

## Activities of ARID Goat Breeding Center in 2007

During the year of 2007 ARID Goat Breeding Center in the framework of “Dairy Goat Industry Development and Genetic Improvement ” project has implemented dairy goat industry development activities in goat farms operating in 17 communities /Yeghegnadzor, Aghnjadzor, Salli, Hors, Goghtanik, Agarakadzor, Hermon, Horbategh, Khachik, Rind, Gnishik, Mozrov, Vernashen, Gomk, Meghrashen, Lchashen, Gavar/ of 3 regions /Vayots Dzor, Gegharkunik, Shirak/ of Armenia.

On the whole the number of beneficiaries involved in the project is more than 234, including 82 members of 7 Youth Clubs and 107 goat farmers. Due to the technical assistance provided by ARID Center job opportunities have been created for around 45 people in the farms and 8 processing units cooperating with the Center. The goat milk processing units function in Khachik, Goghtanik, Salli, Gomk, Tsghuk, Gavar, Lchashen and Meghrashen communities of Vayots Dzor, Syunik, Gegharkuniq and Shirak regions.



Since 2006 in order to organize efficient operation of

ARID Center the goats have been taken to the pasture of Gnishik village. These measures have been taken to ensure efficient organization of goat farming and to reduce the expenses for animal maintenance and care. Within the overall grazing season, from June 2007 to September 2007, 1,300,000 AMD was saved due to the fodder and other components required for animal care. This kind of management also enables the reduction of unit production expenses and self-cost.

All the necessary conditions have been provided in Gnishik community for the care and feeding



of animals according to the age-sex classification. Milking of goats is being carried out on a portable milking parlor with all the veterinary-sanitary conditions required for production and storage of high quality goat milk. In the year of 2007 ARID Center produced and marketed 14.264 liter high quality goat milk during the milking season, as well as marketed 25 heads of crossbred kids, which brought cash in amount of 2,720,540 AMD. It was decided to use the income to cover all the necessary expenses for animals in grazing season as well as for unexpected costs. Milk marketing, as

well as fattening and marketing of buck kids is considered as one of the sources of income for ARID Center.

Currently ARID Goat Breeding Center hosts 120 heads of purebred goats, 27 out of which are mother goats.

During the implementation of “Dairy Goat Industry Development and Genetic Improvement ” project, as a result of consistent procedures followed by ARID Center the average milk yield of mother goats in ARID and other goat farms has been as follows:

Purebred	650 l
Crossbred /second generation/	412 l
Crossbred /first generation/	320 l
Local	140 l

In order to reach the above mentioned results ARID Center provides bucks to the cooperating goat farms for pairing purposes, thoroughly analyzing the origin of previously provided and current bucks as well as the desirable qualities of their generations. This is a paid service; up to 50000 AMD for each buck.

Provision of consulting services is considered to be the key component of ARID Center activities. Consequently the organization of visits, practical courses and seminars is one of the most important project components, as due to those trainings 36 goat farmers, 16 farm employees,

4 animal breeders and 3 veterinarians, 72 Youth Club members, 3 representatives of Extension Department and other interested parties gained appropriate knowledge and experience in this field. The main topics explored during practical seminars are as follows:

1. Proper milking and milk handling procedures
2. Animal health and disease prevention
3. Goat breeding specifications and dairy goat breeds
4. Feeding and care management during the breeding season

ARID Goat Breeding Center is in close cooperation with Armenian State Agrarian University. In the year of 2007 two students from the veterinary/animal-husbandry faculty did their practical work at ARID Center.

ARID has implemented a great number of programs with 7 Youth Clubs closely cooperating with the Center. 82 members of those Youth Clubs also took part in the above mentioned trainings and procedures related to goat breeding and veterinary services.



*The ARID Goat Breeding Center is located in Vayots Dzor marz, Yeghegnadzor that is in Southeastern part of Armenia. USDA MAP launched the Goat Industry Development Project in 1999 for assisting Armenian agriculture in developing an independent and economically viable dairy goat production, product manufacturing and marketing industry through technology transfer. As of 2005 the GIDP project was transferred to the newly established Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development (CARD). The components of the project are: Cooperatives and individual goat farms, associations, milk collection units and cheese factories. The ARID center is a repository for improved goat genetics and for training in proper goat farming practices. The Breeding program of ARID Center is focused on the genetic improvement of the domestic Armenian goat, through successive generation crosses to high producing animals of four dairy breeds such as: Saanen, Alpine, Toggenburg and Nubian.*