expert within the scope of the eunite Programme and is Head of the Chemistry Laboratory at the Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and the Environment (BIOR) in Riga, Latvia. He brings extensive expertise in food safety and quality research, with a strong focus on EU legislation governing the production and circulation of animal products. He has authored over 180 scientific publications in the fields of environment and food safety, contributing significantly to both academic and regulatory advancements.

Driving Competitiveness:
"Innovation, Value Addition, and Branding in Agri-Food Markets"
Dr. Yiorgos Gadanakis

Dr. Yiorgos Gadanakis is an applied agricultural economist whose work centres on sustainable farming systems, production efficiency, and farm business management. His research has advanced understanding of technical and economic efficiency, water-use efficiency, precision farming adoption, and sustainability assessment, particularly in Mediterranean farming. He has produced notable publications on incorporating climatic factors into efficiency analysis, improving productivity and water management, and using gamification and innovation indicators to support precision agriculture awareness and uptake. He has contributed to several funded research projects, including those focused on sustainable aquaculture integration, smart-farming awareness, and farm-level sustainability improvement. His work bridges economic modelling with practical decision-support tools to enhance the environmental and economic performance of farm businesses.

Trade and Policy Environment:
"Influencing Market Access and Competitiveness"
Çağlar Türk

Çağlar Türk is currently working as the Green Line Trade Expert for the EU One Stop Shop Project - Supporting Green Line Trade and Businesses. He is a seasoned trade and compliance expert with 13 years of professional experience in cross-border trade, business development and EU regulatory compliance consultancy.
Holding a Master's degree in International Relations and a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and International Relations; he has provided consultancy services for over 100 Turkish Cypriot producers in the areas of Green Line Trade, EU regulatory compliance requirements, export-focused market research, business capacity building, and marketing for seven years through the Cyprus Turkish Chamber of Industry, and subsequently for over five years through his own consultancy venture.

Session 4

Building Bridges through Collaboration and Partnership

Closing the Gap Between Research and Practice

Introduction to the need and support available for interactive innovation

Dr. Mark Redman

Dr. Mark Redman is an independent rural development consultant based in Southern Transylvania, Romania. He has a PhD in Agricultural Science and over 30 years of experience working in central and eastern Europe on a diverse range of food, agriculture and rural development-related projects. He is the co-owner and Director of Highclere Consulting (www.highclere-consulting.com), with further specific experience as a non-academic SME partner participating (to date) in a total of 7 Horizon 2020 and 8 Horizon Europe research and innovation projects. For over 10 years, Mark worked as a freelance facilitator for the European Commission (DG AGRI) and led numerous major EIP-AGRI workshops and seminars throughout Europe.

Practical Roots, Digital Growth:
"A Fermenter's Journey into Smart Technology"

Greta Skemaite

Greta Skemaite is the Co-founder & CEO of V.G. Freyia Labs Ltd., a company pioneering deeptech innovation in sustainable food systems. With a strong commitment to scalable circular solutions, Greta integrates cutting-edge technology, diversity, and Net Zero market potential into every initiative. Her leadership is shaping the future of food through science-driven sustainability and inclusive innovation.

Making it Possible Together
"Support for Island-Wide Partnerships"
Donald Aquilina
(See bio on page 1)

Marketplace of New Ideas

eunite SME

eunite:SME is an EU-funded initiative dedicated to empowering Turkish Cypriot small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and fostering island-wide economic collaboration under eunite: Uniting Cyprus for Business. Building on years of EU investment, the project supports innovation, sustainability, and digital transformation to enhance the competitiveness of SMEs and strengthen value chains with high Green Line trade potential. Through grants, technical assistance, and tailored capacity-building programmes, eunite:SME helps businesses improve quality, adopt green and digital practices, and connect with partners across Cyprus—creating new opportunities for growth, collaboration, and convergence with the EU single market.

---

eunite AgriBusiness

eunite:AgriBusiness is part of eunite: Uniting Cyprus for Business, an EU-funded initiative under the EU Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community. The project strengthens agriculture, fisheries, and rural development by establishing an Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS) that connects farmers, fishers, advisors, researchers, and agribusinesses. Through tailored training, advisory services, and research-driven demonstration activities, eunite:AgriBusiness promotes sustainable production, boosts competitiveness in high-potential value chains, and fosters bi-communal collaboration. By facilitating knowledge exchange and innovation, it empowers stakeholders to enhance productivity, embrace sustainability, and access new market and trade opportunities across Cyprus and the wider EU.

EU FOOD SAFETY
AB GIDA GÜVENLİĞİ

EU Food Safety Project (EU FSP) is an initiative funded under the EU Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community. The project strengthens food safety, animal health, and environmental protection across the Turkish Cypriot agri-food sector, contributing to public health and the prevention of transboundary animal diseases. Through extensive training, awareness-raising, and crisis-preparedness activities, EU FSP supports producers, food business operators, and local bodies in aligning with EU standards, enhancing hygiene and traceability, and fostering a more resilient, sustainable, and competitive agri-food chain in Cyprus.

EU One Stop Shop
Supporting Green Line Trade & Businesses

EU One Stop Shop (EUOSS) for Supporting Green Line Trade and Businesses is an initiative of the European Commission, implemented in cooperation with the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI/KEBE) and the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce (TCCC/KTTO). The project provides technical assistance, information, and hands-on support to traders and entrepreneurs engaged in, or exploring, Green Line trade. By promoting compliance with EU standards, enhancing product quality, and fostering cross-community collaboration, EUOSS plays a pivotal role in strengthening business cooperation, protecting consumers, and unlocking new trade and investment opportunities across Cyprus.

---

eit | European Institute of Innovation & Technology

EIT Food is the world's largest and most dynamic food innovation community, supported by the European Union. With teams across Europe, EIT Food connects entrepreneurs, researchers, investors, and industry leaders to drive transformation across the entire food value chain. Through equity-free programmes, collaborative research, and market-driven innovation, it empowers startups and agrifood tech ventures to scale sustainable, healthy, and trusted solutions. By placing consumers at the heart of change and fostering inclusive participation, EIT Food is building a resilient and transparent food system that benefits people, business, and the planet.

CYPRUS
AGRI-FOOD
FORUM
2025

This publication was funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of GIZ International Services and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.