

GREEN LANE

AGRICULTURAL ASSISTANCE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

NEWSLETTER

#2, March 2007

SUCCESS STORY

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Armenia is one of the more than 20 countries where Avalon supports local organisations in their activities towards sustainable agriculture and rural development.



This new issue of the Green Lane Newsletter has been brought out through support from AVALON Foundation.

Read the foreword by Martien Lankester, Executive Director of AVALON

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Martien Lankester
Executive Director of
Avalon

Avalon welcomes this new issue of the **Green Lane Newsletter on organic agriculture development in Armenia. Our foundation acknowledges the value of the pioneering work of Green Lane for achieving a more sustainable countryside as important part of a green future for planet earth. Avalon has been working in this field for over 15 years, supporting organisations in more than 20 countries. Since a few years Armenia is one of these countries, also participating in the Avalon project Organic Agricultural Chain Development in the Southern Caucasus, Moldova and the Kyrgyz Republic to promote organic farming in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Kyrgyz Republic and Moldova.**

We have come to know Green Lane as a committed and skilled organisation in our Avalon Network and wish Nune Sarukhanyan and her colleagues a lot of success with their important and inspiring work! May we all reap the fruits from the interesting activities, experiences and learning points that you can read about in this and the following issues of the Green Lane Newsletter.

This new issue of the Green Lane Newsletter has been brought out through support from AVALON Foundation. We highly appreciate the incessant interest shown by our colleagues and friends working with AVALON in the activities of Green Lane. They have not only rendered financial assistance to help us in publishing this newsletter, but have also contributed interesting articles telling about AVALON's mission and activities.

↳ 6-7

SUCCESS STORY

Women's Farmer Extension Research Group



We asked the leader of the group **Armineh Mouradyan** to tell about the accomplished works

The Women's Local Extension Research Group (LERG) in Gargar village, Lori marz, is operating since 2003. Why research? Because these women, together with professional researchers, are implementing applied research activities (mainly in the area of organic farming) based on the needs in their community. The members of the group are involved in growing medicinal herbs, production of vegetable and melon crops, flower growing, collection of wild and medicinal herbs. They also carry out comparative studies of different varieties of potato and cabbage. The positive results of trials are transferred to other members of the community.

<http://arm.agrowebcac.org/wfg.pdf>



Karen Zalinyan, the head of Gargar community, always supports the groups participation in different fairs and exhibitions

- There are five women farmers initially involved in our LERG. The preference of the group has been and is producing healthy food. Even prior to setting up the group, over the last ten years, we have never used any chemicals or mineral fertilizers. Our women have a solid experience processing their own produce in homestead conditions, which is highly accepted by consumer. By the way, we don't have any problem in marketing of our produce.

Our collaboration with the Green Lane NGO allowed us to establish local and international business relations and get involved in different projects.

The experience of the members of our group appears to be 'infectious' and many other farmers are now following our practices. We are more than pleased to share our experience and knowledge with the rest of the community, including (and most importantly) the children from the Young Naturalist's Club at the local high school.

In 2005, together with five other

women, we became also members of another women's group established in our village through the efforts of the Chairperson of the Democracy Today NGO, Gyulnara Shahinyan. Democracy Today provided a grant of \$500 to each of the 10 members to start their own small agricultural business. DT also funded the Green Lane for organizing seminars on organic agriculture practices, appropriate management of farmer groups, and on tax policies.

Our hard work combined with the aforementioned critical technical and financial assistance from these two NGOs has resulted in a significant improvement in the social state of our families. This, along with better incomes, brought about self-confidence, and, if you will, self-esteem for our new status in the community. I would add also

Armineh participated in a training in Romania last year within the exchange program implemented by the Bioterra Association of Organic Agriculture and the Green Lane supported by the Open Society Institute. She now shares with pleasure the knowledge and experience obtained, which promotes more vitalization of the group's activities.

http://arm.agrowebcac.org/newsletter_12.pdf

communication skills that are incomparable with what we had before: I think most of us are now able to uniquely combine tradition-keeping rural Armenian women with these new (sometimes the newest) business concepts and new knowledge. These skills are apparently useful in particular during the field days and seminars that we



The members of the group hosting the representative of Bioterra Romanian Organic Farming Association

periodically hold in the village and accessible for anybody who has the wish.

All this positive experience helps us meet the many challenges that still exist. One of these challenges is the certification process: though during the four years of the group's existence we have produced only organic products, but we are not able to certify our produce yet. The reason is the too high cost of certification for very small organic land plots that each of us have (1000-1500 sq.meters). So far, even certification of the total area belonging to the group is not reasonable.

Another challenge or dream is having a small office space equipped with a computer and internet access. Actually the village mayor's office is ready to provide a room for that. We will also place our small library there, which is now in the house of one of the members of the group as well as our certificates awarded by the Green Lane to the women's farmer group in Gargar during 2005-2006.

WORKING PARTNERSHIP FOR THE BENEFIT OF FARMERS

The keystone to success is cooperation and partnership with other organizations dedicated to the same goals you are striving to achieve. We are happy to introduce the organizations Green Lane is cooperating with to double its efforts in supporting farmers and agricultural businesses in Armenia.

www.acdivoca.org

www.acdivoca.org/acdivoca/PortalHub.nsf/ID/armeniaFFf

ACDI VOCA ARMENIA

Farmer-to-Farmer Caucasus Program (FFf). HELPING AGRIBUSINESS GROW...

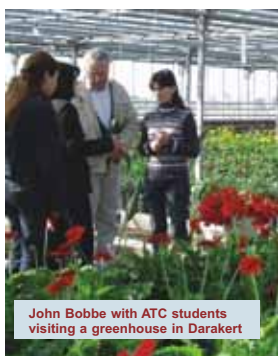
Active in Armenia since 1992, ACDI/VOCA began to implement its FFf Program in the Caucasus as a whole in 1996 and since that time over 900 volunteer assignments have been completed. U.S. volunteers provide technical assistance to local farmers, farmer groups, agribusinesses and rural credit organizations contributing to the development of private farms and enterprises, agricultural service organizations and rural credit institutions.

Over the last two years, ACDI/VOCA assisted three U.S. volunteers and Honorable Members of Green Lane NGO, **John Bobbe, Silvia Ehrhardt and**

Dora Ramsey to visit Armenia and share professional expertise with the Green Lane team and partner farmer groups and unions. All of them are professionals practically working in the field of organic farming for a long period of time and really willing to take part in the development efforts throughout the world. With their knowledge and experience, they are making an outstanding contribution to both strengthening the emerging organic sector of the

agricultural production in Armenia and securing sustainable institutional development for Green Lane.

We highly appreciate what is being done by the ACDI/VOCA colleagues to make it possible to us and other organizations and individuals in Armenia to benefit from the expertise of



John Bobbe with ATC students visiting a greenhouse in Darakert



Dora Ramsey with the members of Jrahovit Farmer Research and Extension Group

Farmer-to-Farmer (FFf) Program is a worldwide initiative first authorized by the US Congress in 1985 to provide for the transfer of knowledge and expertise of the US agricultural producers and businesses to middle-income countries and emerging democracies. FFf provides voluntary technical assistance to farmers, farmer groups, and agribusinesses in developing and transitional countries to promote sustainable improvements in food processing, production, and marketing. The program relies on the expertise of volunteers from US farms, land grant universities, private agribusinesses, NGOs, etc to respond to the local needs of the host country farmers and organizations.

the U.S. colleagues. However the ACDI/VOCA team sees the FFf program as being of benefit not only to the hosts but also to the volunteers.



In this high mountain region farmers sow organic winter wheat by hand

SUCCESS GOES ON...

In the first issue of the Newsletter, under the title "Success Story", we had told the story of the Farmer Field School involved in organic produce in Gandzakhar village, Tavush marz. We are happy to state now that, thanks to the collaboration with World Vision, this group of farmers had a successful start in 2007 as well.

http://arm.agrowebcac.org/GL_newsletter.pdf

World Vision provided a great support to the group by providing two tractors, 12 heads of cows, and a forage grinder. In addition, the members of the group initiated a production of organic wheat by the support from the Green Lane and World Vision. Barley and spelt will also be seeded this year:

So far the members of the farmer group in Gandzakhar have been basically involved in vegetable production (green beans, cucumber, tomato, garlic, pepper, basil, and parsley) as well as in collection of wild berries. The products were mainly sold in the regional center; however the farmers find it possible to market part of the product in Yerevan where there is specialized store for organic products.



The wheat being cleansed by Azolovit

growing. This year they will be trying to expand the crop areas to meet the this growing demand among consumers. In future, they are planning also to get involved in organic animal breeding. They are already trying to shift to organic feed production, with cereals being the priority crops.

Hopefully, mother nature will be good to these hard working group of farmers by rewarding with abundant yields in the fall.



The first calf was born... Kids are always glad to help to take care of it

World Vision International

<http://www.wvarmenia.am>

World Vision Int is a Christian humanitarian organization working to create lasting change in the lives of children, families and communities living in poverty. World Vision came to Armenia eighteen years ago providing emergency aid to the victims of December 1988 devastating earthquake. During the next eighteen years WV's projects have gone beyond meeting the demands of crisis situations to changing the quality of life in entire communities and helping Armenians to restore their country.

The farmers state that the gross volume of the produce in 2006, unfortunately, was small, while the demand for it is now

THESE ORGANIZATIONS ALSO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN ARMENIA

Development of organic agriculture is a complex and complicated task, accomplishment of which requires time and concert action of different organizations and professionals working in this field. We highly appreciate what is being done by all our colleagues working hard towards strengthening the organic production sector in Armenia and we pay great attention to the activities and achievements of our partner organizations.



Currently in Armenia there are a number of organizations supporting organic agriculture one way or another, and SHEN NGO is one of the leaders amongst them. One of SHEN's activity directions since 2002 is supporting the development of organic farming and creation of awareness of organic food in our country.

www.organic.am

www.shen.am

Shen NGO implemented the Project for Strengthening Organic Agriculture in Southern Caucasus supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and EPER (Entraide Protestante Suisse).

One of the first activities within the framework of this project was the establishment of the Organic Production Standard approved in 2004.

www.organic.am/doc/Standards-06-1-01-03.pdf

ORGANIC ORCHARDS ON THE RESERVE LANDS



As the concept of organic farming is very new to start with Shen decided to rent reserve land and encourage farmers to try organic farming methods without jeopardizing their private land plots - the main source of their incomes.

As a result, in Lusakn village of Aragatsotn region and Argina village of Armavir region there are two fully organic fruit orchards with total acreage of 110ha established through support from ICCO, EED, EPER and Christian Aid. A 20 year old apricot orchard on 6 ha in Ashtarak has also been converted into organic. All three orchards have certificates provided by EcoGlobe Ltd. All the generated profit goes back to the communities through the local community foundations.

Covering thousands of kilometers of countryside roads into faraway, environmentally clean areas of Armenia, the Shen extensionists introduce organic farming principles to farmers, explain the benefits and challenges and provide practical consultancy. They are sure that the major challenge is to evoke change in the minds of farmers.

FAIR TRADE

Our colleagues working with Shen are sure that it is necessary to support marketing of the Armenian organic produce on both domestic and foreign markets to secure sustainable growth in this sector of agriculture.

As organic farming has also a strong social dimension, most of the export is realized through Fair Trade channels. Already for three years, Armenian organic dried apricots and herbs have been sold in Switzerland though Fair Trade Company Claro.

In autumn 2006, through support from Shen NGO and financial assistance from EPER and SDC, the Organic Food and Consumers Association opened the first organic shop in Armenia - "Amour Koriz". The shop sells fresh and dried fruits and vegetables, herbs and nuts.



«Amour Koriz»
the first organic shop in Armenia

ECOGLOBE

www.ecoglobe.am

The First National Organic Food Certification Body

Within the "Project for Strengthening Organic Agriculture in Southern Caucasus", the first independent certifying body, EcoGlobe was established in Armenia in 2002.

EcoGlobe has been established as a result of the growing interest among farmers and processors toward organic methods of farming.

Today, EcoGlobe ensures the compatibility of marketed Armenian products with the organic standards, thus protecting interests of consumers and helping the producer enter the international market. Currently, the organization is working with 35 farmers and processors in Armenia who are in different stages of control. According to data provided by EcoGlobe, there are 550 hectares of land currently under organic control and certification. Every year, EcoGlobe organizes special training courses for inspectors and agricultural producers on national and international levels.



The shop has delivery service, and in addition it is possible to buy everything you need through internet and e-mail.

market@organic.am www.organic.am



Focus on Avalon

Green Lane Agricultural Assistance NGO is an active member of the Avalon Network. Armenia is one of the more than 20 countries where Avalon supports local organisations in their activities towards sustainable agriculture and rural development. A focus on Avalon.

Plan together, work together...

The Avalon Foundation is an international non-profit organisation, based in the Netherlands, supporting sustainable rural development in the Central and Eastern European region and beyond. In Avalon's view, the interlinked instruments of organic farming, agri-environmental policy and market development provide the basis for sustainable rural development.

With an experienced staff of project managers and associated experts, Avalon cooperates with local and national organisations, governments, international advocacy groups, university research institutes and the business community in implementing a wide range of activities and projects.

Combining forces and working together, Avalon helps local organisations to create solid sustainable rural communities.



Network Meeting in Czech Republic



Network Meeting in Poland

Avalon's role

Avalon seeks to fulfil its mission through activities and projects, and by developing concepts that provide a basis for progress in years to come. The projects and activities all relate to one or more of the three main Avalon pillars:

- Sustainable Rural Development
- Agri - Environmental Policy
- Knowledge and Capacity Building

Together, these pillars form the basis for a solid organisation of a sustainable countryside.

From farm to fork

Avalon has extended its work field by considering the total organic and sustainable production chain as its point of departure. In many project countries the primary production of organic products has been mobilised, and the need for support has shifted to other links in the chain. An integrated approach of the production chain - from producer to consumer - is now at the heart of all Avalon projects and activities.



A broader horizon

As a number of central, east and south-east European states have now joined the EU, the boundaries of the Avalon arena are continuously shifting. Avalon assisted most new member states in preparing for new legislation in the area of agriculture and the environment required for EU membership, and in introducing and implementing those policies. With the admission of these new members, the EU acquired several new neighbors who in turn will be seeking EU membership. Next to the countries in Central and Eastern Europe, where Avalon has been active for a longer period of time, Avalon is currently expanding to the states adjoining the new EU, reaching from the Caucasus to Central Asia and Turkey.



Promoting sustainable rural development in the Central and Eastern European region and beyond...

The Avalon Network

During 15 years of fruitful cooperation with many local organisations, the continuously growing number of contacts has developed into a lively and energetic network of more than 120 organisations that are active in the field of organic agriculture, nature conservation, biodiversity and sustainable rural development. Avalon developed a network programme, which creates synergy and motivates co-operation and new initiatives - it contributes to the common objective of all network members through an array of instruments:



South East Europe project: visit to Holland

- ◆ Supporting Avalon Network members with regard to attending/organising international events/exchange visits
- ◆ Network meetings
- ◆ The Avalon Network Newsletters
- ◆ The Avalon ExtraNet: knowledge database exclusively for Avalon Network members
- ◆ Exchange visits
- ◆ Promotional visits to Brussels and national governments
- ◆ Joint project development and fund raising

Membership of the informal Avalon Network is free of charge.

More information can be found at www.avalon.nl

Avalon project in Armenia



*"Organic agriculture history, production, certification, inspection and accreditation"
International training in Yerevan, Armenia*

In Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Kyrgyz Republic and Moldova, Avalon works together with its respective local project partners, EcoGlobe, GABA Agrobusiness Association, Elkana, ULGU and ProRural Invest, in the project Organic Agricultural Chain Development in the Southern Caucasus, Moldova and the Kyrgyz Republic. The project is funded by the Netherlands Foreign Ministry under its co-financing programme. The specific objective of the project is to establish structures for organic agriculture training, extension and production and also to develop outlets and to raise awareness among producers and consumers. The basis of the methodology is to

coordinate the local partners' activities and planning in the participating countries and to create synergy. To enhance knowledge and skills, the project offers training, exchange visits, access to the Avalon Network and other forms of support. The partners have a considerable liberty to adjust activities to the situation in the country. The project focuses on the entire organic chain (hence the name). Themes include organic agriculture and certification, lobbying - both at policy making and public administration level - and involving businesses in production and marketing.



Participants of the training in Yerevan

The project is underway for one and a half year now and the countries are exchanging knowledge and information. Contacts within the framework of an international organic farming network are developing.

Eventually the project hopes to contribute to a higher standard of living in the rural communities and to an increased supply and demand for organic products.

ORGANICS IN ARMENIA



Larry Yager (USA)

Consultant on Marketing, Penn State University

In 1997-2004 Larry Yager worked in Armenia with the USDA Marketing Assistance Project. He has made a great contribution to the introduction of the western models of cooperatives and the dissemination of the concepts of organic farming in Armenia.

An FAO report titled "World Markets for Organic Fruits and Vegetables" states there is a viable and value-added market niche for developing countries in exporting to the developed countries. In the UK, for example, demand for organic food was increasing about 40 percent per year while production was increasing only 25 percent. The report also indicated that the value of total organic sales in the five major countries in Europe amounted to nearly 5 billion US dollars. The main reasons for the increasing interest in buying organics are food safety, health, environmental concerns, freshness and taste. Mainstream consumers are now asking for organics, and in US and European supermarkets there are now large organic sections.

Former USDA MAP Director, Dr. Craig Infanger and this author conducted research in the UK on organics. Their interesting and helpful insights are found in a report,

"Organic Food Products in the UK". This report can be accessed on the web by going to Google and entering "Organic Food Products in the UK, USDA".

USDA MAP staff members Jeffrey Engels and I have felt that Armenia was a natural for organic production. This is especially the case as the mountain and pre-mountain areas of the country have not used commercial fertilizers and pesticide chemicals since independence in 1991. The primary reasons for this is the unavailability of these products and lack of funds to purchase them if they were available.

Engels and I visited with Martien Lankester, the Executive Director of the Avalon Foundation in the Netherlands and attended the IFOAM International World Conference in Victoria, Canada. They learned that many countries worldwide are struggling with the same questions about organics that Armenia has. We were proud to realize that Armenia is not at the bottom of the ladder as Armenia has done much compared to other countries.

These visits increased their interest and recognition of the potential for organic production and processing in Armenia. As a result, they were instrumental in forming the Armenian National Organic Action Plan Committee in 2002. The committee had a broad range of individuals representing Extension, Ag Academy researchers, Ministry of Agriculture, processors, farmers and NGOs involved in organics.

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

analysis for organics was conducted for Armenia with the following results:

S = Strengths are available land and a strong motivation to proceed with organics.

W = Weaknesses are the distance to export markets and poor roads and transportation.

O = Opportunities are in strong overseas market demand and growing each year.

T = Threats include expensive input costs, high fuel costs, and possible corruption.

Many countries moving to satisfy the increasing demand for organic food have strong government involvement in developing policies, regulations and subsidies during the conversion stage. Should the Armenian Ministry of Agriculture establish the infrastructure and standards equivalent to the EU requirements? As timing is important and because of the politics involved, this may be a lengthier and more complicated alternative.



Thanks for sound food!

PARTICIPATION IN BIOFACH - 2007 THE WORLD ORGANIC TRADE FAIR



This year, on February 15-18, the Green Lane NGO, together with some other Armenian organizations involved in organic agriculture - EcoGlobe Ltd, MAG Bee-Keeping Farm, Tamara Fruit Ltd and CHIR Ltd - attended BioFach - 2007 World Organic Trade Fair that brings together about 2,000 exhibitors - two thirds from abroad - and 33,000 trade visitors from some 100 countries to Nurnberg every year in February. Participation of the Armenian organizations has been supported by the Armenian Agribusiness SME Market Development Project and Avalon Foundation.

In the beginning of each year, traditionally Nurnberg hosts internationally attended BioFach World Organic Trade Fair. Thousands of exhibitors and trade visitors from all over the world come to Germany to partake in this world organic celebration.



Everything can be found here: from food to essential oils, perfume, candles, clothes, plates and dishes - all certified and labeled as organic and thus safe for human health and environment.

This year Armenia was presented mainly by its organic food production - dried apricots, spices, honey, marmalades, juices, glace fruits, berries and frozen vegetables.

Green Lane presented some publications telling about the mission and activities of the

organization, including the first edition of its newsletter, as well as the organic thyme tea - "Spirit of Noravanq" - being produced by the company headed by Hazarapet Nazaryan, one of the active members of our organization.

Many of the fair guests showed interest in this herbal tea. In particular it attracted an Estonian businessman Andrei Grokhotov's attention. He offered to help export large



quantities of this organic tea to Estonia providing that the Armenian partners secure continuous, all-the-year-round delivery.

However, there are still some problems with exporting the Armenian organic produce to other countries, and amongst them meeting internationally accepted certification standards remains the main concern. To find its consumer on the foreign markets, this tea, just like any other product, has to fit those standards.



On the days of the fair, Avalon Foundation conducted an interesting seminar dedicated to the issues of developing organic agriculture in the Eastern European countries, taking into account the experience of the Western Europe and the global trends of organic production.



ARMENIAN ORGANIC AGRICULTURE FOUNDATION

The Armenian Organic Agriculture Foundation (AOAF) was founded in 2003 as a result of two years of discussion between the interested local stakeholders and many international agencies and projects (USDA, DAI-ASME, USAID, FAO, etc). The primary purpose of the Foundation is to become the national organic umbrella organization, which would coordinate, unite, promote and support the development of organic agriculture and production in Armenia. To achieve the declared goals, AOAF works hard towards developing its capacities to provide professional services to interested farmer and consumer groups, marketing organizations, governmental agencies and processors.



Currently, the Foundation is carrying out a Project for Establishment of an Organic Demo Farm in Armenia. The purpose of the project is to establish a demo farm on the basis of Dimitrov farmlands in Ararat region of Armenia. This project is being carried out through support from the UNDP Armenia.

The Dimitrov farm occupies 12 hectares of arable land in Dimitrov village of Ararat valley. It has been developed by AOAF as its base for research.

Our colleagues working with the Foundation are sure that having a sound

and complete organic demo farm in Armenia will allow farmers to gain knowledge and practical experience of growing organic grain, fruits and vegetables. In addition, through its training facilities, a demo farm can become an educational center that provides both theoretical and practical education to farmer groups, university students, and agricultural specialists interested in organic farming.

Under the project, organic orchards of mainline fruit trees will be established and some plots will be put under cultivation of organic grain and vegetables. EcoGlobe

Organic Certification and Control Body will provide the quality control and certification services.

Along with different other projects aiming to support the Government of Armenia to develop the organic sector, the Foundation has also played an active role in drafting the Law on Organic Farming. The Law is expected to be passed by the National Assembly of Armenia this year. This will create more favorable legal environment for development of organic sector of the Armenian economy.

2005 - 2007: BRIEF REVIEW

This year Green Lane became a member of the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA).

We are sure that our membership in this organization will help us be more successful in our efforts to secure animal health and welfare on farms as well as to make the animal welfare the focus of the public's and policy-makers' attention in Armenia. Green Lane's activities in this field are being coordinated by Dr Tigran Chitchyan.

www.wspa.org.uk

In November 2006, one of the young professionals working with Green Lane - Tigran Khachatryan, took part in the meeting of the Caucasian NGOs held in Tbilisi, Georgia, within the frame of the Environment for Europe process - a unique partnership of the member states within the UNECE region, the UN organizations represented in the region, other inter-governmental organizations, regional environment centres, NGOs and other groups.

The participants of the meeting learned more about the environmental policy development process in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and about the local organizations coordinating this process. The meeting helped the Caucasian NGOs to prepare for the upcoming Environment for Europe Sixth Ministerial

Conference that will take place in Belgrade, on October 10-12, 2007. The participants of the Conference will discuss issues regarding the development of environmental policies in EECCA countries.

www.unece.org/env/europe/



In February 2006, our organization took part in the 17th Annual Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference (UMOFC) held by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) in Wisconsin, USA.

Participation of the Green Lane representatives in this event has been supported by MOSES as well as the Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing (OFARM), Organic Valley Farmer-Owned Co-operative and Midwestern BioAg - an biologically-based agri-consulting company. We take this occasion to thank all our partners for their support.

www.mosesorganic.org

In 2005 Green Lane NGO became a member of the Avalon Network that links over 120 organizations active in organic agriculture, nature conservation, biodiversity and rural sustainable development.

The Avalon Network is a valuable source of knowledge and experience for all member organizations. Twice, in 2005 and in 2006, Green Lane took part in the Avalon Network annual meetings. In 2005 the meeting was held in Krakow, Poland, and in 2006 the Avalon members came together in Prague, Czech Republic, to discuss among other topics some issues regarding the development of the organic food production national plans.



Read more about the Avalon Network on the pages 7-8 or visit the Avalon's website:

www.avalon.nl

2005 - 2007: Brief Review

We actively cooperate with the Bioterra Organic Farming Association of Romania. Every year our representatives partake in the conferences and exchange programs organized by Bioterra. This is a fruitful cooperation that creates more and more opportunities for knowledge and experience sharing between Armenian and Romanian farmers and researchers.

July-August, 2006 - Green Lane and Bioterra, through support from the Open Society Institute's East-East Program, organized Days of Organic Agriculture in Armenia and Romania.

August 2005 - Our representatives visited Romania to take part in the "Biofarm models in the Southern Romania" exchange program.

October 2005 - Green Lane participated in the Bioterra's Conference on Ecological Agriculture.

www.bioterra.org.ro



Our members took part in the training on organic agriculture at the International Agriculture Center (IAC) in Wageningen, the Netherlands.

www.iac.wur.nl

It is always interesting and amazing to communicate and work with children. The Green Lane team has organized a number of training programs and educational events for kids in Syunik, Tavush and Vayots Dzor regions of Armenia.



In the picture: "Impact of the organic farming upon the birds' life" seminar conducted by Green Lane and the Armenian Society for the Protection of Birds (ASPB). Young participants of the seminar taking part in the "Birds in nature" drawing contest.

www.aspbirds.org

Research and New Technologies

Armenia is taking intense steps to develop organic agriculture sector right up to implementing the National Law on Organic Agriculture expected to be passed by the parliament this year. The scientists and researchers also have to keep pace with this advance. That's why, Green Lane in cooperation with its member scientists and partner institutions, conducts applied research in organic agriculture.



ORGANIC METHODS FOR PEST, WEED AND DISEASE CONTROL

In 2004, the USDA Marketing Assistance Project funded two small grant programs for introducing weed and disease organic control methods - "Weed control with vinegar solution" and "Disease control with baking soda solution". The projects were completed in 2005, but to ensure validity and adequacy of the obtained results, the Green Lane team continued research in the next two years and developed new technologies that are now effectively used by farmers.

In addition, efficiency of the pest control with garlic solution has been tested in 2005-2006 in cooperation with the researchers from the Scientific Centre for Agriculture and Plant Protection as well as with the members of the Research and Advisory Farmer Group of Jrahovit village (Ararat region). The results obtained dispelled the farmers' doubts about the efficiency of the non-conventional organic methods for disease and weed control and convinced them of the possibility to solve the problems they face through practical cooperation with researchers and scientists.



CROP VARIETY TESTING

This year, four newly introduced chickpea varieties tested by the Green Lane and Action Against Hunger International Foundation teams have been recommended for variety zonation in Armenia. In addition, our specialists have tested two bean varieties already listed in the National Register of Crop Varieties. Both varieties are disease and pest resistant and are recommended for growing in organic farming systems.

ASSESSMENT OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Green Lane is cooperating with the Agricultural Support Republic (National) Center in implementation of the small-scale projects for assessment of new agrarian technologies. Under these projects, our specialists work towards introduction of new legume cultivation technologies and more effective methods for disease and pest control as well as crop variety testing.



AZOTOVIT: ORGANIC FERTILIZER

GL members working at the Yerevan State University and the Research Center for Vegetable Crops have studied and estimated the impact of AZOTOVIT organic fertilizer upon the growth and productivity of different crops.

Contact us to get more information about our research projects

office@greenlane.am

Green Lane supports its members to market their production

**We are glad to present the thyme tea produced by
NORAVANQI SHOUNCH Ltd.**



NORAVANQI SHOUNCH Ltd offers its production to all herb tea lovers

*Enjoy the tea prepared from thyme
that has been collected in virgin
mountain areas of Vayots Dzor
region.*

**Thyme is collected and
processed under professional
control.**

WELCOME TO GREEN LANE! Who We Are and How to Become a Member...

OUR MISSION

Assist in production and marketing of high quality, competitive agricultural products via formation of farmer groups and cooperatives thus improving the income of the member farmers, people co-operating with them, and processors who are buying from the member farmers. Our goal is to provide the population with healthy and safe agricultural products and sustainable development of rural communities.

OUR VISION

To tighten the cooperation with local and international private and public organizations which will help our beneficiaries improve their income.

MEMBERSHIP

Citizens of the RA and foreign citizens who are above 18 years of age and accept the by-laws of "Green Lane" NGO can become members of the organization.

The requirements to become a member of our organization are a written application on the name of the president of the organization and annual membership fees as follows:

- ◆ \$ 20 for the citizens of Armenia
- ◆ \$ 60 for foreign citizens
- ◆ \$100 for honorable members
- ◆ \$300-500 for the Friends of Green Lane
- ◆ \$2,000 and up to become a sponsor

*Green Lane thanks all its
members, partners and
sponsors for their valuable
contribution to this
newsletter and for
supporting our initiatives
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