Larnaca, 20/06/2024

**Lidl Cyprus celebrates the successful completion of the 4th Sustainable Gastronomy Competition**

**The big winner of the competition was the team of the American College.**

The awards ceremony of the **4th Sustainable Gastronomy Competition** was successfully held on **Tuesday, June 18, 2024**, at the Lidl Food Academy. This year's event once again highlighted the harmonious blend of culinary innovation and environmental stewardship, thus highlighting the talents and commitments of young culinary professionals across Cyprus.

Notable educational institutions such as the **American College, City Unity College, KES College** and the **Vocational Education and Training Institutes of Post-secondary Education and Training (MIEEK)** participated in this year's competition. Contestants were challenged to come up with creative menus that were judged, not only with regards to taste, but also on adherence to sustainability principles, such as using local and seasonal ingredients and minimising water and energy consumption.

The winner of this year's competition was the **American College**, with the team consisting of **Maria Dimitriou, Michalis Michael** and **Yara Al Ayyas**.

The awards ceremony celebrated the innovative efforts of all those involved, with winners demonstrating exceptional skill and dedication towards sustainable culinary practices. At the opening of the event, **Mr. Georgios Dimitroulakis, Communication and Corporate Responsibility Manager of Lidl Cyprus** welcomed the audience saying *“As an environmentally responsible company, Lidl Cyprus is committed to the continuous improvement of sustainability in all aspects of its activities. We strongly believe that sustainable development is not just a choice, but a necessity for the future of our planet and future generations. Through this competition, we want to highlight and reward future professionals in the culinary industry who share the same vision.*

*Sustainable gastronomy is not only about the quality of the ingredients we use, but also about the way they are produced and consumed. Our aim is to encourage the use of local and organic products, reduce food waste and promote practices that protect the environment.”*.

Every year the competition is aligned with the **International Day of Sustainable Gastronomy under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment** and the **Cyprus Chefs Association**, while embodying Lidl Cyprus' commitment to promoting sustainable practices in the industry of gastronomy.

During the award ceremony, representatives of the Ministries and the Association congratulated the company for this initiative through their own greeting. On behalf of **the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, Dr Elias Markatzis, Director of the Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training**, said "*I would like to congratulate Lidl Cyprus for this initiative which I find very important and very useful, because as we know everything now revolves around sustainability and cooking could not be an exception*." In his speech, Dr. Markatzis also expressed the congratulations of the **Minister of Education, Sports and Youth, Dr. Athena Michaelides** "*I congratulate the initiative of Lidl Cyprus and Lidl Food Academy to establish this competition which has become an institution and contributes to the adoption of good practices by all of us, professionals and ordinary households so that food habits become healthier and more environmentally friendly.*"

**Mr. Andreas Grigoriou, General Director of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment**, also expressed his own greetings and congratulated Lidl Cyprus *"I would like to congratulate Lidl Cyprus for the consistency it demonstrates in matters related to sustainable gastronomy."* He went on to add *"Lidl Cyprus' actions to promote and support sustainable gastronomy through the establishment of this competition are also in line with the objectives set by the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment and it is with great pleasure that we have placed this special competition for another year under our auspices"*.

At the end of the speeches, **Mr. Evagoras Hadjipavlou, Vice President of Training, Cyprus Association of Chefs** expressed his own greetings and *congratulations "I would like to express our sincere thanks to Lidl Cyprus for their support and initiative in organizing this important competition. Lidl's contribution is invaluable and is a model of how businesses can make a positive contribution to society and the environment."*.

Sustainable gastronomy, as defined by the UN International Food and Agriculture Organisation, focuses on the sourcing, production and distribution of food, emphasising the importance of understanding how these factors affect our environment. Lidl Cyprus’ annual initiative aims to promote these practices, demonstrating the **company's continuous commitment to sustainability** that benefits both the health of its consumers and the efficient use of resources.

Lidl Cyprus **remains steadfast in its commitment to sustainable development, environmental respect and conscious consumption**. Events such as the Sustainable Gastronomy Competition play a key role in promoting these values, encouraging a future where the culinary arts contribute positively to environmental stewardship.

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