



Tajikistan



Masuda chides her four children as they pit, shape and dry apricots. She knows there are better tools available—but they are for rich farmers. While she has considered selling her

goat for a down payment on better equipment—what would her children drink? So Masuda continues to employ her children as they manually prepare the apricots for drying.

Rebuilding the Robust Fruit and Vegetable Market

Background

Since the fall of communism, Tajikistan has been one of the poorest of the former Soviet republics. Despite privatization of many former state-owned industries, much of the technology is obsolete. Civil wars, droughts and political unrest have caused the infrastructure in Tajikistan to be extremely weak. While there has been much growth in the years since 1997, when the civil war ended, the economy is still fragile and the debt load heavy.

MEDA's Assessment

While Tajikistan is known for its fruit, existing technologies left over from the Soviet era are unacceptable by modern standards. The dilapidated machinery is primitive and inefficient. The fruit from these ancient canning machines is almost un-sellable. Farmers either use this existing equipment, or process the fruit by hand. Both systems mean less profits, constant frustration and back-breaking work.

The market for processed fruit has changed dramatically since the fall of the Soviet Union. With increased competition on the global market, standards for processing have gone up. Good processed fruit is now being sold in Tajikistan and the expectation for quality goods is high.

MEDA has provided training, consulting and has also looked for new technologies. MEDA has been sourcing micro-technologies for solar drying of apricots and tomatoes, and for crack-

ing pistachio nuts. MEDA consultants from successful fruit processing plants in North America have also done extensive assessment. They have created a solid plan that clearly outlines the next steps

MEDA is helping to rebuild a robust fruit and vegetable sector through loans and mentoring relationships. We are also researching new processing facilities and are investigating linkages between producers and marketers. In addition to this, we are training 500 farmers on intercropping, disease identification and other agricultural techniques.



Outcomes:

More than 800 fruit and vegetable farmers like Masuda will benefit from:

- *Increased efficiency and effective processing of fruits and vegetables*
- *Better links between farmers and processors*
- *The design and building of facilities to store crops until market prices increase*
- *Education and training in better agricultural methods for their area*

Cost:

Life of Project: \$4,600,000

Funder/Partner: Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

MEDA Match Needed: \$375,000