



## **Rural Development and Trade of agricultural/livestock products**

The Rural Development section of the Agricultural Research Institute manages the research program "Rural Development and Trade of agricultural/livestock products".

Within our website you can find information about the research project "The 'Information Society' in rural areas: Informing farmers through the use of new information and communication technologies". The aim of the project is to record: (a) the extent to which rural world is informed on agricultural issues, (b) the existing sources and the means used by farmers to access agricultural related information, (c) the extent of satisfaction as regards the use of the existing media and (d) the establishment (if necessary) of a new extension model or improvement of the existing one.

The purpose of this project is to make suggestions as for the means and methods in order to improve the way that the research results are disseminated to farmers. This could be achieved with the exploitation of several capabilities offered by the new information and communication technologies (ICT) as well as the Internet. The main objective is to enable the farmer to have access to data and information that will become his/her knowledge and help them to take informed decisions. Access to new and updated information will also facilitate the producers to improve the quality of their products, to become aware of new cultivation practices, and to improve the quality of life in rural areas, since, as well known, research contributes to development. At the same time, ICTs improve the two-way communication between researchers, agricultural extension officers and producers. Moreover, researchers can be informed directly about existing problems that need further research. Direct and timely information, enhanced with the use of ICT is beneficial for all stakeholders. This project is carried out with the cooperation of the Extension Office of the Department of Agriculture and the Cyprus National Rural Network.