

US AMBASSADOR JOHN HEFFERN'S VISIT TO GREENHOUSE IN DARAKERT, ARCOLAD CHOCOLATIER AND CARD OFFICE

Press Release

January 19th, 2012: The US Ambassador to Armenia, John Heffern, along with USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) personnel, Caucasus Agricultural Development Initiative (CADI) staff, and CARD representatives visited a seedling nursery and greenhouse in Darakert village in Ararat marz. The group met two farmers, Varoujan Khudedanyan and Armen Simonyan, and was introduced to new varieties of tomato and cucumber seedlings tailored to local and export market needs. Through USDA/CARD support, new technologies such as bio-protection for pest control, bumble bees for pollination, and drip irrigation systems are applied in the greenhouses for the improved yields.



The ambassador's trip was followed by a tour to Arcolad, the Armenian Chocolatier, which produces high quality chocolates with dried fruits. Since 2006, USDA/CARD has supported the company with marketing assistance, food safety trainings and capacity building. The company manager Mr. Emil Harutyunyan elaborated on the chocolate production cycle and the importance of CARD support for the success of the company. The visitors also had a chance to taste the company's delectable chocolates.



The final meeting was held at the CARD office with CARD management. For the meeting, USDA FAS CADI coordinator, Greg Booth, and USDA FAS Agricultural specialist, Levon Gyulkhasyan, made presentations on the CADI program, and the USDA approach and strategies in Armenia. The meeting was concluded by a presentation by the director of CARD, Gagik Sardaryan, detailing CARD's continuing support of the agricultural sector in Armenia.

To memorialize the Ambassador's visit, group photos were taken at the CARD office.

