

"Agribusiness in Animal Husbandry" Lamb Raising

By Anna Karapetyan, CARD, 10 January 2008

Organization of Lamb Raising Youth Clubs in collaboration with the Children of Armenia Fund (COAF)

In the RA Armavir Marz district of Baghramyan animal raising is a highly developed trade. The majority of inhabiting villagers are active in lamb raising and herding. The village children inhabitants (11-16 years of age) are also very active in this labor and development. Much like their parents, the children active in sheep raising frequently do not fulfill the rural animal needs and chores of normal feeding, nursing, and utilizing raising technologies. Consequently the majority of village members active in lamb raising weigh 8.5-9 month old lamb at having a live weight of 30-32 kg; considering that consistent and normal raised lamb should weigh in with a live weight of 40 kg or more at the age of 8.5-9 months. On behalf of the realization of the project, 11-16 years old village youth members were voluntarily and indiscriminately selected. Furthermore, the youth members were provided with 2 types of sheep: "Balbas" (Armenian semi-coarse) or "Aragats", both of which were 2.5-3 months old, had a live weight of 14-15 kg, and prior to allocation were weighed and numbered.

Beforehand, on behalf of the Armenian State Agrarian University (ASAU) professor H. Mkerchyan organized training classes for the youth members, providing them with technical skills and knowledge regarding sheep; holding facility conditions, feeding, water regime, health considerations and medical knowledge, weighing process and analysis, and desirable techniques for displaying their lamb.

Every youth participant had an individual record log book, in which all daily work had been logged. There were training courses held for the youth members in regard to the proficiency of record keeping. All vocation regarding lamb raising skills had been included and had been offered by the local supervising instructors and veterinarian; which were responsible for the training of all relevant medical information needed by the youth members. Throughout the entire project all relevant parties (supervisors/veterinarian) were responsible on advising and collaborating with the youth members.

In conclusion to the project the youth members organized their lambs to display in an admiration show. The show entailed the youth members presenting their animals which they fostered, along with a personal oral presentation informing the audience of all successes and obstacles overcome. The accomplishments on behalf of the specialists were judged by the skills acquired by the youth and the consistent daily work accomplished by youth members. The show ended with a competition and certificates distribution.

a. Purpose

To promote the youth of rural villages:

- to create a progressive environment in which youth will be subjected to individual learning and growth;
- realization of the project, the assurance of accomplishment, undertaking of responsibility by youth and the exercising of acquired skills;
- to show the achievements of labors by the youth members and assure the progression of these youth members in to the future;
- involvement and discipline in all goals and efforts;
- assist with the choice of future specialization/career;

b. Expected Results

The expected results of the project are:

- acquire practical knowledge, skills and experience in regard to lamb raising;
- acquire demonstrable skills in lamb demonstration, disease detection, rearing, feeding and watering regime, as well as record keeping;

- learn comparative skills and apply them when comparing the condition of their animal with others;
- provide their families with specially raised lambs;
- show their individually raised lamb at the admiration show to local villagers, parents, and specialists; at which point if they desire the youth can attempt to sell their lamb;
- to demonstrate the efficiency and effectiveness of utilizing technologies in the field of animal raising.
- share their experiences, skills and knowledge with other youth in the community;
- gain recognition as young professional breeders in their own communities;
- acquire enough knowledge to eventually establish an agribusiness of their own.