



GOVERNMENT
OF MALTA



AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) SPECIFIC PROVISIONS



AECC 1

Integration and Maintenance
of Autochthonous
Maltese Species

AECC 1A

Integration and
Maintenance of the
Maltese Black Chicken



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) – SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

AECC 1 – Integration and Maintenance of Autochthonous Maltese Species

This intervention will focus on conserving Malta's biodiversity and will be consistent with the priorities of Malta's National Biodiversity Action Plan. This intervention will have a positive impact on biodiversity, enhancing the countryside and promoting practices which work in harmony with our unique ecosystems. Support may include conservation of indigenous species including Carob and Mulberry trees that will assist farmers to maintain these trees in a good condition.

AECC 1A – Integration and maintenance of the Maltese Black Chicken – Eligibility Criteria

- ▶ All Maltese Black Chicken need to be certified as such by competent individuals identified by the competent authority;
- ▶ Have a minimum of 30 heads (0.315 LU) of Maltese Black Chicken in order to be eligible for support, which is to be maintained throughout the contracted period;
- ▶ Farmers will be required to maintain any records relevant to the sub measure and also those relevant to Conditionality obligations.

AECC 1A – Commitments

- ▶ Beneficiaries will be required to ensure that all Maltese Black Chicken are ringed (or micro-chipped) using appropriate (as instructed by the Competent Authority) tamper proof rings/micro-chips;
- ▶ Each individual poultry must have a signed certificate of accreditation clearly stating the identifying number on the poultry ring;
- ▶ Applicants are required to fill in the livestock form (template) under Annex I of the guidelines;
- ▶ All poultry upon which the applicant is applying for aid must also have an updated vaccination program in place, which is to be documented in the vaccination form under Annex II;
- ▶ In case of any chicken deaths, the beneficiary must submit a Force Majeure request with ARPA within 15 working days from the event.

AECC 1A – Support

Support rate: €25.01/head/year.



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) SPECIFIC PROVISIONS



AECC 1

Integration and Maintenance
of Autochthonous
Maltese Species

AECC 1B

Integration and
Maintenance of the
Maltese Ox



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) – SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

AECC 1 – Integration and Maintenance of Autochthonous Maltese Species

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AECC 1B – Integration and maintenance of the Maltese Ox – Eligibility Criteria

- ▶ Livestock breeders registering for support under this AECC must provide breed accreditation and certification (attesting to the purity of the Maltese Ox to be at least 96.87%) for each livestock unit;
- ▶ Applicable to livestock breeders who are registered with the Food and Veterinary Regulation Division;
- ▶ Farmers will be required to maintain any records relevant to the sub measure and also those relevant to Conditionality obligations.

AECC 1B – Commitments

- ▶ Must rear Maltese Ox – herd book must be kept up to date.

AECC 1B – Support

Support rate: €1,936.27 per 1 livestock unit (equivalent to 1 Maltese Ox).



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) SPECIFIC PROVISIONS



AECC 1

Integration and Maintenance
of Autochthonous
Maltese Species

AECC 1C

Conservation
Indigenous Species
including Carob
and Mulberry trees



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) – SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

AECC 1 – Integration and Maintenance of Autochthonous Maltese Species

This intervention will focus on conserving Malta's biodiversity and will be consistent with the priorities of Malta's National Biodiversity Action Plan. This intervention will have a positive impact on biodiversity, enhancing the countryside and promoting practices which work in harmony with our unique ecosystems. Support may include conservation of indigenous species including Carob and Mulberry trees that will assist farmers to maintain these trees in a good condition.

AECC 1C – Conservation indigenous species including Carob and Mulberry trees – Eligibility Criteria

- ▶ Carob, black/white Mulberry tree found on site;
- ▶ Trees must be located on eligible agricultural land;
- ▶ In order to apply for aid a farmer must have a minimum of 0.1124 hectares of agricultural land. Any parcels that are found to be less than 0.04 hectares of eligible land are ineligible for payment;
- ▶ Parcels not containing any trees can still be included under this AECC in order to reach the eligible area of 1 tumolo as well as to be able to increase the number of trees eligible under this AECC;
- ▶ Committed agricultural area needs to be maintained in line with annual minimum agricultural activity.

AECC 1C – Commitments

- ▶ The beneficiary is obliged to implement specific maintenance actions relevant to the tree species and ensure that the tree is maintained in good health;
- ▶ The beneficiary will be required to maintain any records relevant to the AECC and also those relevant to Conditionality obligations.

AECC 1C – Support

Support rate: The rate of support for the conservation of the carob and mulberries shall be of €44.49 per tree per year, up to a maximum of 18 trees per hectare.



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) SPECIFIC PROVISIONS



AECC 2

Measure for the Maintenance of Trees
(Support for the maintenance of
newly planted recommended
tree species)



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) – SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

AECC 2 – Measure for the maintenance of trees (Support for the maintenance of newly planted recommended tree species) – Eligibility Criteria

- ▶ In order to apply for aid a farmer must have a minimum of 1124m² of agricultural land. Any parcels that are found to be less than 0.04 hectares are ineligible;
- ▶ Farmers will be required to keep records relevant to their holdings and provide them upon request during any official inspection;
- ▶ Farmers must be registered in the IACS Farmer Registry;
- ▶ Farmers must declare the type and location of the trees planted;
- ▶ Trees must be planted on eligible agricultural land, eligible trees are as listed in Annex III of the guidance notes.

AECC 2 – Commitments

- ▶ Introduction of newly planted trees must be carried out in accordance with ERA Guidelines;
- ▶ Farmers are obliged to keep a record pertaining to the trees present on the parcel as per Annex IV of the guidance notes;
- ▶ Must carry out appropriate practices, depending on the tree being maintained;
- ▶ Pest control and rationalization of fertilizer and pesticide treatments;
- ▶ In the event that a tree planted dies, at any point during the 5-year commitment, the farmer is obliged to replace it at his own expense.

AECC 2 – Support

Support rate: €44.49/tree/year up to a maximum of 18 trees per hectare.



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) SPECIFIC PROVISIONS



AECC 3

Environmental Commitments to control
Weeds in Orchards and Vineyards
by Mechanical, instead of
Chemical Methods



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) – SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

AECC 3 – Environmental Commitments to control Weeds in Orchards and Vineyards by Mechanical, instead of Chemical Methods

The objective of this measure is to incentivise farmers to control weeds growing in vineyards and orchards between 15th October and 28th February, using mechanical means. The measure will oblige farmers to use a grass cutter/mower to control weeds growing in vineyards and orchards during the winter season, with the aim of promoting biodiversity and supporting local flora and fauna.

AECC 3 – Eligibility Criteria

- ▶ In order to apply for aid a farmer must have a minimum of 0.1124 hectares (1 tumolo) of permanent crops (fruit trees/olive trees/vines). Any polygons in parcels that are found to have less than 0.04 hectares of orchards and vineyards are ineligible for payment;
- ▶ Adjacent polygons (touching each other) may be counted together.

AECC 3 – Commitments

- ▶ Payment may only be granted on agricultural area which has been maintained in line with annual minimum agricultural activity;
- ▶ Farmers must observe the baseline Conditionality requirements;
- ▶ Farmers will be required to keep records relevant to their holding and provide them upon request during any official inspection;
- ▶ Between 15th October and 28th February weeds can only be controlled with a mower/grass cutter. Weeds removed during this period can be retained as mulch;

- ▶ The use of herbicides is prohibited throughout the year with the exception of specific herbicides targeting Bermuda grass between 15th June and 15th August;
- ▶ Nitrogen based fertilizer must be split into a minimum of 2 separate applications – a template of the Fertiliser Application record can be found under Annex V of the guidance notes;
- ▶ In the event that farmers do not retain the weeds as mulch (removed between the 15th of October and the 28th of March) they are required to cultivate intercrops between vines and orchard trees, nitrogen fixing plants part of the vicia spp group (excluding vicia faba) in addition also the hedysarum spp;
- ▶ The beneficiaries are required to maintain records of use of herbicides and records in relation to Conditionality obligations.

AECC 3 – Support

Support rate: €144.15/tumolo/year.



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) SPECIFIC PROVISIONS



AECC 4 Introduction of Bee Boxes on Holdings



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) – SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

AECC 4 – Introduction of Bee Boxes on Holdings

The objective of this measure is to incentivise farmers to set up bee boxes on their holding and to support established beekeepers, to encourage them to continue in the apiculture sector. This measure would be particularly beneficial in areas which have a high garrigue/maquis to agricultural land ratio, due to the wild-flower varieties naturally occurring in such areas.

AECC 4 – Eligibility Criteria

- ▶ Farmers must have a minimum of 0.2 hectares of agricultural land registered under this land-based commitment. This is the minimum land requirement needed to be eligible for payment for 1 bee box. Any parcels that are found to be less than 0.04 hectares, are ineligible, however movement of bee boxes may be carried out on Agridec parcels, parcels with less than 0.04 Ha of eligible land and X:Y coordinates;
 - ▶ Farmers must be registered in the IACS Farmer Registry;
 - ▶ Bee boxes must be kept on agricultural land (including garrigue) throughout the year;
 - ▶ All bee boxes under this measure are to be also linked/attached to agricultural parcel/s upon registration of land-based management commitment;
 - ▶ Beneficiaries are to inform the competent authorities on the exact location in which the bee boxes are placed to ensure adequate traceability and controls using form in Annex VI of the guidance notes;
 - ▶ The beekeeper may enter in agreement with other farmers with the aim of introducing parcels under this commitment to increase the amount of supported bee-boxes and/or to use these additional parcels for the movement of bee boxes obligation;
- ▶ In registering for support the applicant is required to have a minimum of 5 active bee boxes;
 - ▶ All bee boxes must be uniquely tagged for identification and control purposes.

AECC 4 – Commitments

- ▶ Keep and maintain a minimum of 5 bee boxes in good health;
- ▶ The beekeeper will be required to identify the location on the holding (and garrigue as and when permissible) where the bee boxes will be set up;
- ▶ Required to be a member of an apicultural society and annually present the receipt upon submission of the payment claim;
- ▶ Beekeepers are required to keep a record of all committed bee boxes on their holding and/or under their ownership but located on a different holding;
- ▶ The beekeeper will be required to notify ARPA of the movements to be carried out every year;
- ▶ Upon registering bee boxes for support the beneficiary will be required to put physical identification in accordance with ARPA requirements on each box upon which the farmer is registering for aid.

AECC 4 – Support

Support rate: €147.80/hive/year up to a maximum of 5 bee boxes per hectare may be supported.



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) SPECIFIC PROVISIONS



AECC 5

Implementation of Soil Management and Conservation Plan on a Parcel



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) – SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

AECC 5 – Implementation of Soil Management and Conservation Plan on a Parcel

The objective of this measure is for farmers to prepare and implement a Soil Management Plan (SMP) on their parcels targeting three primary soil related threats on a parcel level; erosion, compaction and low soil organic matter. The SMP must be drafted and signed by a competent person whose name is published on the website of the competent authority (Plant Protection Directorate). The farmer will be obliged to follow all the recommendations in the SMP.

AECC 5 – Eligibility Criteria

- ▶ In order to apply for aid a farmer must have a minimum of 0.1124 hectares (1 tumolo) of arable land. Any parcels that are found to be less than 0.04 hectares, are ineligible;
- ▶ Farmers will be required to keep records relevant to their holding;
- ▶ During the request period the farmer must present either a copy of the soil test results or a receipt showing proof that the soil sample has been submitted covering all parcels being included in the commitment;
- ▶ All submitted soil samples need to be collected by advisors who are already recognized on the date the sample was submitted to the lab. All soil samples are to be collected under the supervision of the competent person;
- ▶ Only arable land is eligible for support under this measure;
- ▶ Irrigable agricultural land with soil organic matter (SOM) below 2% is ineligible (GAEC obligation). When submitting a request for application for the first time, the farmer must present a SOM test with a result of 2% or higher to be eligible. This 2% eligibility requirement is not applicable in the case of non-irrigated parcels;
- ▶ Farmer must also submit a crop plan with the SMP.

AECC 5 – Commitments

- ▶ Farmers must implement the measures and actions included in the Soil Management Plan. The SMP should be in line with the guidelines issued by the Competent Authority;
- ▶ Submit copy of the crop plan and fertiliser plan;
- ▶ Soil tests must be carried out annually for Soil Organic Matter (SOM) throughout the commitment years. The soil test results must be submitted to ARPA during the annual payment claim;
- ▶ By the end of the commitment in the case of irrigated land, the soil organic matter must be at least 3%;
- ▶ In the case of non-irrigated land by the end of the commitment the soil organic matter must be of at least 1%;
- ▶ The costs of the soil tests and the SMP are to be borne by the beneficiary since these are included in the payment rate of the measure;
- ▶ On the spot checks will be carried out by ARPA which shall include where deemed necessary sampling and testing for Soil Organic Matter;
- ▶ Leave the committed parcels fallow between 1st July and 1st October every year during the summer months. Summer fallow is the practice of allowing land to lie idle during the growing season;
- ▶ Between 1st July and 1st October farmers cannot plant any crops, apply synthetic fertiliser/pesticides to the parcels in question;
- ▶ Farmers will be required to maintain any records relevant to the AECC and also those relevant to Conditionality obligations.

AECC 5 – Support

Support rate: €2,378.35/hectare/year.



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) SPECIFIC PROVISIONS



AECC 6

Broiler Welfare Scheme



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) – SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

AECC 6 – Broiler Welfare Scheme

The objective of this intervention is to incentivize broiler breeders in the Maltese Islands to improve broiler welfare during the growing period by reducing the stocking density of broilers per square meter during the growing period on their farm, which is set at a thirteen (13) birds per square meter.

AECC 6 – Eligibility Criteria

- ▶ Eligible beneficiaries for this intervention should be active broiler breeders registered with the Veterinary Regulation Directorate (VRD) who produced over 2,000 broilers per year in the previous two years OR newly licensed broiler breeders with a capacity to produce over 2,000 broilers per year;
- ▶ Only batches of chicks that entered the farm as from 1st of January 2023 shall be eligible for this scheme;
- ▶ Data concerning eligibility and eventual payment data shall be extracted directly from NLD;
- ▶ To be and remain eligible for this scheme farmers must adhere to the relevant EU and National regulations and take any follow up actions as indicated by the competent authority (VRD).

AECC 6 – Commitments

- ▶ Broiler breeders are to keep and present updated records on production data such as amount of day-old chicks bought from hatchery, breeding data of each batch, medical treatment (if any), mortalities and slaughtering data;
- ▶ The broiler breeder shall inform the slaughterhouse that they are following this measure to commence slaughter by the 35th day, whereby the farmers must at least slaughter 20% of the batch in question by the 36th day otherwise the whole batch would not be eligible for payment; in any case animals slaughtered after the 42nd day shall not be eligible for payment;
- ▶ Whereby day 1 shall be the first day that the chicks are on the farm, provided that in Malta delivery of chicks to the farm from the hatchery occurs in less than 24hrs from hatching; the date of slaughter is the day that the broilers are slaughtered.

AECC 6 – Support

Support rate: €0.35 per eligible broiler slaughtered.



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) SPECIFIC PROVISIONS



AECC 7

Organic Farming

AECC 7A Support for In-Conversion to Organic Farming



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) – SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

AECC 7 – Organic Farming

This intervention provides for support for farmers to convert part or all of their production to organic farming practices with products aimed for human consumption. Support payments for conversion shall only apply for a maximum of two (2) years (irrespective of crop type following the certification “in conversion to organic” issued by the Control Authority or Control Body), for all land which is converted to organic production. The farmer shall move to the maintenance level/rate after the end of the conversion commitment (maximum 2 years subject to the parcel meeting CA/CB recognition criteria) which support shall be provided for farmers to maintain organic farming practices (aimed at human consumption) for a minimum of 5 years (where applicable), following the 2 years conversion period described under the previous action of conversion.

AECC 7A – Support for In-Conversion to Organic Farming – Eligibility Criteria

- ▶ Farmers applying for aid under Conversion to Organic shall satisfy a number of baseline mandatory requirements as follows:
- ▶ Applicants must be active farmers and commit themselves to control management of land for the length of the conversion period and engaged in food production;
- ▶ Farmers will be required to keep records relevant to their holding;
- ▶ Those receiving support for conversion are required to attend training relevant to conversion as detailed in the MA's Guidance Notes;
- ▶ Farmers benefitting from the organic quality scheme shall not be eligible for support under the Organic Conversion and Maintenance scheme for the same year;
- ▶ Applicants shall be in line with standard mandatory agricultural conditions and thus should be able to provide records of their actions;

- ▶ The applicant must have at least 0.1124 Ha of eligible agriculture land.
- ▶ Each parcel declared must have at least 0.01 Ha of eligible land cover specific to the sub-measure in question.

AECC 7A – Commitments

- ▶ Farmers will be required to demonstrate ‘in conversion’ certification in order to be eligible for support for conversion, which certification shall be confirmed annually by ARPA with the relevant Control Authority/Body;
- ▶ Regarding the conversion to organic, commitment shall be undertaken within 2 years whereas maintenance shall be undertaken within 5 years (total of 7 years if land was in conversion).

AECC 7A – Support

Support rate: €4,377.60/Ha for land which is under conversion to organic land. It is important to note, however, that this rate is still subject to European Commission approval, and thus may change accordingly.



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AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE COMMITMENTS (AECCs) SPECIFIC PROVISIONS



AECC 7

Organic Farming

AECC 7B Support for Maintenance for Organic Farming



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AECC 7 – Organic Farming

This intervention provides the support for farmers to convert part or all of their production to organic farming practices with products aimed for human consumption. Support payments for conversion shall only apply for a maximum of two (2) years (irrespective of crop type following the certification “in conversion to organic” issued by the Control Authority or Control Body), for all land which is converted to organic production. The farmer shall move to the maintenance level/rate after the end of the conversion commitment (maximum 2 years subject to the parcel meeting CA/CB recognition criteria) which support shall be provided for farmers to maintain organic farming practices (aimed at human consumption) for a minimum of 5 years (where applicable, following the 2 years conversion period described under the previous action of conversion).

AECC 7B – Support for Maintenance for Organic Farming – Eligibility Criteria

- ▶ Farmers applying for aid under Maintenance to Organic shall satisfy a number of baseline mandatory requirements as follows;
- ▶ Applicants must be active farmers and commit themselves to control management of land for the length of the conversion period;
- ▶ Farmers will be required to keep records relevant to their holding;
- ▶ Those receiving support for conversion are required to attend training relevant to conversion as detailed in the MA’s Guidance Notes;
- ▶ Those beneficiaries transitioning from conversion to maintenance will be receiving support for 5 years from the initial certification date of organic certification status, regardless of the crop type;
- ▶ Farmers benefitting from the organic quality scheme shall not be eligible for support under the Organic Conversion and Maintenance scheme for the same year;
- ▶ Applicants shall be in line with standard mandatory agricultural conditions and

thus should be able to provide records of their actions;

- ▶ The applicant must have at least 0.1124 Ha of eligible agriculture land;
- ▶ Each parcel declared must have at least 0.01 Ha of eligible land cover specific to the sub-measure in question.

AECC 7B – Commitments

- ▶ Farmers will be required to demonstrate ‘organic’ certification in order to be eligible for support for maintenance, which certification shall be confirmed annually by ARPA with the relevant Control Authority/Body;
- ▶ Regarding the conversion to organic, commitment shall be undertaken within 2 years whereas maintenance shall be undertaken within 5 years (total of 7 years if land was in conversion).

AECC 7B – Support

Support rate: €4,377.60/Ha for land which is under conversion to organic land. It is important to note, however, that this rate is still subject to European Commission approval, and thus may change accordingly.