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PRESS RELEASE

RESULTS OF THE FARM STRUCTURE SURVEY OF AGRICULTURAL AND LIVESTOCK HOLDINGS 2023

The Statistical Service announces the results of the Farm Structure Survey of Agricultural and Livestock Holdings 2023.

Holdings and Agricultural Area

The total number of holdings enumerated during the Survey 2023 was 32.023, recording a decrease of 5,9% compared to the Census 2020.

The total agricultural area reported in 2023 was 1.413.590 decares, recording a decrease of 3,4% compared to 2020. Of this area, 1.298.470 decares were utilised agricultural area (-3,2% compared to 2020), 80.701 decares were abandoned or uncultivated land (-3,2%), 28.899 decares were land occupied by buildings such as warehouses, stables and other facilities, as well as yards or roads within the holding (-11,8%) and the remaining 5.520 decares were woodlands (+2,7%).

The average utilised agricultural area per holding in 2023 was estimated at 41 decares, recording an increase of 5,1% compared to 2020.

The distribution of the utilised agricultural area among the various administrative districts and the percentage change in relation to the Census of 2020 is presented in Table 1 according to the place where the land is located.

Table 1

Distict	Utilised Agricultural Area (decares)		Change 2023/2020
	2023	2020	(%)
TOTAL	1.298.470	1.341.359	-3,2
Lefkosia	413.014	415.993	-0,7
Ammochostos	114.777	107.392	6,9
Larnaka	371.683	383.024	-3,0
Lemesos	161.181	173.549	-7,1
Pafos	237.816	261.400	-9,0

Holders or Managers of the Holdings

The 96,9% of agricultural and livestock holdings belong to natural persons (individual or shared ownership), 0,2% to public or government entities and the remaining 2,9% are operated as companies, associations or in another form. Compared to the Census 2020, there was a decrease in the share of holdings owned by natural persons (97,5% in 2020) and an increase in the share of companies (2,3% in 2020), while the share of public or government entities remains stable at 0,2%.

The Survey 2023 showed that 54,5% of the holders or managers of the holdings had agriculture and/or livestock farming as their main or sole occupation, while 45,5% were mainly employed in other sectors of economic activity (compared to 51,7% and 48,3% respectively in 2020).

The share of male holders or managers of holdings in 2023 increased to 82,5% compared to 78,8% in 2020. In contrast, the share of female holders or managers decreased to 17,5% in 2023 from 21,2% in 2020.

The average age of holders or managers of holdings remained stable at 63 years, as in the Census 2020. Based on their age distribution, 1,8% of holdings were owned or managed by persons under the age of 35, 17,4 % by persons between 35 and 54 years old, 58,7% by persons aged 55 to 74 years and 22,0% by persons aged 75 years and more. The most important changes observed in the age structure of the holders was the increase in the proportion of holders or managers over 75 years old, while the remaining age groups showed a decrease in their percentage distribution compared to 2020.

The majority of holders or managers of agricultural and livestock holdings (63,9%) had only practical experience, the 35,9% had basic training whereas the remaining 0,7% had full agricultural training. The corresponding percentages in the Census 2020 were 68,5%, 30,4% and 1,1%.

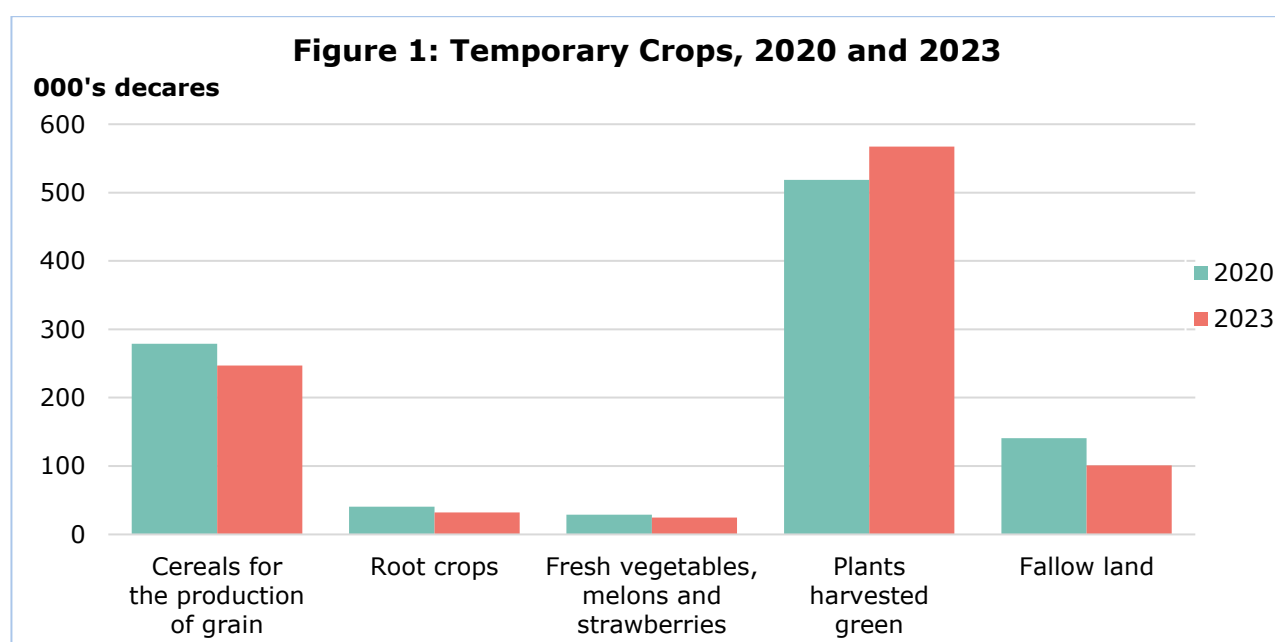
Land Tenure and Land Use

Of the total utilised agricultural area, an increase was recorded in the share of rented area as a percentage of the total (from 57,4% in 2020 to 58,3% in 2023), while a decrease was observed in the share of owned area (from 41,6% in 2020 to 40,5% in 2023). Common land or land of other status increased from 0,7% in 2020 to 0,8% in 2023, while the jointly owned area remained stable at 0,3%.

In relation to land use, a rise of 0,3% was observed in the areas in greenhouses under glass or high accessible cover, while a fall of 6,7% was recorded in the areas of permanent grasslands, of 3,6% in temporary crops outdoor and of 1,5% in permanent crops outdoor, compared to the Census 2020.

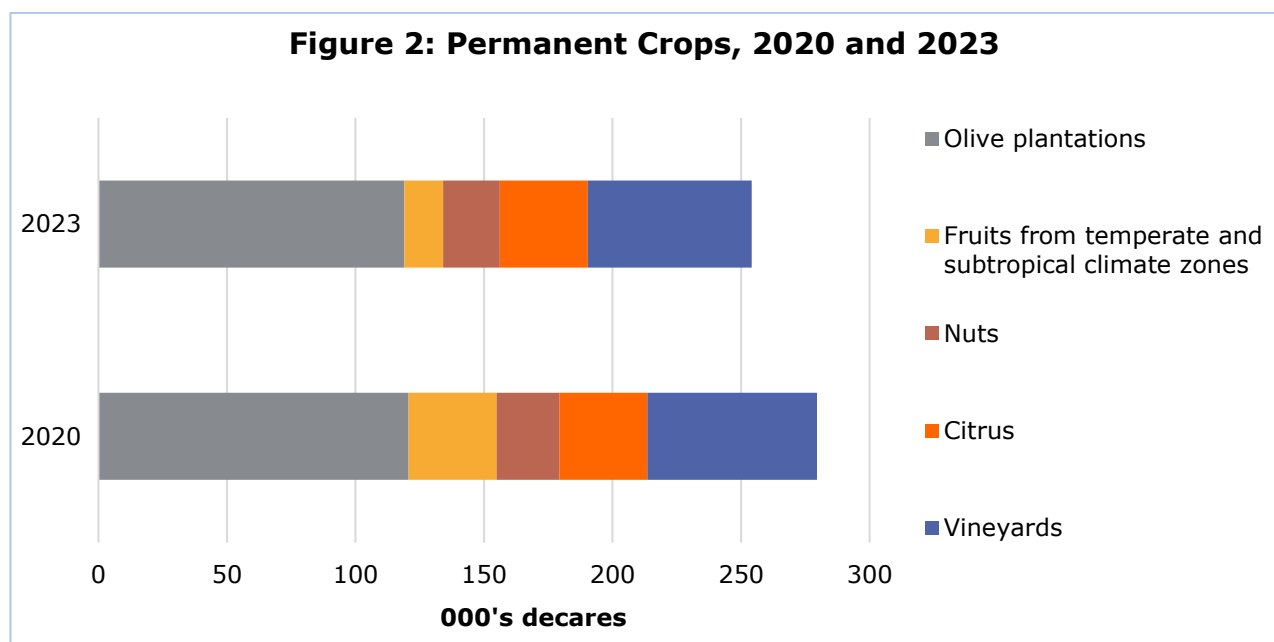
Of the **temporary crops outdoor**, plants harvested green and intended mainly for animal feed or grazing occupy 43,7% of the total utilised agricultural area, with the largest areas cultivated in Larnaka District (229.917 decares). The different types of cereals for the production of grain follow with a share of 19,0%, with the largest areas being sown in Lefkosia District (117.182 decares).

Significant changes were recorded in the areas of temporary crops outdoor, especially fallow land, root crops and fresh vegetables, melons and strawberries, which decreased by 28,4%, 19,9% and 14,2% respectively compared to 2020. Crops of plants harvested green and flowers and ornamental plants, increased in area by 9,3% and 7,5% respectively compared to 2020.



Of the **permanent crops outdoor**, olive plantations hold the largest share of the area (9,2%), with most trees located in Lefkosia District (area of 36.574 decares). They are followed by vineyards with 4,9% of the total utilised agricultural area, with the largest plantations found in Lemesos District (28.729 decares).

A noteworthy increase of 66,1% compared to 2020 was registered in the cultivated area of berries, while a decrease was recorded in nuts (-9,9%), in nurseries (-6,3%) and in vineyards (-3,4%).



The largest areas of permanent grasslands were recorded in Pafos District with 15.421 decares.

The largest areas of crops in greenhouses under glass or high accessible cover were recorded in Larnaka District with 1.886 decares.

Irrigation

The total irrigable area recorded in 2023 was 306.634 decares, registering a decrease of 19,6% compared to 381.250 decares in 2020. The total area reported as irrigated decreased by 5,7% to 251.040 decares, from 266.076 decares in 2020.

Of the outdoor area, potatoes, flowers and ornamental plants, seeds and seedlings, as well as nurseries, were the main crop categories with all of their area being irrigated. Of the temporary crops outdoor, fresh vegetables, melons and strawberries and industrial plants follow with an irrigated area of 99,7% and 82,4% respectively.

Among permanent crops outdoor, citrus, pome and stone fruit trees constitute the main crop categories with over 95,0% of their area being irrigated. Other permanent crops outdoor that are mainly irrigated are fruits from temperate and subtropical climate zones with 91,9% of their area being irrigated, berries with 85,8% irrigated area and olive plantations with 66,7%. Only 14,1% of the area with vineyards was irrigated, while the irrigation of the remaining crops relied mainly on rainwater.

During 2023, the main irrigation method used by farmers was drip irrigation, which covered 78,4% of the irrigated area (196.835 decares). It was followed by sprinkler irrigation, with 14,4% (36.040 decares) and the remaining 7,2% (18.166 decares) was occupied by surface irrigation method.

Livestock

The main characteristics and the structure of holdings that directly owned or managed animals are reported with reference to the 31st December 2023.

The total number of holdings with cattle was 342, recording an increase of 10,0% compared to 311 reported in 2020. The cattle population numbered 86.992 heads, of which 27,0% (23.463 heads) were under one year old, 17,5% (15.248 heads) were aged 1 to 2 years old and the rest 55,5% (48.281 heads) were 2 years old or older.

Only 153 holdings declared pigs compared to the 156 holdings recorded in 2020. Nevertheless, the number of pigs increased and from 323.522 heads recorded in 2020 reached 336.533 heads in 2023. From the

total pig population 10,7% were breeding sows (35.943 heads), 35,3% were piglets with live weight under 20 kg (118.701 heads) and 54,0% were various other pigs (181.888 heads).

The total number of holdings with sheep reached 1.342 compared to 1.509 holdings in 2020, recording a decrease of 11,1%. The total number of sheep recorded reached 327.427 heads. Of these, 75,8% (248.152 heads) were breeding females and 24,2% (79.275 heads) were other sheep.

A decrease of 8,1% compared to 2020 was observed in the holdings managing goats (from 1.587 in 2020 to 1.176 in 2023). The total number of animals recorded was 227.307, with the majority (73,6%) being breeding females (167.361 heads) and the remaining (26,4%) being other goats (59.946 heads).

The total number of holdings raising broilers declined significantly by 33,4% (from 1.176 in 2020 to 783 in 2023). There was also a decrease in the number of holdings raising laying hens, by 23,1% (from 6.192 in 2020 to 4.763 in 2023).

Organic Crops and Animal Production

The total number of agricultural and livestock holdings recorded, where organic farming and breeding methods and practices are either applied and certified or are under conversion to be certified decreased by 4,2% reaching 1.197 holdings in 2023 from 1.250 in 2020.

The total utilized agricultural area under organic production methods in 2023 increased by 30,2%, from 54.650 decares in 2020 to 71.145 decares in 2023.

Employment

Based on the results of the Survey 2023, the total volume of work in agricultural and livestock holdings in 2023 reached 4.560.686 working days, which is equivalent to 18.615 full time working persons, thus registering a fall of 2,7% compared to 2020. The working days of the holders and family members employed on the holding decreased by 13,8%, while those of permanent employees increased by 35,9% and those of seasonal workers by 6,4% compared to 2020.

Of the total number of employed persons on the holdings (93.830 persons), 69,6% were males (Table 2). Compared to 2020, the number of males employed on the holdings decreased by 5,9% and the number of females by 20,2%.

Table 2

Employed Persons	2020		2023		Change 2023/2020 (%)
	Number of persons	Distribution (%)	Number of persons	Distribution (%)	
TOTAL	105.187	100,0	93.830	100,0	-10,8
Males	69.399	66,0	65.283	69,6	-5,9
Females	35.788	34,0	28.547	30,4	-20,2
Holders and family members	66.353	100,0	60.599	100,0	-8,7
Males	43.365	65,4	40.118	66,2	-7,5
Females	22.988	34,6	20.481	33,8	-10,9
Permanent employees	5.993	100,0	6.722	100,0	12,2
Males	5.147	85,9	5.803	86,3	12,7
Females	846	14,1	919	13,7	8,6
Seasonal workers	32.841	100,0	26.509	100,0	-19,3
Males	20.887	63,6	19.362	73,0	-7,3
Females	11.954	36,4	7.147	27,0	-40,2

METHODOLOGICAL INFORMATION

Objective

The Farm Structure Survey is carried out in all Member States of the European Union, based on the provisions of the Regulation (EU) 2018/1091 and is co-financed by the European Union. The aim is to collect information to examine trends in the structure of agricultural and livestock holdings in order to provide the EU with the necessary information for designing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and other related policies. The information relates to the structure and types of agricultural and livestock holdings and the characteristics of their holders, to farm fragmentation, land tenure and use, cultivated areas, irrigation methods and sources of water as well as technical parameters of irrigation equipment, soil management practices, machinery and equipment, number of animals, breed and age as well as rural development measures. Also, information is collected on the characteristics of the holders (age, gender, legal status, agricultural training, main occupation, etc.), the labour force of the holdings, including other gainful activities as well as production methods, environmental aspects, etc.

Coverage

The enumerating unit is the agricultural or livestock or mixed holding, which is defined as a single unit, both technically and economically, that has a single management and that undertakes economic activities in agriculture

The Survey 2023 covered every agricultural or livestock holding in the Republic of Cyprus that has:

- At least two (2) decares of utilised agricultural area or at least one hundred square meters (100m²) of greenhouse or at least one (1) decare vineyards or at least one hundred square meters (100m²) mushrooms regardless from the title deeds (type of tenure) and the location or,
- Owns animals and in particular one (1) or more cows or a total of two (2) or more bovine animals, of any kind and age, or a total of five (5) or more "small" animals (sheep, goats, pigs), of any age and gender, or fifty (50) or more poultry (chickens, hens, turkeys, ducks, geese) or five (5) or more ostriches or twenty (20) or more beehives or ten (10) or more breeding rabbit females.

Data Collection

The Farm Structure Survey is conducted every 3 years as a sample survey and every 10 as a census. The data collection for the Survey 2023 took place during the period September 2023 - May 2024 under Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2286 and the relevant EU guidelines. The data collection was mostly done through telephone interviews and, where deemed necessary, personal interviews with the holders of agricultural and livestock holdings filling out a paper questionnaire.

Reference Period

The reference period for land characteristics refers to areas used in the period of 1st September 2022 - 31st August 2023. The reference day for variables on livestock is 31st December 2023. The reference day for machinery and equipment variables is 31 August 2023. The reference period for variables on labour force is the 12-month period of 1st September 2022 – 31st August 2023. The reference period for variables on rural development measures is the three-year period ending on 31st December 2023.

Definitions

Holder: Is the natural person, group of natural persons or legal person on whose account and in whose name the holding is operated and who is legally and economically responsible for the holding. It is clarified that the concept of the holder of the holding should not be confused with that of the owner of the land or the animals of the holding. The holder may be the owner of the holding or the tenant or hereditary long-term tenant or manager of a third party's property.

Utilised agricultural area: Includes the agricultural area cultivated or exploited by the holding, regardless of type of tenure (owned, rented, etc.) and covered by temporary crops, permanent crops, greenhouses, kitchen gardens, permanent pastures and grazings and fallow land up to 5 years. It also includes rough grazings that had been used by animals of the farm during the reference period.

Temporary crops: Includes areas worked (ploughed or tilled) regularly, generally under a system of crop rotation, which means that the crops are alternated on a certain plot in a planned pattern or sequence in successive crop years so that crops of the same species are not grown without interruption on the same field. In other words, these are crops that are changed annually. Temporary crops consist of cereal for the production of grain, dry pulses for the production of grain, root crops, industrial crops, fresh vegetables,

melons and strawberries, flowers and ornamental plants, plants harvested green, seeds and seedlings, fallow land and other annual crops.

Permanent crops: They are woody plants, i.e., trees or shrubs, not grown in rotation, occupying the soil and yielding harvests for several consecutive years. The products of various species of trees or shrubs are usually intended for human consumption. Permanent crops consist of olive plantations, pome fruits, stone fruits, fruits of subtropical and tropical climate zones, nuts, berries, carobs, citrus, vineyards, nurseries and other permanent crops.

Greenhouses under glass or high accessible cover: Areas of crops, which for the whole of their period of growth or for the predominant part of it are covered by greenhouses or fixed high cover or mobile high cover or mobile high cover (glass or rigid or flexible plastic).

Permanent grassland: Areas used permanently (for several consecutive years, normally 5 years or more) to grow herbaceous fodder, forage or energy purpose crops, through cultivation (sown) or naturally (selfseeded), and which is not included in the crop rotation on the holding.

Kitchen gardens: Small plots of land that are usually located near the home of the holder, normally separate from the rest of the agricultural land, and their production is intended for self-consumption by the holders and their household and not for sale.

Irrigable area: Is the maximum utilised agricultural area which could be irrigated in the reference period using the equipment and the quantity of water normally available on the agricultural holding, regardless of whether it was irrigated or not. Areas in greenhouses or under high accessible cover and kitchen gardens are excluded.

Irrigated area: Is the total of the areas that were actually irrigated, at least once, during the reference period. Areas in greenhouses or under high accessible cover and kitchen gardens are excluded.

Labour force: The set of natural persons who, during a growing season, were involved in any way in the operations (management, technical or manual work) of the holding that are required for each part of production, as well as for the general needs or the management of production from a marketing point of view.

Permanent employees: Persons who worked on the holding regularly, all weeks during the 12-month reference period, regardless of the length of the working week, and received remuneration (salary, earnings or payments in kind) from the holding. Permanent employees are also the persons who worked regularly for part of this 12-month period and were unable to work for the entire period either because the type of crops require fewer working months, or because of illness, military service, accident or death, or because there was a termination of employment in the holding in the 12-month period, or due to a definitive cessation of the holding's operations due to disasters, e.g., floods, fire etc.

Seasonal workers: Persons who did not work on the farm regularly, during all the weeks of the 12-month reference period, but only for a short period of time, or for short periods of time, because they are hired only for particular type of work, such as harvesting of grapes or gathering of potatoes, tobacco, etc.

For more information:

CYSTAT Portal, subtheme [Agriculture, Livestock, Fishing](#)

[Predefined Tables](#) (Excel)

[Infographics](#)

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