



BUILDING CONFIDENCE



In July 2011 CARD foundation organized series of trainings within the project “Poverty Reduction and Confidence-building in Border Areas of Georgia and Armenia by Strengthening Civil Societies in Sustainable Rural Development” (STAGE II), as a final capacity development component under the aforementioned project.

Trainings and workshops were organized both for the target local government representatives and civil society organizations. Three trainings on Planning, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation were conducted for the local government representatives, namely from Lori and Tavush regions covering urban and rural municipalities.



The workshops aimed at enhancing the knowledge and skills of the local government representatives via introducing the concepts and methods on planning, specifically the key aspects that should be focused on while developing and implementing local socio-economic development plans.

The trainings on “Fundraising” and “Results based Management” were conducted for the target CSOs, namely “Shirak Competitiveness Centre”, “Spitak-Farmer” Association and “Yerevak” NGO.

These trainings aimed at promoting strategic perspective on fundraising and project management and their incorporation in the organizational and project management processes. With this the CSOs would gain more skills and abilities to better implement their projects.

All sessions were designed and carried out based on experiential and adults learning model. Trainees were extensively involved in practicum followed by trainers’ feedback and theoretical presentations. Group works, role plays, brainstorming and discussions were also part of training to make main ideas more explicit and tailored to the needs of trainees. This helped them become part of the training and learning process in real life situations.



As an outcome of those trainings the participants had increased their understanding about the topics taught and obtained more skills to apply the knowledge in their work and support their team members. The trainees and their trainers are sure that the impact of these activities will be visible during the project work of the participants’ respective organizations.

“Poverty Reduction and Confidence-building in Border Areas of Georgia and Armenia by Strengthening Civil Societies in Sustainable Rural Development” (STAGE II) Project is financed by the Austrian Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe (ADC) (for more information please visit: www.mfa.at/adc, www.ada.qv.at), implemented by CARE Österreich and CARE International in the Caucasus, along with the partner organizations – Civil Development Agency (CiDA) in Georgia and Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development (CARD) in Armenia.

FDA APPROVES CARD TO TEACH COURSE ON LOW-ACID AND ACIDIFIED CANNED FOODS IN ARMENIA



On July 25-29, Better Process Control School (BPCS) training was organized in Congress hotel, Yerevan by CARD Food Safety Department in collaboration with Louisiana State University (LSU). The course was delivered by CARD specialists: Mkhitar Hakobyan, Senior Food Safety Specialist, Sergey Chakhmakhchyan, Training Coordinator, and Zaruhi Davtyan, Food Safety Department Manager. FDA approved John Rushing, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, NCSU and Adjunct Professor, LSU to supervise this course. There were 18 participants in the program and one observer. Participants represented State Food Safety Service of the Ministry of Agriculture (SFSS), fruit & vegetable canneries, and Armenian State Agrarian University (ASAU).

This was the third of the minimum number of courses recommended by the FDA for establishment of a foreign BPCS. The first course was conducted in June 2007 by LSU with the presence of an FDA representative Mr. Daniel Gefin, and the second course was conducted in June 2010 by CARD in collaboration with LSU.

The School provides complete coverage of those areas of instruction that are considered critical to properly train canning plant personnel: Microbiology of Thermally Processed Foods, Acidified Foods, Food Plant Sanitation, Principles of Thermal Processing, Still and Agitating Retorts, Aseptic Processing and Packing Systems, Container Closure Evaluation. Since regulatory compliance is the key to any exports going to the US, scientific principles for safely processing low-acid and acidified foods were presented along with US regulatory requirements to insure compliance. Certain tools for tear-down examination of double seams, such as seam micrometer, can opener, and nippers were demonstrated. Delivery of the instruction was determined to be effective, based on the success of the participants on the tests conducted at the end of each chapter instructions.

In his report to FDA Dr. Rushing mentioned that the course was planned and conducted in a professional manner. In addition, he mentioned that this type of training is indispensable in communicating US food safety and regulatory requirements to the WTO trading partners. The CARD team, in his opinion, will bring credit to the BPCS effort. Thus, Dr. Rushing recommended the course be approved by the Commissioner, and FDA accepted CARD as a qualified provider of BPCS instruction in Armenia. On the whole, the trainings elicited good response from the participants, who were attentive and enthusiastic about the class.

Low-acid canned foods and acidified food products are important to the Armenian economy and represent a significant source of value-added export products. For the past five years there has been a growing demand for the BPCS in the country. Armenia is developing its food processing industry and both private and public sectors want and need to follow international export requirements. Hence, training programs required by US regulations, such as BPCS, are going to become a permanent and sustainable reoccurring event.

CARD considers provision of food safety training and dissemination of science-based food safety information to the food processing industry and regulatory agencies as one of its major objectives. Therefore, becoming an FDA-approved institution to conduct BPCS in Armenia on a regular basis is considered to be one of CARD's major achievements. CARD has already been authorized by the appropriate US bodies to conduct other food safety courses, such as Seafood HACCP, Meat and Poultry HACCP, ServSafe, and has successfully conducted these courses on a regular basis.



SOME PLANTS DUPLICATE THEIR DNA TO OVERCOME ADVERSITY

Whatever does not kill a plant may actually make it stronger. After being partially eaten by grazing animals, for example, some plants grow bigger and faster and reproduce more successfully than they otherwise would.

Researchers report that one secret to these plants' post-traumatic triumph lies in their ability to duplicate their chromosomes - again and again - without undergoing cell division.

Supported by



1/21 Azatutyan Ave., Yerevan 0037, Armenia
Tel. (374 60) 440-550
E-mail: card@card.am; Website: www.card.am