**Hellenic Republic**



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**PRESS RELEASE**

**A Programme Contract signed for fighting against insects to** **the chestnut tree between the Agricultural University of Athens** **and the Region of Peloponnese.**

On Tuesday, July 18 2023, a Programme Contract has been signed in Tripoli, between the Agricultural University of Athens and the Region of Peloponnese. The Vice Rector for Research, Finance and Development, Mr. Thomas Bartzanas, Professor, has signed the pertinent Programme Contract in collaboration with the Head of the Region of Peloponnese, Mr. Panagiotis Nikas.

 Mr. Dionysios Perdikis, Associate Professor of the Laboratory of Agricultural Zoology and Entomology of the Department of Crop Science of the Agricultural University of Athens has given his presence at the meeting. Furthermore, the General Manager of the Regional Agricultural Economy and Veterinary Medicine Mr. Dimitrios Mitropoulos, along with the Director of the Directorate of Agricultural Economy and Veterinary Medicine of the Regional Unit of Arcadia, Ms. Anastasia Stavropoulou have been present.

That Programme Contract has been the result of the close collaboration between the Contracting Parties, marking thereby the significant willingness and strong commitment of both the Local Government and the Academic Community to support in practice the primary sector of the Region of Peloponnese and in particular the chestnut producers of Parnon. In fact, a net of insect traps shall be developed over the areas of Ano Doliana, Mesorahi, Agios Petros, Kastanitsa, Vourvourou, Vamvakou, Alepochori and Kosmas, in order to study the behavior of the insect and indicate the appropriate time required for spraying, inasmuch for the potential use of even biological factors to control the insect against the chestnut tree.

By means of the Actions, which the Agricultural University of Athens is to undertake, based on the monitoring network of populations of entomological enemies against the chestnut tree, the producers will be provided with the opportunity of receiving timely update, related to further measures taken to respond to such an occasion, by insect species and by district. Besides, some alternative and environmentally friendly methods of combating the problem will be evaluated, thus organising a number of awareness-raising actions.

Planning and implementation of the necessary scientific and institutional procedures shall lead to the acquisition of knowledge for the first time on local level, contributing to the increase of the production quantity, as well as the avoidance of the chestnut of Parnon quality problems, with a view to enhancing the producers’ income and reinforcing rural economy, in addition to protecting the environment and even start making strong efforts to illustrate the chestnut of Parnon as a distinct product obtained, by applying the rules of the integrated treatment, with respect for the environment and the consumer, too.

Finally, both the Agricultural University of Athens and the Region of Peloponnese have expressed their wish for transforming this Contract into the beginning of a greater strategic cooperation towards the sustainability of agriculture and rural economy in the Region of Peloponnese, at a time when agricultural production is beset by multi-faceted challenges and is called upon to implement the Green Deal of the European Union.