

For mass-media

Khujand, April 30,

News: Awareness on Implementing a Food Safety Management System according to International Standardization Organization requirements was the topic of a workshop conducted in Khujand city – the administrative center of Sughd region.

Representatives of the fruit and vegetable processing enterprises, relevant governmental structures and business support services organizations participated in this three-day workshop. The workshop was conducted by the International Trade Centre (ITC) under the Trade Promotion Program in Tajikistan and is financed by the Government of Switzerland. The workshop was conducted by Ms. Namrata Vakhlu, a specialist on this issue and ITC international consultant.

The general objective of this event was to support improving the trade competitiveness of the agro processing sector by assisting enterprises directly, in cooperation with local services, to implement Food Safety Management Systems. Saidmumin Kamolov, National Manager of the Trade Promotion Program in Tajikistan says, at present, most of food products produced by Tajikistan fruit and vegetable processing enterprises have a low competitiveness level in the world markets because of not meeting international standards on food safety and quality. Mr. Kamolov says, lack of the Food Safety Management Certification according to ISO 22000: 2005 requirements is one of the main problems of Tajik enterprises in the way of entering international markets. Implementation of the Food Safety Management System based on HACCP principles is considered as one of the main conditions of the production of food staffs and entering food markets in the developed countries. The number of these countries has been increasing year by year and implementation of this system in the food production companies in Tajikistan is essential. This is for the first time that a workshop on this topic is conducted in Tajikistan.

Implementing the new Food Safety Management System will bring a lot of benefits to the Tajik enterprises. Among the main of them are that the safety management system and its effectiveness will significantly improve, and the products of the enterprises will be more competitive in the international and local markets. Better quality and HACCP certification will increase the clients and potential partners' confidence, assist in improving an enterprise image and create favorable conditions for attraction of investments.

Our Project: Fruit and vegetable processing and its export is considered as a priority in agriculture sector of Tajikistan. Development of this sector can support the other sectors of agriculture, increase rural population attention to fruit and vegetable cultivation, create new jobs and accordingly reduce poverty level in Tajikistan.

Taking into account all said above, the sector was chosen as one of the main directions of Tajikistan Trade Promotion Project. The main objectives of the project are improvement of enterprises export competitiveness in agro-processing in the areas where the competitiveness is determined by activities at the enterprise level and strengthening Business Support Services Organizations through increasing the quality and range of services that could assist potential and actual exporters to become more competitive in export and increase the export potential of Tajikistan in this direction.

The project is financed by the Government of Switzerland. At this moment, Phase 2 of the project is on progress that will continue until the end of 2008. ITC partner from Tajikistan is the Ministry for Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan.

ITC: The International Trade Centre (ITC) is the technical cooperation agency of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). ITC supports developing and transition economies and particularly the business sector in efforts to realize full potential for developing exports.

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