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GROWING SUCCESS: NEW TOMATO DEMONSTRATION PLOTS ESTABLISHED IN MASALLI DISTRICT



Launch event, Masalli district

As a continuation of the establishment of demonstration plots and orchards in the districts of the Lankaran-Astara Economic Region (LAER), the EU4Lankaran project supported the establishment of tomato plots in Masalli district to test new productive varieties of tomatoes. On July 3rd, 2024, the village of Tekle in Masalli district hosted the launch event of the Tomato Demonstration Plots. The event drew the attention of local authorities, agrarian experts, and farmers from across the district, highlighting the growing focus on agricultural innovation.



Discussion on practical techniques and best practices
for tomato seedling planting

The ceremony was attended by representatives of the Masalli Executive Power, the State Agrarian Development Center, agricultural experts, and local farmers, reflecting the broad support for this initiative. One of the highlights was the practical training conducted by an experienced agronomist from the seed provider company. The training focused on the essential techniques for planting and caring for tomato seedlings, providing farmers with the knowledge and skills necessary to maximize yield and quality. This hands-on training was a valuable opportunity for farmers to learn directly from an expert, ensuring that the Tomato Demonstration Plots will serve as a model of best practices in tomato cultivation.

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The establishment of these demonstration plots is a crucial step in enhancing the agricultural capacity of the district. A total of 49,712 tomato seedlings were distributed to 8 farmers across 6 villages - Tekle, Sighincag, Sherefte, Tekdam, Koçekli, and Khil. Seedlings of three high quality international varieties Yusuf, Sultan, and Ulduz were planted in 1.5 hectares. The project aims to identify the most suitable types for local conditions, to improve productivity and sustainability in tomato farming.

The Tomato Demonstration Plots offer numerous advantages, including the opportunity for farmers to observe the growth process, compare different tomato varieties, and adopt the most effective cultivation techniques. This initiative is not just about growing tomatoes, as well it's about empowering farmers with the knowledge and tools to increase their livelihoods and contribute to the region's economic development.



Tomato seedling

As the next steps, the 'EU4Lankaran' project plans to implement initiatives focused on developing a branding and marketing strategy for tomato and identifying potential areas for bankable projects. These efforts aim to create a strong identity for local products, increasing their competitiveness in both domestic and international markets.

The establishment of the Tomato Demonstration Plots in Masalli district represents a significant investment in the future of local agriculture. It showcases the commitment of the European Union and local authorities to supporting sustainable agricultural practices, fostering innovation, and improving the livelihoods of farmers in the Lankaran-Astara region.



Hands-on aspect of tomato seedling planting

The project not only focused on the development of tomato plots but also initiated the formation of a Tomato Producer Group in Masalli district. Establishing such a group is vital as it allows farmers to collaborate more effectively, increasing their access to larger markets and improving their negotiation strength. By working together, they can reduce costs of inputs, ensure consistent product quality, and adopt more advanced farming techniques. This collective approach significantly boosts their productivity and income, contributing to the sustainable growth of the agricultural sector in the region.



Planted tomato seedlings

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