

## **TUI Cares for Turkey - boosting rural income by supplying locally-made products to the tourism sector**

- *With the help of the tourism industry, 150 rural producers will improve their access to markets in the Muğla region of Turkey*
- *Boosting the quantity and quality of local delicacies will increase income and employment in rural communities*
- *Project will preserve gastronomic heritage and enhance authentic food experiences and cultural experiences for holiday makers*

**Berlin, 01 April 2019.** *Over the next three years, the TUI Care Foundation will help rural, small-scale farmers in south-west Turkey to benefit from tourism. The project, which will be delivered by the Travel Foundation, will improve the livelihoods of farmers and small holders in the Muğla region by helping them to supply much sought after local delicacies of honey, olives, citrus fruit, almonds and pomegranates to hotels, restaurants and gift shops.*

More than 50% of the population in Muğla is rural and although the tourism industry is booming along the “Turquoise Coast”, most farmers do not yet tap into the growing tourism market or take their products to the next level to create added value and increase their profitability. Research estimates that only 5-10% of “value added” foods such as jam, yoghurt and ice cream bought by hotels are produced locally. Farmers and village communities lack the scale or knowhow to add value to products, to meet the quality standards of an international market or to create appealing marketing campaigns. The TUI Care Foundation believes that this needs to change.

By creating new or improved products and opening new markets in the hotel and resort sector of the tourism industry, the aim is for at least 150 farmers and their families to have more secure and sustainable livelihoods. A team of agronomists, business and tourism experts will help establish supply chains for delicacies such as jams and honey, bringing local products to international visitors.

The project focuses on offering tailored technical assistance and advice which will help the community of rural Muğla to thrive. From increasing the visibility of their produce and brands through better marketing and communications, to upgrading production processes and to offering guidance on how to meet international quality and certification standards, the project aims to develop and improve the long term prospects of the community. To celebrate the start of the project, a launch takes place on 4<sup>th</sup> of April in Muğla’s Chamber of Commerce including a tasting of locally sourced products.

Thomas Ellerbeck, Chairman of the TUI Care Foundation, explains: “Helping communities to go beyond primary production through value addition not only helps local economies thrive, but it also preserves valuable and authentic local heritage. The TUI Care Foundation works towards an inclusive tourism economy, in which destinations and their communities thrive”.

Salli Felton from the Travel Foundation said: "The Muğla region is blessed with a whole variety of products that will be of interest to tourists staying in hotels and visiting gift shops and producers are keen to supply them. Developing a local supply chain from the coast to the countryside will spread the economic benefits of tourism and provide rural communities with the opportunity to grow and diversify".

The project will run until 2021 and is part of the TUI CARES programme, which is dedicated to inclusive tourism development by supporting social business models and the protection of a destination's cultural and gastronomic heritage. Through its TUI CARES projects, the TUI Care Foundation aims to support 10,000 livelihoods by 2020 as part of its economic empowerment strategy.

#### **About TUI Care Foundation**

Building on the potential of tourism as a force for good, the TUI Care Foundation supports and initiates partnerships and projects, which create new opportunities for the young generation and contribute to thriving communities all over the world. Connecting holidaymakers to good causes, the TUI Care Foundation fosters education and training initiatives to open up new opportunities and perspectives for young people, the protection of the natural environment in holiday destinations and sustainable livelihoods in thriving destinations where local communities can benefit even more from tourism. TUI Care Foundation works global and acts local - it builds on strong partnerships with local and international organisations to create meaningful and long lasting impact. The charitable foundation values transparency and the efficient use of funds. Therefore 100% of the donations go to destination programmes with all administration costs of the foundation covered by TUI. TUI Care Foundation was founded by TUI, the world's leading tourism business, and is based in the Netherlands.

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