

SOUTHEAST ANATOLIA ORGANIC AGRICULTURE CLUSTER PROJECT

(GAP ORGANIC)

Project name: Organic Agriculture Cluster

Budget: 6,575,000TL

Project funding: National funds of the Republic of Turkey

Timeline: June 2009 – December 2013

Location: Southeast Anatolia Region

Status of the project: Ongoing

Corporate Thematic / Related Cross-Cutting Areas: Poverty / Regional Competitiveness, SME and Rural Development

UN/National Executing Agencies: UNDP / Ministry of Development GAP Regional Development Administration

UN/National/NGO Implementing Partners: UNDP and GAP Regional Development Administration are the partners for the successful implementation of the Project.

Short summary of the project: The overall objective, towards which the Project will contribute, is to improve the competitiveness of the Southeast Anatolia Region in a sustainable and socially equitable manner. This overall objective reflects the vision of the Competitiveness Agenda for Southeast Anatolia Region, and serves as a reference point for all initiatives (i.e. projects and programmes) to be implemented within the scope of the Agenda.

The purpose of the Project is to increase the competitiveness of the organic agriculture sector in the Region (especially in Şanlıurfa) through activating the regional organic agriculture cluster and improving the local business environment by establishing an innovation and information centre, establishing best practices (pilot and demonstrative actions), and building local capacities, and by promoting the region nationally and internationally.

What has been the situation?

Southeast Anatolia Region is one of the most socially and economically distressed regions in Turkey. As per the socio-economic development index, issued by the State Planning Organization (current Ministry of Development) in 2003, the Region is the second least developed region in Turkey. A considerable portion of the economic output of the Region is derived from agriculture and trade. Although the region is endowed with favorable factor conditions (land, natural resources etc.), most of the manufacturing activities in the region are concentrated in the lower value-added segments of the manufacturing value chains. These favorable conditions create a significant potential for organic production where higher value added in organic production could serve sustainable development in the Region. However, the potential of the Region have, thus far, not been used efficiently.

The Competitiveness Agenda, which has been developed by UNDP in strong collaboration and cooperation with the GAP RDA within the scope of the EU-funded GAP-GIDEM (Entrepreneurship Support Centers) Project, aims at turning the Southeast Anatolia Region into the “Cradle of Sustainable Civilizations” by integrating the Region to national and international markets with a unique value proposition in areas like

renewable energy, organic textile and organic agriculture. In line with the provisions of the Competitiveness Agenda; Organic Agriculture Cluster in Southeast Anatolia Project was developed with a view to mobilize the organic production potentials of the region through applying clustering methodology and supporting improvements in organic agriculture value chain.

What's our mission?

UNDP's mission can be summarized as providing the Government of Turkey, particularly the GAP Regional Development Administration with high quality technical assistance, which will help achievement of the ambitious objectives of the Organic Agriculture Cluster Project hence contributing to the improvement of the competitiveness of the organic agriculture sector of GAP Region on national and international markets.

How are we doing this?

Organic Agriculture Cluster Project is composed of the following activity groups:

- **Action 1:** Cluster Development Activities
- **Action 2:** Pilot actions and demonstrative studies
- **Action 3:** Branding, promotion and visibility
- **Action 4:** Establishment of an Organic Agriculture Innovation Centre
- **Action 5:** Institutional Capacity Building

It should be noted that, the activities to be carried out during the first year of operations will mainly focus on the development of the cluster roadmap upon which further planning and implementation processes will be developed in the following years.

How will Turkey benefit?

Improved competitiveness of the organic agriculture sector in Southeast Anatolia Region will contribute to elimination of regional disparities and to improvement of regional and national wealth through creating of new investment and employment opportunities. In addition, the Project will generate the following expected results:

- GAP Organic Agriculture Portal is activated and used effectively,
- Regional organic agriculture cluster is activated,
- A regional Organic Agriculture Innovation Centre is established, and linked to international R&D networks,
- Institutional capacity of the GAP RDA and its national, regional and local partners is improved.