



Georgia Employment and Infrastructure Initiative
საქართველოს დასაქმებისა და ინფრასტრუქტურის ინიციატივა

COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS

Georgian Farmers' Trip to Turkey: Sharing professional experience and knowledge



"I'm going to use this knowledge and experience to improve my own farming activities and also give a lot of this helpful information to my students"

Ruslan Gogvadze,
Adjara

On July 12, 2008 a group of 20 Georgian farmers visited Turkey in order to gain a greater understanding of agricultural practices employed in the wider region. In the framework of the USAID funded project "Georgian Employment and Infrastructure Initiative" and with the financial support of TIKA, Turkish farmers shared their professional experience, including skills and practical usage of modern technologies with their Georgian guests.

The Georgians were divided into two working groups: one group had an interest in cattle breeding and visited Bursa, while the other group arrived in Yalova with the aim of learning more about vegetable growing and greenhouse management issues.

In Yalova, the farmers were accommodated at the Ata Turk Central Vegetable Growing Research Institute's campus. Founded in 1961, the Institute has been managed by the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture since 1964. It is located on an area comprising 120 hectares of vegetable plantations and fruit orchards. Scientific research of various fruits, vegetables and medical herbs is conducted in laboratories found on campus on a regular basis.

The Institute has already implemented 581 projects. Scientists have invented new species of fruits and vegetables (grapes, strawberries, apples, onions, peppers, and garlic), as well as new varieties of decorative plants.

A unique study program was especially created to match the interests of the Georgian farmers. Each day was dedicated to a theoretical discussion on a particular issue and practical activities in the garden and greenhouses. Special focus was placed on introducing new species of apples, inoculation methods of nuts, mushroom growing, and contemporary greenhouses for vegetables and decorative plants. It is strongly thought that the wide range of information that was made available through this unique opportunity will go a long way in assisting the Georgian farmers when applying new technologies back home.

Several articles about the Georgian farmers' visit were published in local Turkish newspapers. Study programs were followed by excursions and cognitive programs.

The other group that visited the Bursa region was stationed in the town of Karajabei, which is home to the Union of Agricultural Enterprises of Tigem, founded in 1984. The Union includes various sectors such as cattle breeding, corn growing, sapling production and a dog farm.

The Bursa group also had a program custom designed to meet their diverse interests. The farmers visited a cattle farm and became acquainted with feed production infrastructure. In addition, the group visited a horse farm housing 500 Arabian horses.

The farmers also visited vegetable fields hundreds of hectares of tomatoes, fitted out with an expansive drip irrigation system. The tour also included apple, almonds, olive, nuts and peach sapling greenhouses. Group members received advice, and a number of useful recommendations and answers to many interesting questions.

The farmers pointed out that the tour was very interesting and useful for them. "I'm going to use this knowledge and experience to improve my own



farming activities and also give a lot of this helpful information to my students" stated Ruslan Gogvadze from Adjara, who, in addition to being a farmer, is also a school director. Many of the farmers decided to use the information received in Turkey and knowledge gained through their experience to improve the quality and quantity of agricultural outputs and form strong linkages with local farmers and producers.

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