

# Консултативният съвет по плодове и зеленчуци: субсидиите да бъдат съобразени с районирането на културите и адаптирането на производството към климатичните промени

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On 11 August 2023, the Consultative Council on Fruit Growing and Vegetable Production was held at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, with the participation of representatives from the entire food chain – policy, business, academia, agricultural producers and branch organizations.

At the meeting, proposals for amendments to the Strategic Plan for the Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas 2023 – 2027, affecting the activities of the sector, were discussed. The focus of the meeting was the proposal made by the scientific community for determining subsidies according to the region and the crops suitable for it. The scientific institutes of the Agricultural Academy proposed that a new zoning of varieties be carried out and that production be adapted to climate change. Only in this way, according to them, will quality production of Bulgarian fruit and vegetables be guaranteed. Scientists from the following institutes within the structure of the Agricultural Academy participated in the Consultative Council on Fruit Growing and Vegetable Production: Maritsa Vegetable Crops Research Institute, Plovdiv, Agricultural Academy (AA); Institute of Agriculture, Kyustendil, AA; Fruit Growing Institute, Plovdiv, AA; Institute of Viticulture and Enology, Pleven, AA; Institute of Mountain Animal Husbandry and Agriculture, Troyan, AA, and Institute of Agricultural Economics, AA.

“The purpose of this Consultative Council is to connect production from field to table and to defend our national interest along the entire product line,” stated Minister Vatev. He emphasized the importance of cooperation for agricultural producers and the opportunities it provides in terms of their market presence and access to investments.

Other ideas for improving the situation in the sector were also discussed at the meeting.

With the establishment of agricultural associations, where farm produce is delivered and which in turn will place it on the retail market through guaranteed origin and standardized packaging, this is considered to be an effective method for production control.

The process may be stimulated by providing these associations with free packaging for fruit and vegetables through state aid. To support the process, the creation of programmes for these organizations is being considered, enabling them to build cold storage facilities, packing lines and other necessary infrastructure.

Another important issue – the control of producers with green cards – was also discussed at the meeting. It is known that there are traders registered as farmers who resell foreign produce in significant volumes without issuing receipts, thereby creating unfair competition. One of the proposed ways to address this problem is to oblige all traders to issue fiscal receipts. How exactly the Ministry intends to resolve this case is still unclear, but at least within the framework of the meeting this pressing problem for all vegetable and fruit producers in the country was formulated and addressed.

During the meeting, a request was also made to establish several new-generation wholesale markets.

“For the first time there was agreement that the state must start implementing certain policies and purposefully organize production through these policies and its support,” noted Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sava Tabakov from the Agricultural University in Plovdiv.