

PRESS RELEASE

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PYRAGRAF Project Hosts Technical Meeting on Sustainable Agriculture in Gaziantep, Türkiye.

The PYRAGRAF (Decentralized pyrolytic conversion of agriculture and forestry wastes towards local circular value chains and sustainability) project partner Ankara University held a technical meeting with members of PYRAGRAF's associated partner, NAZDER (Nizip Pistachio and Olive Producers Association), at the Nizip Chamber of Commerce in Gaziantep, Türkiye. The event brought together farmers, agricultural experts, and local policymakers to explore sustainable agricultural practices, specifically focusing on the management of agricultural waste and the use of biomass byproducts like biochar and wood vinegar to improve farming practices.

Gaziantep is one of the pilot regions for the PYRAGRAF project, and this meeting marked an important step in introducing these innovative solutions to the local agricultural community.

The meeting started with a survey conducted by the project partner LPIT / Łukasiewicz - Poznan Institute of Technology, to gather insights from participants. Around 20 individuals from different agricultural backgrounds volunteered to complete the survey. The results are currently being processed and will be shared later along with other project countries' survey results, providing a deeper understanding of local needs and expectations.

Following the survey, Ankara University delivered an informative presentation that introduced the concept of **biochar** and **wood vinegar**, detailing how these natural byproducts, produced through the process of pyrolysis, can be applied to *improve soil health, enhance plant productivity, and contribute to a more sustainable farming system*. PYRAGRAF project concept has been presented and explained. These solutions have shown great potential in transforming agricultural practices, and the meeting aimed to raise awareness of their benefits among local farmers and stakeholders.

The event attracted a diverse group of participants, including not only NAZDER members but also representatives from the Gaziantep Provincial and District Directorates, as well as experts from the Peanut Research Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture in Gaziantep. Their presence underscored the importance of collaboration across various sectors to promote sustainable agriculture and innovation in farming practices.

One of the key moments of the meeting was the lively discussion that followed the presentation. Farmers and industry experts raised several pertinent questions regarding the potential applications of biochar and wood vinegar in combating local agricultural challenges. In particular, there was strong interest in using wood vinegar as a natural solution to control the "Pistachio Twig Worm," a common pest affecting pistachio farms in the region. Other



topics included the costs of setting up pyrolysis units, the logistics of creating a reliable biomass supply chain, and the practicalities of scaling up biochar production for large-scale agricultural use.

As expected, many pistachio farmers expressed a keen interest in witnessing the effects of biochar in practice before considering large-scale investments in biochar facilities.

The meeting concluded with a sense of optimism and strong commitment from all involved parties to continue exploring these sustainable solutions. There was unanimous agreement on the need for further research, collaboration, and practical demonstrations to ensure that biochar and wood vinegar can be effectively integrated into local farming systems.

The PYRAGRAF project's work in promoting sustainable agriculture and biomass-based solutions is set to make a significant impact in the region. The continued support and participation of farmers, researchers, and policymakers will be key in advancing these initiatives.



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