



# Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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### Cochran Fellowship Program for Armenian Specialists

On May 15, 2010 a group of veterinarians from Armenia went to the USA to participate in Cochran Fellowship Program/ CFP for 2 weeks. Two representatives, Nazeli Grigoryan, "Animal Health" Project Assistant and Sergey Chakhmakhchyan, Technical Assistant of "Biological Threat Reduction" Program from the Center for agribusiness and rural development also took part in CFP.

This agricultural training program was interesting and important for the veterinarians. It first provided an overview of the animal health industry in Iowa and then offered broad comprehensive analysis on the Iowa animal health industry including on-farm livestock production, the management of veterinary businesses, disease prevention and control and government and organization contributions to the industry.



The training covered aspects such as dairy production practices, nutrition, artificial insemination and breeding technologies, surveillance and reporting of disease, structure of the industry, and disease identification and treatment.

The training was complemented with various visits to farms, veterinary organizations, governmental agencies, Iowa State University. Among several sites, especially impressive were Animal Science Department and Iowa Veterinary Medical Association; Dubuque County Extension Office; Community College; Postville Vet Clinic; Consolidated Grain and Barge Enterprises; American Breeding Service (ABS); Sassy Cow Creamery; Orangeville Animal Health Services; Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship; ISU Teaching and Research Farms; ISU Sheep Farm; ISU Dairy Farm; Farm Supply Store; Center for Food Security and Public Health; Iowa Farmers Union and National Farmers Organization; National Animal Disease Center; and Iowa State University Extension, where everyone was very kind to answer all the questions and also demonstrate their practices.

Thanks to USDA, USDA-FAS Training Educators and VAAP Program Coordinator, instructor and guide Madeline Schultz, the participants of the training learned a lot about the USA Veterinary Service System and enjoyed their stay in the USA by getting acquainted with the history, culture, architectural monuments and religious life of the country.

Upon return to Armenia, the training participants started applying the newly gained knowledge and skills in practice supporting Armenian farmers in the fields. The training participants plan also to develop new approaches and concepts and pamphlets on preventive measures for Armenian Agricultural Infrastructure to introduce to veterinarians for their better and proper service in our country.

### High Quality Vegetable Seeds for Rural Armenia

In May 2010 CARD Foundation launched a new project "Introduction of new vegetable seeds and technologies for greenhouses" in 4 regions of Armenia. The aim of the project is to support green house owners/farmers in increasing their income through application of new varieties of different types of vegetables (tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, salads) and farm supplies in Armenia in cooperation with "Rijk Zwaan" Dutch Seed Company, "FarmbiomedService" Russian company for "Fitoverm" insecticide and "Nasco" Farm input supplies from USA.

In May 2010, Mr.Sergey Vasilyevski, Director of Rijk Zwaan visited CARD Foundation, got acquainted with different projects implemented by CARD, especially related to the high value crop production component, which CARD Foundation started in 2007 with "Abbott&Cobb", USA company under the support of USDA.

Site visit were paid to observe and assess the qualities and varieties of the vegetables grown by the farmers in the greenhouses and the applied technologies. During the meetings, the farmers expressed interest in expanding and diversifying business by trying a new variety of vegetables seeds, farm supplies and technologies. Taking into consideration the needs and wish of the local farmers, CARD and "Rijk Zwaan" made a decision to help the green house owners with four types of seeds and farm supplies as a pilot project.

On August 9, 2010, a specialist/ agronomist from "Rijk Zwaan", Mr. Andrey Galagurya had a three hours presentation on new seeds

and technologies for 30 farmers/ greenhouse owners from Ararat, Armavir, Kotayk and Vayots Dzor regions, after which the farmers received packages of all four types of seeds. Mr. Andrey Galagurya plans to visit the farmers again in November 2010 to conduct seminars for all beneficiary farmers on harvest and post harvest handling techniques, followed by marketing activities hopefully in December 2010. Successful implementation of this pilot project may bring to expansion and including more villages into new high quality vegetable seeds introduction in Armenia and lead to farm income increase.



## Introduction of “Koppert” Bio-Systems in Armenian farms

On August 17-19, 2010 CARD Foundation and “Koppert B.V.” the international market leader in the field of biological crop protection and natural pollination from the Netherlands in association with UMCOR organized a two-day field training for farmers and a one day seminar on the matter of bio-systems for pest and disease control and improved pollination systems.

During the last few years, pest and disease control became a real issue for local farmers. To survive in the market farmers are treating crops with chemical pesticides and disease treatments, which are not only hazardous to the human health during the application, but also became ineffective in the most of the cases. Besides, these methods of treatment result in unsafe food since farmers have to treat the crop even at the latest stages of vegetation. It is important to mention that local farmers often use chemicals which are banned in EU countries for years.

While paying monitoring visits to CARD’s beneficiary farmers and farmers’ associations, CARD specialists identified the need for introducing new bio methods for plant protection, since vast majority of farmers are complaining on the issue of ineffectiveness of current disease and pest control methods.



The experts from “Koppert B.V.” Mr. Boris Reznikov and Mr. Remco Huvermann visited seven tomato and cucumber grower greenhouse farms and six open field fruit and vegetable growers in Ararat, Armarvir, Kotayk and Aragatsotn marzes. The seminar was organized in

Yerevan for 35 farmers, greenhouse owners and representatives from international agriculture development organizations and local specialists in the field of bio protection methods.



The Dutch experts introduced different methods of pest and disease control through Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

*The IPM is an integrated approach of crop management to solve ecological problems when applied in agriculture. These methods are performed in three stages: prevention, observation, and intervention. It is an ecological approach with a main goal of significantly reducing or eliminating the use of pesticides while at the same time managing pest populations at an acceptable level.*

In addition, Mr. Huvermann presented the benefits of pollination with the bumblebees. Currently, bumblebees are used world-wide for the pollination of several greenhouse and open field fruit crops. Resulting in enormous savings in labor costs, improvements of fruit quality and increase in production. This issues created high interest among the participants leading to thorough discussion of the methods and details.

The new concept of pest and disease control and pollination with bumblebees will improve the local agricultural production, create higher value added products and increase the competitiveness of local fruits and vegetables.

## Making History of Collaboration

In July 2010, Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development Foundation hosted a group of students from Jon M. Huntsman School of Business, Utah State University. The students spent their summer internship program in Armenia to learn about the country, business environment in Armenia, culture and history. Among several meetings and discussions, visit to CARD was especially important for the students as they could learn about the USDA supported projects.

Collaboration with Utah State University and CARD Foundation has started 5 years ago under the USDA program to support modernizing irrigation systems in Armenia.

Dr. Vijay R. Kannan, the Director of International Programs of Jon M. Huntsman School of Business and Professor of Operations Management, introduced Dr. Alan Stephens from the Department of Economics and Finance, Utah State University and the students.

Dr. Gagik Sardaryan, the director of CARD Foundation presented the main goals and objectives of the organization, as well as USDA projects implemented by CARD Foundation. The highlights on small business development and agricultural innovations created high curiosity among the students and they asked various interesting questions.

Company, which is specialized in producing chocolates with different dried fruits. According to Dr. Vijay Kannan, “Arcolad” demonstrated an excellent opportunity for students to learn more about Armenian

small business development, the challenges faced on the way of developing a small business. Students found this information quite significant, as during previous visits the students met only larger corporations and government agencies.

We do hope to continue our collaboration with Utah State University which has a long history supporting Armenian agriculture and had great footprint in developing new irrigation technologies and educational materials under the leadership of Dr. Bob Hill.



Supported by



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