



**Breaking news**

**CARD HOLDS TWO GRAND OPENINGS IN ARAGATSOTN REGION**

CARD's "Apna Cheese Plant Reconstruction" and "Establishment of a Milk Collection Unit" projects held grand openings on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008 in Apna village and in Buzhakan village respectively.

The events were attended by Levon Rukhikyan, RA Deputy Minister of Agriculture; Sean Carmody, USDA Agricultural Project Coordinator for Armenia/Georgia; representatives from UMCOR, COAF and Ashtarak Kat; CARD Director, Gagik Sardaryan, CARD Rural Development Department Manager, Felix Vardanyan and CARD staff members.

The Apna Cheese Plant's project mission was to create proper sanitary and technological conditions for producing consistent



quality products with diversified range and increased volumes at Aram Khachtryan Sole Proprietor's plant.

At present, Mr. Khachatryan produces Lori and Chanakh cheeses in his production unit. Between 1.5 and 1.6 tons of milk are collected daily from approximately 50 farmers residing in Apna and neighboring villages. The products are sold in Yerevan at the Gor supermarket chain and are served at numerous restaurants.

The Buzhakan Milk project established a milk collection unit (MCU), organized milk collection from farmers and introduced a marketing strategy for milk processors.

**Breaking news**



The project offered technical assistance to a farmers group led by David Maloyan. Also financial assistance was provided for remodeling milk collection facilities and for obtaining necessary equipment.

Currently, the Milk Collection Unit collects 1300 kilograms of milk daily and sells to Ashtarak Kat CJSC.

Seventy farmers benefited from the Buzhakan Milk Project. It helped to increase the rural population's income through increased milk sales in the community, which in turn led to improvement of dairy farming practices and increased milk production in the community.

These projects are evidence of the importance of CARD's contribution to the development of rural areas in Armenia and to the organization's commitment to extending the range of beneficiaries and interested parties throughout the country.



**CARD**

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## CARD TEAM'S PARTICIPATION IN THE HACCP TTT PROGRAM HELD IN THE UNITED STATES

As part of the USDA funded Technical Assistance Program to



Support the Armenian Food Safety System project, CARD has dispatched Artak Khachatryan, Mkhitar Hakobyan and Zaruhi Davtyan to visit Washington D.C. and Baton Rouge, Louisiana from June 16 to 28, 2008. Dr. Jonathan Hubchen of LSU was the trip coordinator.

After successful completion of the Basic Meat and Poultry HACCP course, held in Yerevan in September 2007 and conducted by LSU Professor Dr. Kenneth McMillin, three candidates were selected to participate in the International HACCP Alliance sponsored Train-the-Trainer HACCP Course in Washington D.C. The course, held from June 17 to 19, 2008, was organized and conducted by the Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA). There were 30 participants, 5 of whom were from Mexico, 3 from Armenia and the rest from the United States. They represented private processing companies, government programs, consulting companies and universities.

The first half of the first day was devoted to adult learning styles and techniques.

The remainder of the two and a half days were spent reviewing Prerequisite Programs and HACCP principles.

Upon completion of the training, participants received a Certificate of Participation for attending and successfully completing the Train-the-Trainer HACCP Course.

Since implementation of HACCP will become mandatory in Armenia in 2010, CARD staff's participation in the training, sponsored by USDA and arranged by LSU AgCenter, is well-timed. This will assist CARD in becoming an IHA-accredited entity and will increase the organization's capacity to provide further trainings for Armenian government officials and the food industry.

Following the HACCP training, CARD representatives visited Baton Rouge, Louisiana. During the trip they visited Louisiana State University AgCenter and Southern University Campuses, Red Stick farmers market, poultry farms as well as a number of labs. They had a meeting with Dr. Leodrey



Williams, Chancellor of SU AgCenter and Dr. William Richardson, Chancellor of the LSU AgCenter, They also gave a presentation called "The Role of CARD in the Development of the Armenian Agriculture and Food Sector" to LSU AgCenter faculty and staff.

Upon their return from the training, the three CARD participants applied to IHA to become Lead Instructors.

## DATA ARCHIVING TRAINING SEMINAR IN GEORGIA

From June 6 to 9 2008 CARD Marketing Specialist, Armen Harutyunyan, participated in a data archiving training seminar. The event, held in Tbilisi, was organized by CRRG Armenia and Georgia. The training covered data archiving techniques, specifically those applied by British research companies. Special emphasis



was placed on the use of SPSS syntax files. The training was conducted by Professor Gary Pollock from the United Kingdom who had a wealth of information on the topic.

Mr. Harutyunyan will surely put the knowledge he gained to good use at CARD.

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## ASAU Language Centre: Award Certificate Celebration

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008, the achievements of third and fourth year students and members of the economics and veterinary departments at the State Agrarian University Language Centre were recognized.



Artak Khachatryan and Lilia Maranjyan from CARD and Sos Avetisyan from ATC congratulated the students and wished them success in their future endeavors.

The State Agrarian University Language Centre has collaborated closely with USDA MAP and subsequently CARD since its establishment in 2002. Together, the organizations have made significant contributions to the assistance and promotion of English language classes.

These classes provide opportunities for the students and professors to get involved in numerous international programs.



## HOW TO ENJOY CHEESE CURDS WHEN THEY'RE NO LONGER FRESH

Most people think that cheese curds need to be eaten fresh in order to get the best case. This means that you should eat them within 12 hours or the taste will not be the same. Due to this fact, the enjoyment of cheese curds is limited to areas that are right near cheese factories since the curds would have a limited delivery time.



This limitation has led many people to give up on cheese curds altogether, which is quite unfortunate. These pasteurized curds boats of a truly unique taste. Their feel in anyone's mouth has been hailed as one of life's most treasured experiences.

So you can see there are many places that never get fresh cheese curds but that doesn't mean that they can't have them at all. Once they are more than 12 hours old they do lose the freshness but they do not lose their edibility and can be enjoyed as much as any type of cheese.

Cheese curds of this nature are enjoyed in a variety of ways. In some provinces of Canada, for example, curds are deep fried and covered with beer based batter. Such a variety has been a popular finger food throughout the region and throughout the world for that matter. The freshness factor may not be there, but still, a totally different and unique experience, both gastronomic and tasteful, can be savored.



Other areas of Canada use curds in a popular regional dish called poutine. In this dish they struggle over French fries and then gravy is added for a very interesting and unique taste. The fact is, curds, though best enjoyed fresh, can still be cherished way past their "freshness period," through a variety of preparations that make good use of their fanciful flavor.

On the next issue of Gourmet Corner we will explore the history of Mascarpone cheese.

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