



## INTRODUCTION OF COMMUNITY LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (CLMP)



The livestock sector in Armenia still faces challenges and to cope with those, most of the management practices need to be improved.

An idea to develop a Community Livestock Management Program (CLMP) was originated when PUM experts Mr. Robert Back and Mr. Wim de Jong were in Armenia in March of 2011. For the implementation of the pilot project, Sarnakunq community of the Syunik region was chosen to start with, as animal breeding and fieldwork are the main activities in the region.



In the scope of their July, 2012 visit, Mr. Back and Mr. de Jong along with CARD experts Arman Ohanyan, Levon Movsisyan and Tigran Gabrielyan met with Sarnakunq village Mayor Manuchar Mkrtychyan at Farm and Veterinary Service Center (FVSC) and discussed community pasture management issues and the project's strategic plan. The experts together with Suren Vardanyan, manager of FVSC, also visited the nearby and remote pastures to investigate community grazing system and pasture conditions.

The research showed that the lack of good pasture practices, control measures and ineffective use of land have brought about a number of impacts among them:

overgrazing, land degradation and soil erosion.

After the visits to the pastures and meeting with several farmers of Sarnakunq community, it was decided to develop a small-scale plan with a focus on a rotational grazing trial, young stock grazing trial and pasture fertilization.

To have a yield increase in livestock sector, the productivity of natural pastures must be increased, and necessary measures of care must be applied. The trial of rotational or controlled grazing system will involve an intensely grazing portions of a pasture (paddocks) followed by a rest period which will allow the forage to grow again (recover).



Such grazing schedule may as well help to eliminate parasites. Pasture rotation will supply the young stock with new and fresh roughage and the effect of contamination with parasites will be reduced through good nutrition.

Meanwhile, the experts acknowledge the fact that making a change in farmers' thinking will be a quite challenging task as only few of them showed interest in CLMP. They are reluctant to accept alternative grazing schedule; use the manure of cattle as a fertilizer rather than means of heating, etc. Nevertheless, FVSC manager Suren Vardanyan will try to involve at least two progressive farmers in this project, with hopes of serving as a model to attract other farmers in the community.

Apart from having discussions on good agricultural practices, good veterinary practices were also discussed, most importantly the adequate use of antibiotics and the growing resistance against antibiotics and anti-parasitics in the world.

PUM experts will continue to provide their consultations to CARD experts for the successful implementation of the Community Livestock Management Program.

## USDA's INITIATIVE FOR ARMENIAN MEAT INDUSTRY



Within the framework of the USDA Foreign Agricultural Services (FAS) funded Food Safety project, Meat Fabrication and Grading training was initiated and conducted in Armenia from July 19 to July 26.

The course was delivered by highly qualified experts from USA – Curtis Chisley from the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center and Orlando Phelps from the USDA Grading and Verification Division.

The training consisted of a two-day theoretical part and a four-day practical course in one of the slaughterhouses. The course was designed to equip people employed in the meat processing industry with the knowledge to effectively and efficiently grade carcasses in accordance with US and EU standards, and familiarize them with the main retail and wholesale cuts of beef, pork, lamb and goat carcasses. The main techniques of marketing animals and meat to consumers were presented as well.



“Doing this trip, we wanted to help the participants understand some of the different marketing practices that other consumers outside Armenia may have desire for. These were some of the things that we wanted to expose them

and let them see other marketing used around the world”, mentioned Orlando Phelps.

Both Armenian and US sides presented the ways of grading and cutting different carcasses compared and evaluated the advantages and shortfalls of different techniques and instrument methods.

Thirty-four participants, representing governmental agencies, supermarkets, butchery stores, slaughterhouses, Armenian State Agrarian University and private businesses, were very excited and impressed with the neat and uniform appearance of the presented retail cuts, and everyone expressed a desire to see such convenient and attractive offers at Armenian supermarkets in the near future.



While meat quality was the major focus of the current training, further training programs are being discussed to address meat hygiene and safety issues. In addition to the market-driven motivation for meat handlers to apply knowledge acquired during the training and assure safety of their production, regulations must be enforced for more regular compliance provision. Therefore, one of the important objectives of the project is to work with the State Food Safety Service to strengthen in-country regulatory compliance.

“This trip was basically on marketing of animals and meat, and the food safety inspection of meat was not the key point of our discussions. This area still needs to be addressed, and that’s something that I am hoping Armenia is working towards”, said Curtis Chisley.

“We will try to implement projects to work more on the food safety side, so that the meat that’s going into the Armenian system is as safe as possible,” added USDA FAS Food Safety Program Manager, Cynthia Evans.

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