UNISECO

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Pathways of peach growers for a transition towards sustainability: an eco-efficiency and input substitution tree crop-based farming system in Imathia, Greece

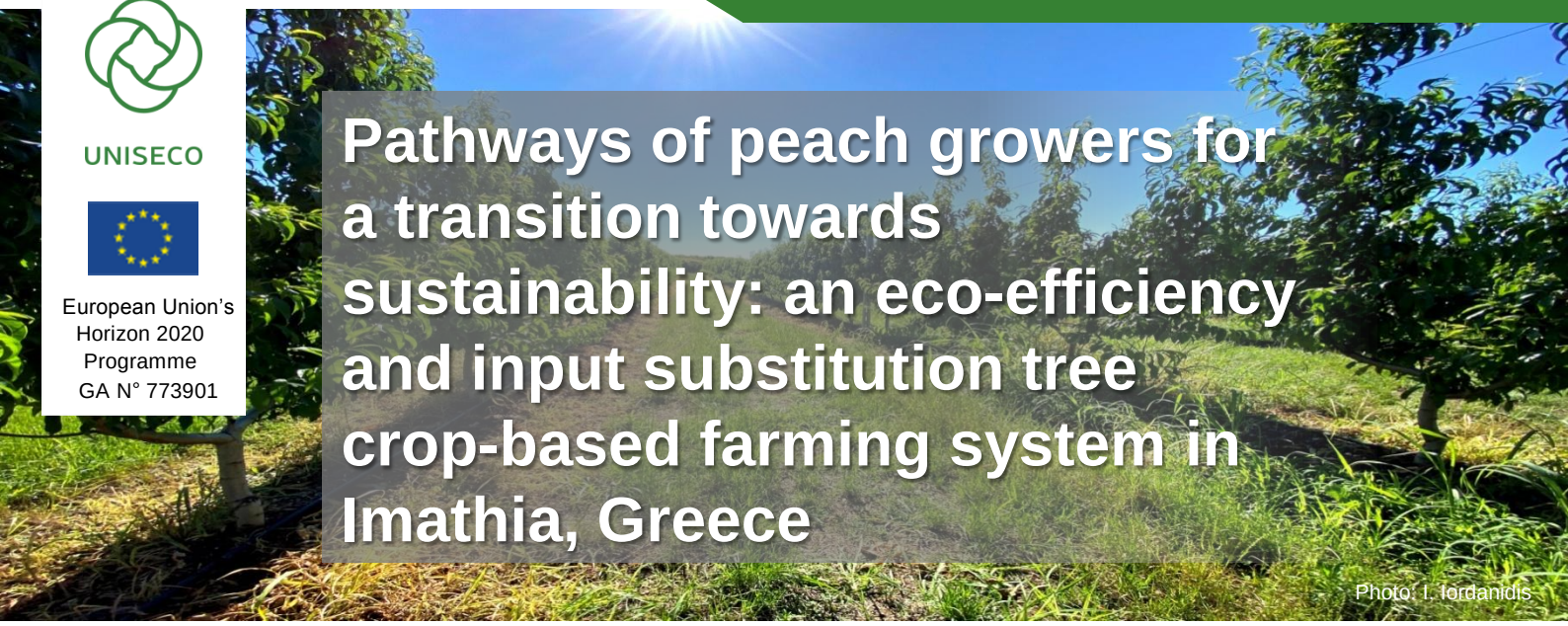

Photo: I. Iordanidis

Understanding and Improving the Sustainability of Agro-ecological Farming Systems in the EU

ISSUE BRIEF

The transition can be further enhanced when key value chain actors collaborate with each other and establish an effective knowledge exchange system with a common objective: safe and high quality products.

The implementation of alternative plant protection practices in peach trees aims at mitigating the food safety risks and environmental impacts, while sustaining the long-term economic viability of farms by improving their competitiveness and ensuring market access.

PRODUCING SUSTAINABLY IN A COMPETITIVE MARKET

During the last decades, intensive peach production lead to environmental problems in the area, such as biodiversity loss and deterioration of water quality. At the same time, the survival of market-oriented fruit farms imposes the need for compliance with quality and safety standards set by the EU and international markets.

TARGETED INCENTIVES AND COOPERATION

Besides the already implemented Integrated Farming and Mating Disruption methods, a set of agro-ecological practices has the potential to improve the competitiveness of products in the marketplace, preserve biodiversity and improve water and soil quality.

Transitioning to a novel pruning system of a narrow two dimensional canopy, growing green manure application and selection of appropriate tree varieties are considered promising solutions.

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Country: Greece

Related to UNISECO case study:

Collective implementation of alternative plant protection practices in peach trees

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Peach trees in blossom in the case study area.

Economic support measures with emphasis on collective schemes, actions that stimulate horizontal and vertical collaboration among farmers, value chain actors, advisors and researchers constitute strong incentives for the adoption of agro-ecological practices.

Advisory and training services should promote knowledge exchange and dissemination of innovative ideas by carrying out pilot projects.

ISSUE BRIEF

POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

Benefits of the orchard system include the reduced applications of plant protection products since narrower canopy allows good light and air exposure, mitigating favourable conditions for pests and diseases, e.g. high temperatures and humidity.

In addition, this system encourages the production of fruit with uniform colour and size contributing to quality and safety of the harvest.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Case study website: https://uniseco-project.eu/case-study/greece

The transition of a fruit producing area to sustainability "story map"

ABOUT UNISECO:
UNISECO is a European research project aiming to develop innovative approaches to enhance the understanding of socio-economic and policy drivers and barriers for further development and implementation of agro-ecological practices in EU farming systems.

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