

ΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΚΟ ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ  
ΣΧΟΛΗ ΓΕΩΠΟΝΙΚΩΝ ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΩΝ, ΒΙΟΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ  
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## Πτυχιακή εργασία

ΑΞΙΟΛΟΓΗΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑΣ  
ΟΙΚΟΣΥΣΤΗΜΑΤΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΒΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΗΣ  
ΑΝΤΙΜΕΤΩΠΙΣΗΣ ΣΕ ΣΥΜΒΑΤΙΚΕΣ  
ΚΑΛΛΙΕΡΓΕΙΕΣ ΤΟΜΑΤΑΣ

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## ABSTRACT

Natural predators provide an invaluable service to an ecosystem, that of biological control. Crop margins provide important refuges to natural enemies and may improve biological control within the crop. The current study aimed at evaluating the ecosystem service of predation in Mediterranean tomato crops. Evaluation of predation within and in the margins of tomato fields was carried out in Pafos and Limassol during two periods: the fall-winter and the spring crop using *Ephestia kuehniella* eggs as prey facsimiles. The facsimiles were placed within the tomato crop and on wild plants on field margins. A week later, predation was assessed by counting the number of missing eggs. Results showed that predation in the field margins was five times lower than predation within the tomato crop. Beat sampling identified *Nesidiocoris tenuis* as the only predator present on tomato plants, and only during the spring season. Diversification of tomato fields using native plant species may increase the ecosystem service of predation and reduce the need for chemical pesticide applications.