

### Rainforest Alliance Management Team Visit

The Rainforest Alliance management team made the following visits in November, when they were in Türkiye as part of the "Rainforest Alliance 2030 Strategy" activities.

- Balsu senior management meeting
- Balsu factory tour
- Large and small scale hazelnut farmer visits in the Balsu supply chain
- Public Authority, farmer and living spaces visits in the "Sustainable Hazelnut Villages" project area, Ferizli District



The overall purpose of these visits, held on November 8 in collaboration with Balsu, is to receive feedback from the field on the value the Rainforest Alliance brings to stakeholders and to understand how it can better support solving potential problems and meeting needs.



Within the scope of the "Sustainable Hazelnut Villages" project, a hazelnut orchard visit was made in Bakırlı village of Ferizli district. While the information on increasing the quality and efficiency in production was mentioned, experience and knowledge were shared on the existence of child labour in seasonal migrant agricultural workers and the necessity of improving living and working conditions. In addition, a workers' shelter, which was improved within the scope of the project work, was visited.





During the ongoing visit at Ferizli District Governorate, the members of the working group established within the scope of the project came together.

Under the leadership of Ferizli District Governor Hasan Balcı, a question and answer session was held on the area-based project objectives within the scope of combating child labour.



Uğur Gülderer, the General Manager of the Young Lives Foundation, the local implementing partner of the project, underlined that the target is to reach children between the ages of 11-18. Gülderer stated that 80 children were drawn from hazelnut orchards and included in the summer school opened within the scope of the project in Ferizli. She also said that in 2022, more children were supported during the harvest period within the scope of other children protection projects supported by Balsu.

## "Education Scholarship" Support for Children

The Young Lives Foundation, which was established to support the 11-18 age group's access to education, participated in the 44th Istanbul Marathon to increase the access of seasonal migrant agricultural workers children to education.

As Balsu, we have been providing scholarships for children in the seasonal migrant agricultural labour cycle during the 9-month education period since 2014.

During the 2022 - 2023, 166 seasonal migrant agricultural workers children who continue their education will receive scholarship support every month thanks to the social campaign of the Young Lives Foundation, in which Balsu participated.





## Regenerative Agro-environmental Applications

While preparing for the 2023 product, we started to examine the climate data of 9 main hazelnut producing provinces (Trabzon, Giresun, Ordu, Samsun, Bartın, Zonguldak, Düzce, Sakarya, Kocaeli) for the months of September and October, 2022.

In these months, temperatures were approximately +1°C higher than normal and precipitation was close to normal. In our general field controls, with the effect of temperatures, “earliness” symptoms are observed according to hazelnut phenology, and the transition period of the pests to the “resting” period is prolonged.



Seeing the impact of climatic changes in hazelnut orchards, it has become much more important for hazelnut farmers to adopt and implement regenerative approaches in hazelnut production.

Drought and unstable precipitation problems, which are frequently encountered due to climatic changes, have made it a necessity to keep water in the soil and increase its usability.



For this purpose, one of the easiest and most natural way is to spread the use of organic matter source materials by composting, which will increase the water holding capacity of the soil.



In this regard, the husk (average 400,000 t/year) which is the harvest residue of hazelnut, constitutes an important potential for farmers.



As Balsu, we provide free soil and leaf analysis support to our farmers in the sustainable hazelnut program in order to protect and improve the soil structure, and to prevent the use of unnecessary chemicals.

According to the results of this comprehensive analysis, after determining the needs of the soil and hazelnut plant, we create a suitable fertilization program for the farmer.



Our program farmers recycle the husk wastes of after harvest by making compost and improve the soil structure by increasing the amount of organic matter.

### **Soil Analysis and Fertilization Program**

Soil analysis support was provided to 542 farmers in six provinces in the Eastern and Western Black Sea Regions for the preparations for the 2023 season. It is aimed to carry out soil analysis of 25 percent of the farmers whose internal inspection process has been completed by the end of the year.



### **Organic Input Support**

Organic fertilizer support was provided to each of our farmers registered in the certification program in six provinces in the Eastern and Western Black Sea Regions.



### **Compost Making / Hazelnut Husk**

Practical composting activities were held with more than 50 farmers in eight farmer gardens' after harvest in four provinces in the Eastern and Western Black Sea Regions, and these activities were conveyed within all farmer groups.

