

Farm minister discusses cooperation with Turkish officials

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Greece's agricultural development minister Evangelos Bassiakos and ministry secretary general Christos Avgoulas discussed issues farm product trade issues and matters of general interest in the agricultural centre, during talks in Istanbul on Friday.

The Greek officials met with the president of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Murat Yalcintas and Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey (DEIK) chairman Selim Egeli, with whom they exchanged views, focusing on the projection and promotion of quality Greek farm products on the Turkish market.

In that context, they discussed initiatives for the two countries' participation in international trade fairs Istanbul and Athens.

Also discussed were olive tree cultivation, olive oil and olive trade and processing, biotechnology and organic farming, rapid mutual briefing on plant diseases, and cooperation between the two countries' research foundations.

In statements to ANA-MPA afterwards, Bassiakos said he was pleased by his discussions in Istanbul, and also by the prospects opening up from such a cooperation between the two countries.

Egeli told ANA-MPA that he and Bassiakos reached an important decision during their discussion, that another meeting would be set up, with the participation of private enterprises from both countries.

The new meeting was tentatively slated for June in Athens, in the context of a meeting of the Mixed Greek-Turkish Committee, in which the private business sector would take part in addition to the customary state organisations.

Earlier, Bassiakos was received by Ecumenical Patriarch Vartholomeos, whom he presented with a special medal in recognition of his contribution to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Vartholomeos also accepted an official invitation to the prefecture of Viotia extended to him by Metropolitans Ieronymos of Thiva and Livadia and Vassilios of Elassona, Viotia MP Michail Yannakis, and Viotia Prefect Klearchos Pergantas, as well as other local mayors and officials, who visited the Ecumenical Patriarchate together with Bassiakos.

Bassiakos paid tribute to Vartholomeos' ecological sensitivity and the Ecumenical Patriarchate's international activity on ecology issues.

The Ecumenical Patriarch hosted a lunch in honour of the minister.