

GEFF Tajikistan Radio Interview #6: Efficient Dairy Farming

Moderator:

Hello dear listeners, we are back with another session on efficient dairy farming, which plays an important role in ensuring the food security of the population. Listen and enjoy! I am Subhon Jalilov and I am hosting an "Agriculture Talks" radio interview program. Today we have invited experts on agriculture and agri value chains. They will share their own thoughts and ideas on how farmers and agribusinesses can adopt modern technology solutions that can enhance competitiveness of Tajik Agri sector.

I would like to remind you that the program has a Question and Answer session. Direct your questions to the experts via phone at 2231106, or simply use Direct Messaging on our Facebook page - @radiovatan. Our invited experts will be glad to answer your questions.

I would like to introduce today's guest, Ms. Saida Rajabova - Leader of the group of women named "Hakimi", they are cattle breeders in the Shahrinav district. We have Mr. Usmonkul Boturov, GEFF Tajikistan Deputy Team Leader accompanying us in this series. Welcome, dear guests. I think today, we will have an interesting conversation about the issue of increasing milk production and dairy processing. Mr. Boturov, could you please briefly introduce the key objectives and activities of the GEFF Tajikistan.

GEFF Tajikistan expert:

Thank you very much. The Green Economy Financing Facility Tajikistan is a product of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, working in cooperation with the European Union, the Green Climate Fund and the Republic of Korea. The Facility operates through Participating Financial Institutions in Tajikistan, supporting its green economy transition with \$25 million of financing for energy and resource efficiency investments. GEFF Tajikistan supports various innovative green technologies with special focus on the agricultural sector. In partnership with the European Union, GEFF Tajikistan offers investment incentives for farmers and businesses investing in modern and efficient equipment and technologies.

Today we are discussing about efficient dairy farming. Agriculture and dairy farming play an important role in the economy. In rural Tajikistan, most of the population is engaged in animal husbandry, which is part of the household income. According to statistics, as of July of this year, 2,375,000 heads of cattle and 5,892,000 heads of sheep are raised in all categories of farms in the republic. Of the total livestock, 92% of cattle and 80% of goats and sheep are raised by household.

From January to July 2020, the volume of meat production in all categories amounted to 67 342 tons, which is 0.7% less than the same period in 2019. In January-July 2020, the volume of milk production in all categories of farms amounted to 366 417 tons, which is 0.6% more than in 2019. Of the total amount of milk, 92% is produced at households.

Moderator:

Thank you Mr. Boturov. Now we will continue the conversation with the invited expert Ms. Saida Rajabova about milk production and processing. It is interesting to hear about your group.

Invited Expert:

Yes, with pleasure. Thank you for inviting me. I am a leader of "Hakimi" group of women of cattle breeders in the Shahrinav district. Hakim - is the name of our village and also one of the most beautiful and tourist attractions of the Hissar valley. The group "Hakimi" was formed in 2016 by the housewives. The purpose of the group was to unite women of our village as we have a lot of housewives in our village and all of them are engaged in cattle breeding. I wanted to provide some of them with jobs and help them improve their family budget. Initially, our group consisted of 14 people and now it has 28 members. I have 5 heads of cattle, 2 of which are dairy cattle. The cows produce an average of 14 litres of milk per day, 4 litres for my family and 10 litres for sale. Every day we collect 1200-1300 litres of milk from the members of the group and other neighbours and sell it to the milk processing company "Intermarket" in Dushanbe.

Moderator:

Thank you, Saida. Great! A woman from the village took a good step, and today has created conditions for improving the lives of 28 families. You have implemented the proposals of the Leader of the Nation, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, H.E. Emomali Rahmon on the role of women in society. Women in business often face challenges, so please tell us about the activities in the areas of milk production and processing. How did you gain experience in increasing milk production?

Invited Expert:

The entire rural population of Tajikistan raises livestock at home and has sufficient farming experience. Household milk is mainly used by family members. However, milk production in rural areas is increasing yearly. Milk is a perishable product. Therefore, we took the initiative to process milk. When we formed the group, we consulted with livestock specialists and experts from international programs and set ourselves the goal not only of milk production, but also its processing.

Many thanks to the experts of international projects such as the EU/EBRD project, ECTAP who supported us and provided our group with livestock, as well as trained us on artificial insemination for livestock, production of various fodder crops. Members of our group improved the skills which helped to improve productivity of their livestock and enriched the ration of dairy cows with daily feed. With the support of this program, training was conducted on the production of various cheeses, especially mozzarella, which is in great demand.

Moderator:

Thank you, now I would like to talk about making cheese. Is it difficult to make cheese at home?

Invited Expert:

Previously I produced a type of Ossetian cheese. With the support of the ECTAP project, training was conducted on the production of various cheeses, especially mozzarella, which is very popular here.

After the training and prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, I produced 12 kilogrammes of mozzarella cheese daily and sold it to supermarkets in Dushanbe. Currently, we process 40-50 litres of milk daily. In addition to making cheese, I use the milk truck to collect milk every day. I bring it to Dushanbe and sell it and distribute the money to our women group. I am planning to apply to the GEFF Tajikistan program for the construction of a cold storage and the purchase of modern milk processing equipment, and in the future I intend to expand our activities in this area.

Moderator:

Thank you very much. Tell me please, under what brand can cheese gourmards buy your products in supermarkets?

Invited Expert:

Our group currently produce Ossetian cheese and mozzarella. Customers can buy them from supermarkets "Auchan", "Paykar" and in "Pizzeria" shops under "Subhiya" brand.

Moderator:

I wish you and your group prosperity, luck and success, and of course involve more and more members. Grow and develop, acquire new clients! It is time to answer the questions that we already received from listeners.

Q&A session***GEFF Tajikistan expert:***

I think that our interview about dairy processing by a group of women who not only do animal husbandry, but also found

ways to process the milk and gain benefits from it, was very interesting. If you have comments or a questions regarding technology we discussed today, or about GEFF Tajikistan project please call 93 4339001 or visit our Facebook page.

Moderator:

We have reached the end of the radio interview, it was a great pleasure to talk with you and I hope our listeners acquired knowledge on efficient dairy farming. Thank you very much for your visit, dear guests. Thanks for sharing the experience with our audience. We hope our audience found it useful.

I would like to express my gratitude to the GEFF Tajikistan team for sharing experiences and supporting modern, resource efficiency technologies in Tajikistan. Thank you for your attention.