

IMPLEMENTATION OF WTO PROVISIONS AND BUSINESS AWARENESS OF WTO ACCESSION

17 April, 2014. Dushanbe

ITC ASSISTS TAJIKISTAN IN DEVELOPING A NATIONAL FOOD SAFETY STRATEGY

The International Trade Centre in collaboration with the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan provides technical assistance to public and private national partners and stakeholders in development of the National Food Safety Strategy of Tajikistan, which is one of the major activities of the National Post-WTO Accession Plan.

The ITC assistance is provided in the framework of its project, which supports the Republic of Tajikistan in implementation of the WTO provisions and the Government's WTO commitments. The ITC project is funded by the Government of Switzerland within its Trade Cooperation Program (TCP) in Tajikistan.

To initiate activities leading to the development of a national food safety strategy for Tajikistan, ITC organizes a round table on "Developing the food safety strategy of Tajikistan" on 17 April 2014. Senior officials from relevant ministries and agencies, international organizations, and other interested national stakeholders will come together to discuss the findings and challenges of the food safety in Tajikistan, and the benefits of a national strategy on food safety. Dr. Namrata Wakhloo, ITC international consultant on food safety, says *"the development of a national food safety strategy will meet the growing expectations of consumers with regard to food safety, take into account developments in the food industry and make the national food safety control system more effective and efficient. The development of the national food safety strategy will provide the Government of Tajikistan with main directions to transform the existing national food safety control system into a modern food safety control system based on best practices. Its implementation will improve the safety of the food available in the domestic market, protect consumer health and facilitate market access and export of food products"*.

In 2011 ITC developed a matrix of agencies responsible for food safety in Tajikistan, which helped to identify gaps and duplication of activities, and served as a basis for recommendations on revising the distribution of roles and responsibilities between agencies. The discussions held by the stakeholders confirmed the existence of extensive duplication of activities between various organizations involved in food safety. In 2012 ITC continued its technical assistance in this area by providing inputs in drafting of the new law on food safety, which also took into consideration recommendations from the roundtable on "Organizational arrangements for food safety management in Tajikistan" conducted in 2011.

The ITC, through this technical assistance project, is committed to support Tajikistan's public and private sector in strengthening their knowledge of the opportunities and challenges stemming from the WTO membership.

Swiss support: Within its Cooperation Strategy for 2012-2015, Switzerland focuses on four sectors in Tajikistan; Health, Rule of Law, Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, and Private Sector Development. The overall goal of Swiss Cooperation in Tajikistan is to support the transition process in the country through contributing to economic development and by helping build institutions and systems which are responsive to the population's needs. www.swisscoop.tj, www.deza.admin.ch, www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch

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