



Press Release

Thousands of Afghan farmers and families to benefit from new dairy facility

Locally sourced, safe dairy products will help improve health and nutritional deficits in Jalalabad, Nangarhar province

Jalalabad, Afghanistan, 17 February, 2015 – The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have today officially opened a multi-product dairy processing plant here in Jalalabad, the second largest city in Eastern Afghanistan.

The plant, operated by the Khatiz Dairy Union, was established under the Development of Integrated Dairy Schemes Project in Nangarhar province. The plant has a production capacity of 10 000 litres of milk and other dairy products per shift.

The Jalalabad processing plant, located some 150 kilometres from the capital Kabul, was jointly inaugurated by HE Acting Minister Salim Khan Kunduzi, HE Acting Governor of Nangarhar Province Mullahi Atullah Loddin and Mr. Shichiri Tomio, FAO Representative in Afghanistan.

When the plant is in full operation, it will produce pasteurized milk, yoghurt, cheese, butter, dogh (buttermilk), cream and ice-cream. The Khatiz Dairy Union will collect milk from local milk producers and co-operatives near the plant. The final nutritious pasteurized milk and dairy products will be supplied to the Jalalabad market.

The creation of this facility was made possible through a project implemented by FAO in very close collaboration and co-ordination with the Ministry, and funded by the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), with a total outlay of \$ 6 million. The project, which began in 2010 and will phase out in 2016, works in six districts namely Surkhroad, Kama, Ghanikhel, Behsud, Batkot and Khogiyani of Nangarhar province. The project is supporting more than 1 500 families helping them improve their food security and sustainable livelihoods.

FAO has been working very closely with the Ministry's cooperative department to help organize farmers into cooperative societies and the dairy unions. Eighteen primary cooperative societies at the grassroots level have been officially registered with the Ministry, as have five secondary cooperative unions at the district level and the provincial cooperative, Khatiz Dairy Union. In addition to the families mentioned above, a further 2 000 farmers have expressed interest to join the coops and the dairy unions.

FAO's dairy work in Afghanistan – women benefiting

The Integrated Dairy Development Programme is one of FAO's flagship programmes in Afghanistan. It has proven to be a very successful model for dairy industry development for both small and medium (SME) scale enterprises and community based enterprises that are owned and managed by cooperative societies.

The programme has strongly contributed to social empowerment especially for women whose participation in this sector has increased. More than 87 percent of income from milk has gone directly to local women, and they are able to prioritize the best use of that revenue for the benefit of their children and the family as a whole.

The Integrated Dairy Development Programme has generated employment at local level across the entire chain of milk production, collection, transportation, processing and marketing including animal feed production and marketing. This approach has contributed in part to import reductions and improved food security as these locally processed and value-added fresh milk products enter the market. In addition, these new skills and enhanced capacity across the dairy sector are improving business operations and their management, while helping to ensure a long term and effective public-private partnership for the development of an inclusive and sustainable dairy industry for Afghanistan.

“Supporting the dairy sector through public-private partnership is an essential element in the country’s mid-term and long-term development, said Acting Minister Salim Khan Kunduzi. “This best practice and well-proven integrated-dairy model developed by FAO should be replicated to other potential areas of Afghanistan and MAIL strongly supports this programme.”

“We are extremely grateful to MAIL and IFAD for their continuing support to the people of Afghanistan, including local community and Afghan private dairy unions, in an effort to increase the production and community resilience of their livelihoods through a well-designed down-to-earth supply and value chain,” said Tomio Shichiri, FAO Representative for Afghanistan.

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