

Friday, 8 December 2023  
Press Release Donau Soja

## **Donau Soja: Republic of Moldova increases soya harvest in 2023 and boosts market opportunities in the EU** ***Soya cake exports increased significantly in 2023***

Vienna/Chişinău. This year, the Republic of Moldova was able to increase the production of soybeans from 31,000 tonnes last year to 50,000 tonnes in 2023, while the area under cultivation remained roughly the same at 25,000 hectares. This success was possible due to increased rainfall and improved harvest yields. "We see great development opportunities for the cultivation of soya and other pulses in Moldova. Also market opportunities in Western Europe will increase in the coming years through the cultivation of sustainable, GMO-free and certified soybeans and soya products", predicts Donau Soja Senior Adviser and Director of the Protein Partnership Programme, Susanne Fromwald.

### **Main soya cake exporter becomes Donau Soja certified**

The Moldovan company and soya processor VI OIL AGRO SRL is currently under the process of Donau Soja certification. The company, which is a Donau Soja member, became the main soya cake exporter from Moldova and contributed to the increase of the overall Moldovan export to 2,800 tonnes until September 2023. The company also imports soybeans from Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Ukraine and other countries and processes them into soya products for livestock farming in the EU.

### **Opportunities for exports to the EU increase soya cultivation**

Since March 2023, the EU has approved the Republic of Moldova to import poultry and eggs into the EU. This strengthens poultry producers and laying hen farms in Moldova and increases the demand for sustainably produced and certified non-GMO and deforestation-free soya in Moldova, because of the demand of Western European consumers. Since April 2023, food producers in Moldova have also been allowed to label eggs, chicken and pork as well as products containing more than 50% meat as "GMO-free". This innovation was supported by Donau Soja, following the example of Austria, Germany and other EU countries. The controls were also strengthened by the Moldovan Food Safety Agency on the initiative of Donau Soja.

### **Protein partnerships connect producers and markets**

Donau Soja is also actively implementing its Protein Partnership Programme in the Republic of Moldova in order to strengthen safe, sustainable, GMO-free and deforestation-free soya production in Europe. This involves organising training courses for farmers on soybean cultivation and facilitating the certification of GMO-free soybeans in accordance with the Donau Soja and Europe Soya standards. Producers in Moldova will also be linked to the markets in Western Europe, as the new EU Deforestation Regulation will increase demand for regional soya from Europe, according to Donau Soja. The activities of Donau Soja in Moldova are supported by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA).

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