

NEWSLETTER

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Dear reader,

Green ideas are becoming popular in the Caucasus. As countries are building on their futures and development routes, we hear more discussions about preservation of biodiversity, conscientious management of nature resources, thinking about what environment and habitat we will leave for our future generation to exist in.

The project “Capacity Building for Farmer Groups on Organic Farming” is fostering one of those popular green ideas in Armenia. Green Lane is helping farmers familiarize themselves with national laws on organic farming, financial and farm management in organic and low input agriculture, assists them in development and marketing their organic produce. Organic, or so called bio-products are modestly but steadily finding their ways to the shelves of the supermarkets and shops in Armenia; by choosing organic food consumers are not only deciding on healthier food but also contributing to addressing such vitally important issues as problems of soil and contamination of food with agro-chemicals, ground water depletion and decline in soil productivity that are side effects of modern food production technologies.

Although we may say that organic farming is starting from rather small base in Armenia and people are less concerned with the use of pesticides, hormones, or GM crops than in the West, and that it will take quite some time before organic movement becomes mainstream, work of such organisations like Green Lane is nevertheless very important. Work with both producers and consumers will gradually change perceptions people have about the environment they live in. We need to change our behaviour and attitudes now, otherwise environmental changes will affect our lives quite strongly; environmental doomsday scenarios are already becoming reality.

The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands is strongly supporting green ideas and initiatives in the Caucasus, environment being one of our focal strategic points. The Georgian and Dutch Ministries of Environment are proud of a long-lasting cooperation and we strongly encourage this cooperation to continue in the future. Waste management, water management, environmental law enforcement, sustainable development and the protection of natural resources are on top of the agenda, but also spatial planning and climate change are gaining more and more importance these days.

Janet Alberda
Deputy Head of Mission
Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Tbilisi, Georgia

SUCCESS STORY

LUKASHIN Agricultural Cooperative

The Success Story in this issue of GL Newsletter is dedicated to another farmer group collaborating with the Green Lane, the Lukashin Agricultural Association (consumer cooperative) in Armavir marz. Talking to Vardges Davtyan, Chairman of the Cooperative and a Green Lane member, was a good opportunity to become familiar with the history and the current activities of the cooperative and tackle the critical overall problem of further development of farmer cooperation in Armenia.

The Lukashin Consumer cooperative, which is a member of the Federation of Agricultural Associations (FAA) Union of Legal Entities, was established in 2005, within the Farmer Organizations Support Program (FOSPA) of UMCOR.

The goal of the project was to assist communities involved in agriculture to establish farmer cooperatives. Initiating such a program, UMCOR was convinced that it is possible to have serious developments in the Armenian agriculture



A member of the cooperative Y. Kostanyan grows tropical fruits

sector even given the too small sizes of farmlands. Such development was observed as stemming from the concept of farmer cooperation. Within the project, loans were provided to farmers for bulk purchases of agricultural inputs (chemicals, fertilizers, etc.), which enabled to reduce the expenses and increase the income. In addition, within the project, the cooperative members participated in trainings on farm management and agricultural production. They received support also in improving the marketing of their own product.

The project served a good motivation for establishing many farmer groups, including the Lukashin Consumer Cooperative. The latter was established by 42 farmers who all are the founding members of the cooperative.

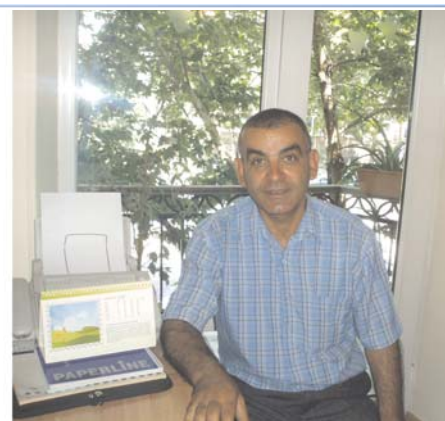
Among a number of advantages, cooperation provides farmers with a wider opportunity for using the training-advisory services. This is where Lukashin Cooperative and the Green Lane are successfully cooperating. Mr. Davtyan stated in particular that currently farmers are being provided advisory and training assistance on non-traditional high value

crops from the Green Lane specialists. It's worth mentioning that under the Water to Market component of the Irrigated Agriculture project implemented by the Millennium Challenge, Green Lane provides such assistance to a number of individual farmers and farmer groups in the form of establishing test plots, providing seeds, seedlings, and secure means of control and fertilization. Green Lane also supports in marketing of the farm produce through its consumer network.

Coming back to the Lukashin Consumer Cooperative, like Mr. Davtyan mentioned, organic farming is another important development trend for the member farmers. Currently, 6 farmer groups, mainly involved in grape, apricot and other fruit and vegetable operations, are in the middle of transferring to organic farming on 12 hectares. This naturally presumes expenses connected with certification that the vast majority of farmers cannot afford to make independently. Shen NGO was there to help out the cooperative by paying the EcoGlobe certification Agency the value needed for the certification of the farmer groups. Green Lane assists by providing the necessary materials and consultancy related to organic agriculture.

There is another important implication about the organic agriculture: the largest processing enterprises are showing interest to environmentally pure produce. In this terms, the experience and practices of beekeepers in Lukashin is definitely interesting. As Mr. Davtyan told, the organic honey produced by Lukashin farmers won the third prize in a contest conducted in Australia in 2007. This honey is certified, and the farmers are successfully marketing it through the LLC attached to the cooperative. Part of the product is sold to Tamara Fruit company, which uses it in its own organic product.

The cooperative members are able to solve a number of problems by joining their efforts. For instance, a refrigerator with a capacity of 400 tonnes will be ready next September. It used to be an old type state-owned refrigerator subject to destroy. The farmers found donors through the FAA and purchased it. Among investor were FAA, village municipality, and the cooperative. As a result of this cooperation, and



supported by RESCAD, the community will have its own commercial-size refrigerator this fall. In addition, jointly with the Future Generation organization, a deep water well has been rehabilitated.

The cooperative considers important to protect the interests of its members in different instances. According to Mr. Davtyan, such an intervention was required during the conflict occurred with the Water Users Associations, and the cooperative succeeded in protecting the interest of its members.

While speaking about the activities of the cooperatives, Vardges Davtyan emphasized the activities implemented with and for the community. He mentioned that the cooperative uses all its potential to help, together with UMCOR, disabled and elderly people, and young families as well



Many of the members of the cooperative are specializing in cabbage production

as resolve problems of women and ensure their equal participation in the community life. In particular, jointly with UMCOR, the cooperative has implemented training and consultancy services, provided support to the local high school and the kindergarten, disabled people, and families with newborn children. In cooperation with the AED, a Community Activity Center has been established. The cooperative has assigned an area and AED has provided the necessary property, a computer, etc. Within the project, 4 committees have been established: social, economic, healthcare, and youth affairs. The cooperative has recently started cooperation with the Heifer International.

To the question about the main difficulties, Mr. Davtyan answered that at this point difficulties are related to purchase of new equipment and marketing the harvest without losses.

DEVELOPING COOPERATION

This is the fifth year since the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Tbilisi, Georgia, through financial support from the NUFFIC Foundation, provides the Green Lane specialists with an opportunity to take part in various training courses conducted by the International Agricultural Center (IAC) in Wageningen, the Netherlands.

Needless to say, this opportunity of getting training and professional experience is of great importance to us. We are taking the chance to say that the Green Lane team highly appreciates supportiveness, friendliness, and responsiveness always shown by the staff of the Embassy.

The IAC training programs, the Green Lane members took part in, were mainly dedicated to the subjects related to the development of organic agriculture as well as effective management of farming systems in the context of transitional economies. These are the main directions Green Lane attaches great attention and importance to.



NaraYaralyan, Information and Communication Specialist, presenting the Green Lane website to the farmer group of the village of Dsegh

New projects, new perspectives

PROJECT FOR CAPACITY BUILDING FOR FARMER GROUPS ON ORGANIC FARMING AND LOW INPUT SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN MOUNTAIN REGIONS OF ARMENIA



Sos Avetisyan, the Editor-in-Chief of Green Lane, presenting the importance of information technologies to the members of the woman FFS of Gargar village

Our cooperation with the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Georgia continues at a new level. In 2007, supported by the Embassy, Green Lane received funding from PKP ODA Poverty Reduction Fund for its Project for Capacity Building for Farmer Groups on Organic Farming and Low Input Sustainable Agriculture in Mountain Regions of Armenia. We believe that in the reality of developing countries and transitional economies, organic and low input

sustainable agriculture systems can serve as a way to sustain the small-scale farming sector and make it competitive and viable in the marketplace.

Thus, this new project intends to raise awareness of the economic and environmental advantages of introducing organic and low input farming systems in farms and rural communities. It mainly aims to improve the capacity for continuing education as well as knowledge and information sharing among the organic farmers and farmer groups in remote mountain regions of Armenia.

We are now planning to conduct a series of trainings for eight farmer groups Green Lane is

cooperating with. The participants will enhance their knowledge about organic legislation, financial and economic management of organic and low input farming systems, marketing of organic produce, etc. However, one of the most important aspects is that the training is not limited to the agriculture and farming only; it also has another goal - to help the farmer groups develop skills needed to effectively use both conventional and new information and communication technologies (Internet, e-mail, etc).



Experience exchange workshop in Gargar village: the leader of Gargar FFS A.Muradyan presenting the work done by the group

As the project is based on the 'train the trainer' approach, it helps the members of the farmer groups not only enhance their knowledge and develop individual professional skills, but also act as trainers sharing knowledge and information with the other members of the community.

Currently, Green Lane is cooperating closely with the above eight farmer groups providing them with educational programs and resources, advice, as well as agricultural inputs. Unfortunately, very often, due to the lack of financial, professional, educational and information resources as well as poor communication infrastructure, the Yerevan based organizations appear to be unable to provide effective continuous support to these groups. And this is the main issue we are going to solve with this new project.



Young members of the Youth Club established and supported by the Gargar Woman FFS welcomed the participants of the experience exchange workshop

Many farmers in remote mountain communities are deprived of the opportunity to obtain the knowledge and information crucial for improving their economic activities. Needless to say how important clear and timely information about the market, economic and legal environment, and supporting institutions is to the farmers involved in organic and alternative farming. Organic legislation, international standards, certification process, marketing information... Good 'navigation' in this complicated economic and legal environment predetermines farmer's success, both on the farm and in the market.

Under this project, in July 2008, an experience exchange workshop was held in Gargar village of Lori region. Farmers from Tavush, Lori and Vayots Dzor regions were hosted by the members of the Woman Farmer Field School in Gargar.

News & Events

On June 14-27, 2008, our young colleague, **Ms. Ani Muradyan**, attended the "Agriculture in Transition" Training Course organized by the International Agricultural Center, Wageningen, the Netherlands.

On September 3-5, 2008, two members of the Green Lane NGO, **Mr. Shavarsh Sarukhanyan and Mr. Vardges Davtyan**, took part in the 8th European Summer Academy on Organic Farming - "Bioacademy-2008".



The Armenian participants of Bioacademy - 2008 with their foreign colleagues

On August 18-31, 2008, through support from the ACDI/VOCA FtF Project, **Mr. John Bobbe**, the Executive Director of OFARM organization (USA), ACDI/VOCA volunteer and Green Lane's Honorable Member, visited Armenia. This time Mr. Bobbe came to assist us in sustaining the activities of newly established Green Life LLC.

On June 26 - July 2, 2008, **Mr. Arnoud Brown**, the Director of FFS Foundation and the Coordinator of the FFS Global Network (the Netherlands), visited Armenia to provide consultancy and evaluate activities of the Farmer Field Schools established by Green Lane under the Rural Enterprises and Small-Scale Commercial Agriculture Development Project (World Bank & Government of Armenia).



Arnoud Brown and Eva Hakobyan, an FFS specialist, in apple orchards of Arayl village

On August 19 - September 5, 2008, Green Lane NGO hosted **Ms. Luz Palengleng** (Philippines), an international expert on FFS. During her visit, which was also a part of RESAD Project, Ms. Palengleng organized seminars for the Green Lane specialists as well as the facilitators working with Farmer Field Schools in Lori and Aragatsotn regions.



Luz Palengleng organized training for facilitators working with FFS

TOWARDS HIGH VALUE AGRICULTURE

In cooperation with its partner organizations - ACDI/VOCA (USA), Euroconsult Mott MacDonald (the Netherlands) and VISTAA Plus (Armenia) - Green Lane is actively involved in a project for development of high value agriculture in Armenia. We consider assistance to farmers in starting production of new, high value crop varieties to be one of the most effective ways of making their businesses more profitable.

In 2007, under the "Water-to-Market" Activity of its "Irrigated Agriculture" Project, the Millennium Challenge Account-Armenia started working in testing and introducing non traditional high value crops on a number of farms in different regions of Armenia. This project is being implemented by the consortium of three organizations - ACDI/VOCA (USA), Euroconsult Mott MacDonald (the Netherlands) and VISTAA Plus (Armenia).



The members of Gargar FFS (Lori region) periodically have field days

Lane and FtF volunteer for ACDI/VOCA, **Mr. Jim Krenek** (USA), we visited **Dr. Ken Swanberg**, who is working for the Millennium Challenge-Armenia Foundation as a consultant on high-value agriculture, became a flying start of successful cooperation. After being presented to the activities of Green Lane, Dr. Swanberg, a specialist of rich personal and professional experience, decided to start collaboration with our NGO.



Hrunk Manukyan, a Board Member of Green Lane and a local advisor to "Water-to-Market" Project organized training in his own greenhouse

After getting acquainted with the details of the newly announced project, the Green Lane Board members came to the conclusion that, in cooperation with ACDI/VOCA, we also could make contribution to this initiative aimed to development of high value agriculture in Armenia. That time, it was our strong belief that the expert knowledge and experience of our specialists would be of help to both the project itself and our partner farmer groups and individual farmers.

The very first meeting, when, together with the Honorable Member of Green

The strategy we choose...

The strategic goal of the project is to switch from low value agricultural products, which provide low income to farmers, to the high value agriculture. The project is intended to offer education and training on the high value agriculture techniques followed by a number of demonstration programs and activities.

In particular, ACDI/VOCA and VISTAA Plus offer to the farmers, who are planning to switch to high value crop production, training courses on techniques of cultivation of high value crops, post harvest storage, processing and marketing of non-traditional crops.



To ensure contribution of this particular component to solution of gender issues, it is planned to involve more women in future demonstration projects as well as conduct special educational programs and training courses to tackle the challenges women running agricultural business usually face. Green Lane, in cooperation with the "Water-to-Market" Activity of the Millennium Challenge Project, undertook to establish experimental and demonstration plots for cultivation of both spring and summer non-traditional crops on 21 farms. Under this project, 55 crop varieties, mainly new to Armenian consumers, are being produced now. With this project, we attempt to cover the entire production chain "from field to fork".

Cooperating with the Millennium Challenge-Armenia Foundation, Green Lane started using e-commerce tools to market the produce of the farmers involved in the project using internet and email.

We have established a small network of clients and patrons who regularly buy products offered by our partner farmers. Green Lane's marketing team led by **Ms. Stella Sarukhanyan** visits the farms that recently started production of new crop varieties in Lori, Tavush, Armavir, Kotayk, Ararat, and Aragatsothn regions - to collect products and transport them to the capital city of Yerevan. Here, the produce is sorted, packaged and taken to buyers next morning.

We are proud that our consumers are satisfied by the quality of the services and maintain good relationship with us and our partner farmers. Unfortunately, the current volumes of the production are small. That's why we think about better planning of the work, meaning that all of the most important issues, such as when, where and what to produce next year, in which quantity and of what quality, etc. should be discussed and agreed in detail with farmers beforehand. We try to arrange and plan all our activities in a way that allows to ensure continuous supply of fruits and vegetables throughout the year. To get this production and marketing chain working in more coordinated and effective way, the "Water-to-Market" project works toward strengthening the existing links between producers, consultancy services, research institutions as well as trading and processing companies.



A young specialist, Shushan Hovhannisyan making records in experimental and demonstration plots



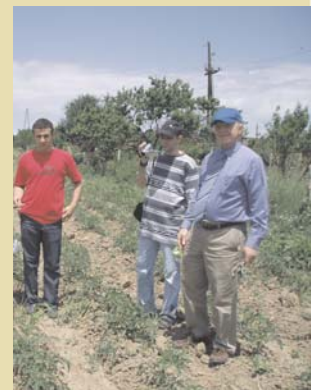
Dr. Ken Swanberg
Doctor of Agriculture

A Person We are Proud to Tell about...

Dr. Swanberg graduated from the Harvard University and continued his study at the Cornell University where he received his PhD degree in agriculture. For 9 years, Dr. Swanberg lectured at the Harvard University. He worked in more than 50 countries and cooperated with a number of international organizations (USAID, USDA, WB, ADB, IFAD, etc). Dr. Swanberg is now working in Armenia, for the "Water-to-Market" project of the Millennium Challenge Account Armenia. He leads the High-Value Crop Production Team of ACDI/VOCA. We would like to emphasize that during the implementation of the project, Dr. Swanberg not only provided great support to Armenian farmers but also became a friend and an advisor to the Green Lane team helping us overcome all the obstacles on the way from farm to market. His assistance significantly contributed to further development of our organization. It was his advice to us to support the establishment of a new business unit - Green Life Ltd, which successfully assists farmers in marketing of their farm produce.

Dear Dr. Swanberg,

On behalf of the Green Lane team, students of the Agribusiness Teaching Center and hundreds of farmers cooperating with us, we express our deepest appreciation to you. Thank you very much for your dedicated work and big heart, for your talent of understanding your colleagues and appreciating the work they do. Thank you very much for great assistance and help we receive from you.



FARMER FIELD SCHOOLS IN ARMENIA

**“If I hear it I forget it
If I see it I remember it,
If I discover it I can own it for life”**

In 2007, considering the experience Green Lane has in establishing and developing farmer groups and cooperatives, the organization was involved in a new project aimed to establish and develop Farmer Field Schools in Armenia. As a part of RESCAD Project (Project for Development of Rural Enterprises and Small-Scale Commercial Agriculture in Armenia) (Government of Armenia & World Bank), this new project is coordinated by the Agricultural Reform Support Project Implementation Unit of the RA Ministry of Agriculture.

In 2007, under this new project, 8 Farmer Field Schools were established in two regions: Lori (communities of Gugark, Tashir, Gargar, Dsegh and Jrashen) and Tavush (Artchis, Sevqar and Tovuz villages). In 2008, in cooperation with Regional Agricultural Support Centers (ASC), this number will be increased by 15. In addition, new farmer groups have been established also in Mastara, Aragats, Ashtarak and Lernapar communities of Aragatsotn marz.

Some of these groups are involved

in fruit and grape growing, others specialize in vegetable, potato and forage production. However, all of them focus on the application of integrated production management. It should be emphasized that, for each group, the main work focus is specified depending on the results of a



Meeting with the members of FFS
in Mastara village of Aragatsotn region

community need survey, taking into account which crops hold much promise for increasing the income of farmers and for supporting economic and social development of communities.

All the groups are now successfully running their farms and businesses. Currently, Green Lane

works on linking the newly established FFSs to different local and international organizations interested in agricultural and rural development to ensure mutually beneficial cooperation between them. Marketing of fruits and vegetables produced by these groups is another direction of our activities.

To support activities of the farmer groups, the Agricultural Reform Support Project Implementation Unit invited **Mr. Arnoud Braun**, the Director of Farmer Field School Foundation (the Netherlands) and the Coordinator of Global FFS Network, to share experience with Armenian colleagues as an international expert. The advice and support provided by Mr. Braun help significantly increase effectiveness of the groups' activities. In August, **Ms. Luzviminda M. Palengleng**, FFS Consultant from Philippines, came to Armenia to share her knowledge and experience with facilitators working with FFSs. She organized and facilitated a special training course. Ms. Palengleng's next visit to Armenia will be in November.



Dr. Grigoryan facilitating workshop
in Sevqar village of Tavush region

What is Farmer Field School: Perspective in the Republic of Armenia

Farmer Field School (FFS) is a continual process of a group training based on non-academic informal educational methods. FFSs are considered to be a Platform and a "school without walls" for improving the decision making capacity of farming communities and stimulating local innovation for sustainable agriculture.

Over time, the farmer groups that conduct non-formal researches in their own communities form a functioning institution based on non-governmental principles of cooperation; they have discussions with members of the community, make suggestions and analyze research data, develop strategies and make decisions. They also establish a special fund for group purposes - to solve particular problems of the entire community later on (for

example, to obtain agricultural inputs - fertilizers, seeds, chemicals, etc).

It is a participatory approach to extension, whereby farmers are given opportunity to make their choice out of different methods and approaches to production. FFS consists of farmer groups who meet regularly during the agricultural production season to test new production methods (on their individual plots) as a group, assess results and their relevance to particular circumstances, and interact on a demand-driven basis with the researchers and extensionists asking for assistance in dealing with some specific problems that can not be solved by farmers themselves. FFS is a forum where farmers and trainers discuss observations and their previous experiences and transfer the obtained experience and knowledge to the community. As a result of meetings, decisions are made on what steps are to be taken to improve farmers' activities and practices.

FFS is an alternative approach to organization of group training; all members are involved in the latter and believe that the weak points of the activities can be identified and assessed only through multiparty research and discussions in the group.



The Green Lane team meeting with the members of Arayl FFS

FFS is not an isolated group; the member-farmers also involve representatives of the community in their activities and exchange information with them. At the end of the training, farmers become trainers and advisors for other members of the community. Thus, FFS as an extension methodology is a dynamic process that is practiced and controlled by farmers to share their own experience and observations and create a more scientific understanding of the crop/livestock agroecosystems.

Gargar FFS: Turning into Business

We already mentioned in one of the foregoing articles (p. 4-5) that, thanks to the grant provided by the Government of the Netherlands, on July 1, 2008, one of the Green Lane's most experienced partner farmer groups Women Farmer Field School of Gargar village in Stepanavan region organized an experience exchange workshop wherein members of farmer field schools from different regions of Armenia partook in.

Growing of non-traditional vegetable crops as well as growing of some wild varieties of medical and pot herbs already became a source of successful business for the members of this group specializing in organic farming. The members of the group are able to create additional incomes for their families and community, in the meantime contributing significantly to conservation of nature and biodiversity. Supported by Green Lane, they deliver their products to consumers in Yerevan.

We take this opportunity to call upon all local and international organizations involved in agricultural and rural development in Armenia to join us in this initiative of supporting farmer field schools. We believe that cooperation with these farmer groups will be mutually beneficial and will help the low-income farms to sustain their activities. In turn, this will contribute to economic and social improvements in poor rural communities.

WE ALL BENEFIT FROM COOPERATION

The Green Lane team expresses deepest appreciation to Ms. Gayaneh Sargsyan, the Director of the Research Center for Vegetable, Melon and Technical Crops, Mr. Aghvan Sahakyan, the Director of the Research Center for Farming and Plant Protection, Mr. Ashot Voskanyan, the Director of the Agricultural Support Republic Center, the directors of the Marz (Regional) Agricultural Support Centers as well as to all researchers, scientists and specialists working with these centers for their supportiveness, cooperation and help. We are sure that all our colleagues share Green Lane's belief in our mission as being at serve to the farmer.



A. Sahakyan and F. Zalninyan in Green Lane's experimental plot

Our cooperation with these partner organizations is always mutually beneficial. This year, under the Millennium Challenge Project, the research centers helped our partner farmers and farmer groups by providing them with more than 10,000 seedlings of non-traditional crop varieties. This support resulted in significant increase in farmers' incomes.

The staff of these research centers consists of highly qualified professionals who have broad scientific and practical knowledge and expertise and, when needed, hurry to help our farmers with advice and all necessary information and knowledge. They accompany our specialists during their visits to villages and farms, take part in field days and other events, help farmers increase the effectiveness and efficiency of their farming and business activities.



A. Voskanyan, G. Sargsyan and H. Sargsyan observing new vegetable crop varieties

We receive significant support from the Marz Agricultural Support Centers. With assistance from the network of village extension specialists, ASCs help us in our local activities such as organization of seminars, testing and demonstration of new crops and technologies, meetings and events for experience exchange as well as successful establishment and development of farmer field schools.

BRINGING ANIMAL WELFARE INTO FOCUS



In 2007, Green Lane became a member of the World Society for the Animal Protection (WSPA). Membership of this organization helps us be more successful in our efforts of bringing the problems in the field of animal health and welfare into focus.

Animal Welfare is a new concept in Armenia while for Europe it's a recognized value based on well developed moral, scientific and legal foundation. It is a value system that brings fundamental change in our relationships with all the living things making us - human beings - more humane.



Dr. Chitchyan facilitating the seminar at the Agricultural Support Center in Kotayk region

As one of the leaders among the Armenian organizations advocating organic and environment friendly agriculture, Green Lane NGO considers farm animal welfare to be a very important part of its activities. We believe that the efforts made by Green Lane NGO and various similar organizations will help Armenia develop animal welfare legislation and become a society that respects animal rights and welfare.

Last year, under WSPA's small grant project, Green Lane received financial support that allowed us to start trainings on farm animal welfare for farmers and agricultural specialists throughout Armenia. The seminars are being conducted at each of ten Regional (Marz) Agricultural Support Centers Green Lane actively cooperates with. These Centers are located in all ten

marzes of Armenia and serve as main extension service providers at local level.

Seminars mainly address state veterinary inspectors involved in livestock breeding, vets, farmers, livestock-breeding experts and other specialists. Training cycles are organized and facilitated by the Green Lane livestock breeding and animal welfare expert **Dr. Tigran Chitchyan**. Dr. Chitchyan also works as a National Coordinator for AGROWEB Animal Welfare Sub-network (<http://arm.agrowebcac.org>) and is a lecturer at the Armenian State Agrarian University.

Participants of the seminars are being introduced to "Concepts in Animal Welfare" - an electronic educational resource (learning modules in PowerPoint Presentation format) developed and published by WSPA and the University of Bristol (some of these modules have been translated into Armenian and published on the AGROWEB - Armenia's Farm Animal Welfare Sub-portal).

This gives the participants an opportunity to expand their knowledge of basic concepts in animal welfare as well as to focus on some specific issues like physiological measures of animal welfare, role of the veterinary profession, 'welfare - market' issue, farm animal transport and slaughter, etc. The seminars include assignments as well as a 'question & answer' part that allows participants to interact with each other and share knowledge and experience.



THE FIRST GLOBAL AGRO-INDUSTRIES FORUM (GAIF) IN INDIA

The first Global Agro-Industries Forum (GAIF) took place in New Delhi, India, from April 8 to 11, 2008. The main purpose the event pursued was to support development of agro-industrial sector of the global economy, which, in its turn, will contribute to the economic growth and reduction of poverty worldwide, in particular, in developing countries.

Over 500 participants from 120 countries attended the Forum. They were representing various agro-industrial sectors as well as governmental units, civil society organizations, research and education centers, private businesses. At the Forum, Armenia was represented by the President of Green Lane **Dr. Nune Sarukhanyan**.



The participants of the Forum discussed the most urgent issues globally facing the agro-industries. They focused on the national and global potential of the agro-industrial sector of economy as well as on the challenges that require urgent solutions. Special attention was paid to the issues of drastic globalization and urbanization processes and their effects on economy. It was emphasized that, along with new global trade opportunities, globalization and urbanization bring us new challenges and risks. "Rapid globalization, market liberalization, and urbanization have created new opportunities for increased trade in agricultural and food products in national, regional and international markets, but they have also created challenges and increased risks", explains **Dr. Daniel Gustafson**, FAO Representative in India.

A number of warnings were voiced during the event:

The Director General, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, **Dr Jacques Diouf** stressed that efforts must be made to minimize the negative effect of the global price raise on poor people. Development of agro-industrial sector furnishes the clue to the solution of this issue.

Dr. Kandeh K. Yumkella, UNIDO Director-General, stated that the climate change put additional pressure on the planet and its natural resources. The daily increase in the world population creates new challenges and one of them is how to feed the rapidly growing population.

IFAD President, **Lennart Båge** noted that, over the last years, some developing countries became food exporters, though about 40 percent of the population of those countries (Zambia, Bangladesh, etc.) suffers from malnutrition. Now, the raising food prices make their living conditions even worse.

It was stated that the climate change, growing population, urbanization, increasing demand for biofuel and its growing production, high prices for exploitation of energy and water resources as well as transport are contributing to the food shortage and price raising worldwide.

Dr Jacques Diouf emphasized that a number of steps must be taken to control the situation:

- Increase investments into water resource management and infrastructure
- Ensure availability of investments and credits to small scale farmers
- More effective marketing
- Consider the fact that agro-industries help process the food, which, in turn, increases the demand for agricultural production.

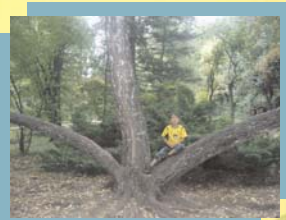
The participants pointed out a number of approaches to be applied to overcome the obstacles hindering the development of agro-industries:

- Eliminate custom obstacles
- Revise current standards and licenses
- Support small and medium scale producers
- In cooperation with NGOs, strengthen linkages between small-scale farmers and consumers through establishment of farmer groups and associations
- Promote development of private businesses; contribute to sustainability and growth of agro-industry.

As a part of the second session, a seminar dedicated to the development of regional strategies was held. Representatives of NGOs and businesses that work towards strengthening the linkage between various businesses and act as mediators between producers, traders and processors, took part in the session and seminar.

More information is available at: <http://www.gaif08.org>





**Green Lane NGO and
Green Life LLC
OFFER FARM TOURS**

**This is a great
opportunity for you to
learn more about rural
Armenia, buy organic
agricultural products and taste
traditional Armenian food
prepared by rural women!**

The Board Members and the team of the Green Lane NGO express deepest appreciation to all friends, partners, sponsors, donors and volunteers, all those people who help us make our efforts to support Armenia's farmers more effective and successful. We share all our success with you.

We are happy to take this opportunity to thank the friends of Green Lane for their great contribution to our projects and the agricultural development in Armenia:

- Dr. Allan E. Lines, USA - financial support
- Dr. Ken Swanberg, USA - financial support and consultancy
- Dr. Richard Fant, USA - seeds
- John Bobbe, USA - financial support, seeds
- Nvard Grigoryan, Internship, ATC, Armenia - volunteer
- Shavarsh Sarukhanyan, Student, ASAU, Armenia - volunteer
- Vardges Davtyan, LUKASHIN Agricultural Cooperative, Armenia - volunteer, financial support

We thank all our donors and sponsors!

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Contact us to learn more about our activities and the terms of membership

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