

## **Mission report on training 1 in Armenia**

Dates: 1 – 6 March 2015

Trainer: Ineke van Meggelen

### **Persons met and participating in (part of) the training:**

Same seven people from November

Hakob Poghosyan (new consultant since February) and Ara Bitar (intern since February)

Different growers (names to be found in presence list of seminar d.d. 5 March 2015)

A list of people met during the mission can be found in annex 2.

The majority of the days was spent with Sahak, Hakob and Ara for training, and Karen and Anna as management staff. The itinerary (annex 1) provides detailed info of the program executed.

### **Reporting according to ToR:**

#### **1. Getting to know Armenian horticulture**

During the training various nurseries and the CARD Farmer Service Center were visited where in-depth discussions took place with the three (future) consultants and growers. Problems were identified and discussed during the seminar with growers on Thursday. The Scientific Center of vegetable and industrial crops was visited briefly to see their facilities. Report on the various places visited can be found in annex 3

Apart from training consultants in identifying problems and finding solutions contacts were made with growers with additional need for consultancy. GreenQ management is contacted for follow up at the Mavas group.

#### **2. Training of individual consultant(s)**

- **Visit a grower with a problem (first day)**

Monday 2 March several growers were visited, and some severe problems occurred that were discussed in detail. By discussing with the growers during the seminar in the future less problems can be expected.

- **Work on solution of the problem**

By discussion and workshops with consultants they were able to solve the problem in theory and translate to practice.

- **Visit grower discussing solutions (later that same week)**

Causes, theory behind the problem and directions for practical solutions were presented and discussed during the final seminar

- **Feedback of trainer to consultant on solving problem and bringing the message**

The cooperation with the consultants went very well, they were active in participating, eager to learn and able to communicate with growers on the right level. This time this was principally done by Sahak. Hakob and Ara are very new, but as eager to learn and participated very actively as well. The next mission they will be able to have a bigger share in the consultancy.

#### **3. Transfer of knowledge to a group**

- **Organising a seminar or workshop for growers by CARD.**

On Wednesday a workshop was organized at CARD Farmer Service Center in which one grower (Armen) participated. On Thursday three major growers participated in the seminar. More were invited, but due to the snow that morning it was difficult for others to participate.

- **The trainer will give feedback on the organisation, materials used and training method.**

During this mission the majority of the information was transferred by the trainer. This goal is set for the ToR of the next mission. Nevertheless during the seminar Sahak had a very active role in translating the English explanation, and was leading most of the active discussions with the growers and colleagues.

#### 4. Content of last week of training (week 18)

The next mission will take place from ± 27 April – 1 May

1. During the four days training there will be two seminars for growers, organized by CARD and executed by Sahak and Hakob with possible help of Ara. The trainer will give feedback on execution of the program and transfer of knowledge.

Topics chosen to prepare are:

- Fertilizer & irrigation
  - Climate control
2. Also some technical training by the trainer will take place on Hygiene and the Mollier diagram. Hygiene is an important topic and will prevent many of the problems with spreading of diseases occurring now. Mollier diagram will provide better understanding of the greenhouse climate.
  3. In the final week also the training packages (for seminars) within this project have to be finalized. It is decided that the language to use is Armenian language.

Chosen topics are:

- Fertilizer & irrigation
  - Climate control
  - Plant = factory
  - Pest control
4. Mid-April Sahak and/or Hakob will visit growers to find a case suitable for individual consultancy, e.g. a problem with a disease. During the mission the grower will be visited and the problem discussed and solutions found.

#### Conclusions discussion with team and director of CARD:

- Gagik Sardaryan is glad with the cooperation and hopes that there will be a phase 2 for the present project as well as a project for young plant production. For phase 2 he would like to see the consultants be exposed to practice for an extended time.
- Furthermore he hopes to have stronger links with GreenQ in the future, being business partners where CARD can be the basis for consultancy in the region Georgia and Armenia. CARD will open an office in Georgia by the end of 2015. Gagik is aware of the interest that the Netherlands embassy in Georgia has in CARD. He aims to have staff in Georgia being trained in phase 2 as well.
- A strong link with the support desk of GreenQ is requested in order to feed the consultants with knowledge and feedback in a sustainable way.
- GreenScheduler is an interesting instrument to use, maybe it can be made available for CARD too.
- There is little literature available in Armenia on protected horticulture. Can we suggest good books and brochures, preferably in a way that simple text can be provided to growers to have a basic understanding of growing in a protective structure. Where translation is involved Karen indicated the price is € 12,00 per page.

#### Other requests from staff of CARD:

- Help with business plan for Seedling Centre (project propagation, responsible Anna)
- Artificial light, how to use in Armenia (Sahak)
- Post-harvest technology (logistics and transportation, Karen)
- How to setup variety trials (Sahak)
- Laboratory equipment for identification of pests and diseases (Sahak)
- Recipe for strawberry fertigation (Biogroup, Sahak)
- Aeroponics (dry hydroponics, Hakob)
- Price of grafted plants vs seedlings (Gayane M and Sahak)

