**Hellenic Republic**



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**PRESS RELEASE**

**The Agricultural University of Athens proposes solutions for the devastating floods that struck Thessaly.**

On Wednesday, September 20 2023, a Press Conference was held at the Editors' Room of Athens Daily Newspapers, wherein the Framework of Actions on the part of the Agricultural University of Athens was elaborated with respect to Thessaly. The Specific Scientific Committee of Experts that had been established, being headed by the Rector of the Agricultural University of Athens, Mr. Spyridon Kintzios, has substantially captured not only into figures, but also per category all havoc wreaked on the plain of Thessaly. It is indeed a reconstruction plan drawn up for the loss of both crops and livestock, which actually focuses on the necessity for an immediate and proper recording over animate and inanimate material, so that the damage caused can be restored to the maximum possible extent.

The Specific Scientific Committee of Experts, composed by Mr. Georgios Zervas, former AUA Rector, Mr. Christos Karavitis, Professor of Hydraulics, Ms. Sophie Mavrikou, Assistant Professor of Biotechnology, Mr. Aristeidis Mertzanis, Professor of Environmental Impact, Mr. Dimitrios Bilalis, Professor of Agriculture and Organic Agriculture, Mr. Konstantinos Oichaliotis, Professor of Soil Science, Mr. Konstantinos Tsiboukas, Professor of Agricultural Economics, Ms. Eleni Tsiplakou, Professor of Animal Nutrition, Mr. Dimitrios Tsitsigiannis, Professor of Phytopathology, Mr. Emmanouil Flemetakis, Professor of Biotechnology, Mr. Spyridon Fountas, Professor of Agricultural Engineering, have highlighted the immediate restoration of the drainage works, in combination with the aid in mechanical equipment, which unfortunately has been completely destroyed due to the floods. Furthermore, the Committee has referred to the direct and fair financing of both the producers and the rural population of the affected area.

In Thessaly, out of the 3.3 million acres, 2.3 million ones are used for irrigation, wherein the severe problems are identified over the land area of 800.000 square kilometres having been destroyed. Except for areas with tree crops, the negative consequences are relatively reversible in a short period of time. Wooded areas will be infested by plant diseases, because of their roots staying into the water over extended periods of time. To become more specific, spring crops like cotton, maize, lucerne, processed tomatoes have been most affected, as they had entered the crucial stage of production.

As far as livestock farming is concerned, along with the fact that 100.000 animals have died, the state of the art in that field raises concerns, however, through prudent and rational allocation in each cattle farm, it can re-establish itself dynamically, within a period from 8 up to 15 months depending on the species of the animals.

Neighbouring prefectures can offer considerable help by selling young animals to the farmers affected, so that production can start taking place at a normal pace within a period of 18 months. Following the disastrous floods, the pertinent Committee has laid emphasis on the need for spatial planning, by means of the establishment and operation of modern livestock parks.

The Deputy Minister of Rural Development and Food, Mr. Stavros Keletsis, has given his presence at that event, featuring that the competent Ministry shall be of precious support over such a huge effort, stating that the resources required are available, therefore they are to be allocated where needed and considered necessary. The Deputy Minister has mentioned that out of the 100.000 dead animals, approximately 56.000 have been recovered and disposed, while it is expected that until next Saturday, the collection and disposal of fallen stock will have been completed. The Deputy Minister, Mr. Stavros Keletsis, who also serves as a Member of the Parliament for the District of Evros, has additionally proposed that similar steps should be taken about the Prefecture of Evros with respect to the devastating consequences of the fires occurred. Needless to say that all the members of the Committee have responded positively to such an initiative.

More photos are available on the following link: [Photos 20\_09\_2023 JUADN](https://auagpa-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/alikifotini_aua_gr/EtqJarYyNpdNn5QiCmKNf2QBaT3UlHmS4A885zl8-meLxg?e=PSfDZd) .