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AN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY IN THE LEMON VALUE CHAIN IN LANKARAN DISTRICT



The recent analysis of the lemon value chain in Lankaran district highlights significant developments and future prospects for this important crop. It was revealed that despite favorable climatic conditions and a unique local product, more than 70% of Azerbaijan's lemon demand is met through imports. However, recent years have seen an increase in both the area and productivity of lemon orchards, largely due to state agricultural policies and subsidies aimed at establishing intensive lemon gardens.



Lemon garden, Lankaran

Farmers like Payim Veysalov, who grows lemons on 0.8 hectares in Vilvan village, have benefited from the support provided for citrus cultivation in recent years. By diversifying his crops to include mandarins, kinkans (kumquats), cherries, and other fruits, Payim Veysalov has adopted a strategy that minimizes risks and ensures a stable income.



Lemon garden, Lankaran



Lemon garden, Lankaran

Lankaran district, alongside Astara and to a lesser extent Masalli, form the core citrus-growing region of Azerbaijan where lemons, mandarins, and oranges are primary crops. In 2022, the area dedicated to lemon orchards in Lankaran reached 267.7 hectares, with significant part of this area eligible for state subsidies. Despite this growth, the region still faces several challenges, including the scarcity of high-quality saplings, effective pest management solutions, water management, inadequate agricultural advisory services, a lack of cold storages, sorting machines, and promotional activities in both domestic and international markets.



Lemon sapling

Economic indicators suggest that lemon farming is a profitable venture, with investments in new orchards yielding high returns. However, more extensive distribution and adoption of high-yielding varieties are needed to boost production.



Establishment of an intensive citrus demonstration orchard in Lankaran

Based on the analysis done under the “European Union Support to the Lankaran–Astara Economic Region of Azerbaijan” project follow up steps are being taken to provide crucial technical assistance and funding to boost lemon production. As part of these efforts, the project organized a study visit to Türkiye for a group of citrus farmers who were trained at the Western Mediterranean Research Institute, Antalya. In addition new intensive demonstration orchards covering two hectares will be established to introduce new early and late cultivars along with advanced agricultural techniques. A lemon producer group will be formed and supported. Steps will be taken to support the establishment of cold storages and to brand and market the “Lankaran Lemon” to enhance the visibility and competitiveness of Lankaran lemons. This will involve creating a unique brand identity and expansion of market access to ensure the product stands out in both domestic and international markets.



Study visit to Türkiye

Stay tuned for more updates from the "EU Support to Lankaran-Astara Economic Region of Azerbaijan" project.