

LOCAL FOOD CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

Boost the local farmers economy
Relationships between locals producers and tourists

INTERVIEW WITH **YASMINA LOKMANOGLU**

Interview by Tarsus Ticaret ve Sanayi Odasi

CASE STUDY: PLACES OF INTEREST



Yasmina Lokmanoglu



Slow Food is a global, grassroots organization, founded in 1989 to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions, counteract the rise of fast life and combat people's dwindling interest in the food they eat, where it comes from and how our food choices affect the world around us.

Since its beginnings, Slow Food has grown into a global movement involving millions of people in over 160 countries, working to ensure everyone has access to good, clean and fair food.

Slow Food believes food is tied to many other aspects of life, including culture, politics, agriculture and the environment. Through our food choices we can collectively influence how food is cultivated, produced and distributed, and change the world as a result.



Slow Food®

WHAT IS THE STARTING POINT OF EARTH MARKET?

The starting point of the [Earth Market](#) is the Tarsus Gastronomic Days. The producers we invited during the Tarsus Gastronomic Days made excellent profits. Then we founded the Slow Food Association - Slow Food Tarsus. The most suitable formula is the Earth Market concept of the international Slow food network. It takes place twice a month, every second and fourth Sunday.

DO YOU RECEIVE ANY SUPPORT FROM INSTITUTIONS?

We get the biggest support from Tarsus Municipality and the Tarsus Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Tarsus Stock Exchange and Tarsus Chamber of Agriculture are also helping us. But the Tarsus Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Tarsus Municipality are always with us.

IF YOU WANT TO SET UP A STAND AT THE EARTH MARKET, WHAT REQUIREMENTS DO YOU HAVE TO HAVE?

First of all, it is not necessary to do organic farming. But you do have to prove that you are farming and breeding in an environmentally and animal-friendly way. Agroecological systems are very suitable for slow food. Secondly, if you do not want to produce but only do the processing, you have to use products that you buy at the market itself.

WHAT IS THE PLACE OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN EARTH MARKET?

Besides the question of how food is produced, a big part of the focus on the circular economy and sustainability is in the attention to packaging. For example, paper material is a priority, baskets made of natural materials are used, plastic material is never used, packaging with materials suitable for recycling is accepted, and many things like that. Plus we place a lot of emphasis on reuse. This also has an impact on cost, which is higher compared to the average price of the same product. Natural packaging is very expensive in Turkey. In the end, people either come with their own bags or reusable bags are sold on the market.

WHAT KIND OF SEMINARS DO YOU ORGANISE IN THE MARKETS?

We provide continuous training. First of all, communication, life without plastic, respect for the environment and nature, gender equality and pesticide damage. We regularly hold seminars on these topics. There are at least one or two seminars every Sunday. Chefs explain waste-free cooking with products on the market. And we certainly teach children something environmentally friendly. For example, last week we explained how to produce solar energy. We held a workshop for children on how to use solar energy. The Earth Market contributes a lot to tourism in Tarsus. There is a lot of movement in Tarsus. You can tell by the number of people who come and the shopkeepers who open their shops. Before the earthquake, tours were also arriving. The arrival of the tours was very important for our Sunday Earth Markets. We were promoting Tarsus and making the products of Tarsus known. In addition, we were establishing a relationship between the producer and the tourist on the tour. I hope the tours will resume in the coming years. The Earth Market has become the centre of attention. Because you can't find such natural and genuine products and food anywhere. With the Slow Food guarantee, you can get delicious, pesticide-free or sustainable food the way you want it. You can have fun with your children. It was a very nice place of interest.

Photo by Slow Food International

