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## **TURKEY, AZERBAIJAN TO BOOST COOPERATION IN AGRICULTURE**

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11.12.2018

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Yeni Safak (10 December 2018)

Turkey's Agriculture and Forestry Minister Bekir Pakdemirli met his Azerbaijani counterpart Inam Karimov in capital Baku during his official visit on Monday.

The two ministers discussed the current cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan in the field of agriculture, and exchanged views to further bilateral relations.

Following the meeting, Pakdemirli and Karimov signed a cooperation protocol on agricultural insurance.

Turkey aims to improve cooperation with Azerbaijan, Pakdemirli told the reporters.

He said Turkey ranks first in Europe, and the seventh country in the world in the field of agriculture, adding: "We want to share our experience with brotherly Azerbaijan."

Turkey and Azerbaijan will jointly produce freight cars for the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway (BTK), the Turkish transportation and infrastructure minister said on Wednesday. "Turkey and Azerbaijan will set up a plant in Azerbaijan to produce freight cars for BTK railway," Mehmet Cahit Turhan told reporters after his meeting with Azerbaijan State Railways head Cavid Gurbanov. "Work on the project is about to be completed. Factory sites were located for manufacturing. They will be produced immediately after establishing the plants," Turhan noted. The BTK railway line is only providing freight shipment services, Turhan said, adding that passenger transportation will start in the coming years. He said not only Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia will benefit from the railway, but also other countries. The 826-kilometer (513-mile) BTK railway project linking Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia began operation last year. Turkey opens new health center in Syria's Afrin

On the current trade volume between the two countries in agriculture, Pakdemirli said it -- not at the desired level -- should be increased.

Karimov, for his part, said that the agricultural cooperation between Azerbaijan and Turkey, as in all areas, set an example of cooperation.

The ministers also set the ways for cooperation in agricultural training and insurance, planting and livestock, he added.

Later in the day, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev received Pakdemirli.

In a statement, the Azerbaijani presidency said quoting Aliyev that friendship and brotherhood between Turkey and Azerbaijan were improving in all fields and agriculture had a great potential to extend cooperation.

For his part, Pakdemirli stressed the importance of Azerbaijan-Turkey Business Forum, which will be held on Tuesday, to boost ties between the two countries.

Pakdemirli also met Azerbaijan's Ecology and Natural Resources Minister Mukhtar Babayev.

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