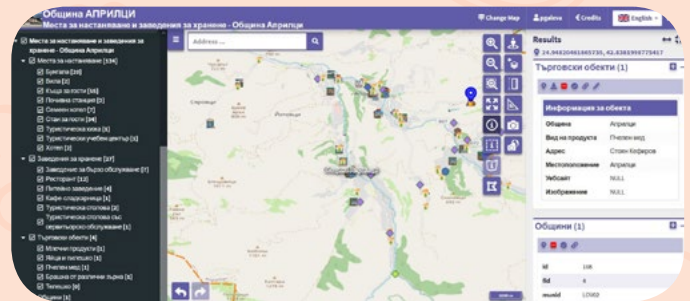


The way of rural food in Troyan, Apriltsi and Ugarchin

Mmmmm, smells like something delicious, fresh and crispy!
This is the smell of the Balkan!

- Do rural areas still feed the cities?
- ▲ How do rural food systems work?
- Who produces what food, how and for whom?
- ↷ Do rural people have access to local food? And visitors?
- What is the role of farmers in food systems?



The **RUSTIK** project has been seeking answers to these questions since December 2023. The aim is to understand whether food is a resource for territorial development, but also to create a sustainable tool for access to local food.

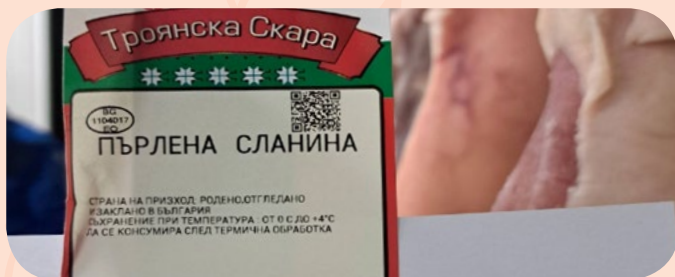
The **RUSTIK** team from St. Kliment Ohridski, together with the Local Action Group Troyan-Apriltsi-Ugarchin (**LIG TAU**), created an application for spatial localisation (**GIS - Geographical Identification System**) of rural food system actors. These are food producers, restaurants, guesthouses and hotels, as well as food processing and trading companies. We also include those small producers who are not registered as farmers, do not receive support for their activities, but are actively involved in

the rural food system. The GIS system will be officially available to everyone from 01.07.2024. Anyone who wants to know where and what local food is produced in Troyan, Apriltsi and Ugarchin, and how to access it, will be able to do so. Here you can see what the map will look like. The data will be available for each of the three municipalities separately and together.

In order to register and verify the data to feed the GIS system and to present it to the participants of the food system, the **RUSTIK** team started a series of meetings with the local communities of Troyan, Apriltsi and Ugarchin.

The first meetings were held in the municipality of Apriltsi on 25-28 April. We informed you about them [HERE](#). In Apriltsi, we found 89 registered livestock farms run by 58 farmers and other residents of the municipality who are not registered as farmers. They all keep a variety of livestock, with sheep (1549), cattle (628) and bee colonies (681) being the most numerous, although there are only 5 apiaries. In 2022, farmers in Apriltsi received a total of 554 713, 36 leva (283 262, 707 euro) in direct payments from the Common Agricultural Policy. It remains to be seen whether these payments have increased in 2023. This is just a small part of the data we have collected and we are rushing to share it with you so you can get an idea of where food is grown. Stay tuned for more data and information on food production and supply this summer and autumn. Questions and analysis to come!

During the period 15-19 May we held similar meetings in the settlements of Troyan. There are many more livestock farms here compared to those in Apriltsi - 283, and again sheep (6564), cattle (5060) and bee colonies (2385) are the most numerous. The Balkan is full of food, and therefore full of life! Farmers in the Troyan region received in 2022 a total of an impressive 40 333 771,429 leva (20 622 329, 870 euro) in direct payments from the Common Agricultural Policy. These subsidies are distributed among 249 farmers.



Expect the official launch of the system on 01.07.2024, and in the meantime news from Ugarchin! All these sites and many more - fruit and vegetable orchards, restaurants and guesthouses, will be available to all those interested in local food.