

Setting Standards and Helping the Private Sector Develop

Clearing the seed fields from all undesired wild weeds, mixed grains and foreign objects is a must, in order to obtain clean and uniformed seed, prior to harvesting. The end result is to provide grain growers with superior seed quality free of other seed varieties. Gagik Mkerchyan, ATG Armenia director is rousing the wheat seed fields from foreign material.

As expected by the USDA/ATG partnership program, ATG's Mkerchyan invited the Ministry of Agriculture Davit Lokian, and Gamik Petrosyan, head of Plant and Pathology Department, as regulatory agencies, to inspect and confirm the quality of the seed fields prior to harvesting.

Through our extensive training program of transfer of knowledge and technology, ATG was able to train a core group of farmers who not only adapted to western farming practices, but are managing the project and are producing superior quality, higher yielding, clean and certified seeds.



A three member USDA Foreign Agricultural Services evaluation team made a special trip to Armenia and visited several ATG seed farmers in their fields, including the president of seed association Ara Soukiasyan. The USDA-ATG partnership started in 1997, and continues until now. Thousands of people benefited from this partnership that helped alleviate poverty in the countryside by creating jobs, increase farm productivity and income. (The Evaluation team members were: Kimberly Svec, Senior Agricultural Attaché based in Moscow; Nicola Sakhleh, USDA International Marketing Specialist and Senior Analyst for Food Assistance Division at the USDA in Washington, DC., and Sean O. Carmody, USDA/FAS Agricultural project Coordinator in Armenia. Gagik Mkerchyan, ATG director in Armenia and Karen Hakobyan, deputy director joined them during their field trip.

ATG has introduced and tested over 280 different wheat, alfalfa, corn and barley seed varieties on trial plots over the past 15 years. Every year, ATG sets up 20-30 varieties of seeds on trial plots at 9-14 different locations and farm sites in Armenia.

After selecting the best yielding seed varieties for various growing zones and adapting them to local climate, ATG makes them available to the farmers, who grow and harvest the benefit of increased productivity and higher income. ATG absorbs all costs related to research and development of the seed industry – the applied science of the project, which is the most expensive part of the program. As a result, the Armenian farmer is able to reap the benefit of harvesting a two to four times higher yield per acre compared to previous years!

Now ATG is able to direct the farmers to plant the most suitable variety in any of the regions of Armenia, including Ararat Valley, Akhourian, Gyumri, Hrazdan, Sissian, Vartenis or Tavoush.

Do not hesitate to contact us or visit our web site at www.atgusa.org and review the list of 326 villages that ATG has assisted so far.

Opportunity

This is a wonderful opportunity to make a contribution directly from you IRA without a tax consequence – but you must make your donation by December 31, 2007. Please consult your accountant or a tax person.

ATG is a 501c3 charitable organization based in California. Gifts of endowments, stocks, bonds, securities or real estate may be made to ATG with potential benefit to the donor. Please check with your accountant or a tax person.



Rose Kachadoorian, pesticide management expert from USDA state of Oregon, and ATG Volunteer, traveled to Armenia for two months conducting seminars in rural villages to educate the farmers, including women, to reduce the health risks associated with mishandling pesticides.

Fighting Poverty and Hunger While Promoting Agro-Tourism, Sustainable Agriculture and Healthy Lifestyle

These two young men guided 26 cyclists from US and Armenia during the fifth annual ATG bike-a-thon all the way to Stepanagerd, where the riders were greeted with a warm welcome by the Ministry of Sport and Culture. Visit BikeForHope.com and enjoy more pictures.



With the intent to promote agro-tourism and agricultural development to alleviate poverty in the Armenian countryside, the ATG 2007 BikeForHope raised funds to purchase a No-Till planter to help wheat seed growers reduce their operating cost and increase their income. The 1000 km seven day ride created enthusiasm among the people. (Photo: cyclists from left, Seth, Edwin, Martin, Khodam, John, Jack and Noel, meeting with ATG seed grower Vartan, in Sissian)

ADVANCING FARMERS TO THE 21ST CENTURY

ATG is introducing No-Till planters such as the one illustrated in this picture, that will lower petroleum input costs by 60 – 65%, labor input costs by 50%, and machinery input costs about 50%. In turn, this will increase yield volume and subsequently household income.

Continuous no-till systems will also help preserve moisture in the soil and reduce soil erosion 95% - 99%, a serious problem in Armenia.



We need to replace the old, inefficient farm equipment such as the one pictured below, with more advanced equipment that provide the farmers with the benefit of agriculturally sound, economically superior, and environmentally safer technology to cultivate their land.

Our goal is to purchase up to 10 such planters in the coming years. Each system costs about \$35,000. Your support will help us obtain this equipment.



ATG Purpose Statement

Armenian Technology Group, Inc. a 501 (c)3 California Public Benefit Corporation, is dedicated to helping guide the Armenian people toward food and agricultural self-sufficiency by working to modernize Armenia's agricultural and rural economic infrastructure.

Center to ATG's mission is the belief that a strong private farming sector is the foundation for building a healthy free market economy in Armenia.

For the past 18 years ATG has reached farmers in 326 villages, focusing its efforts on creating jobs, increasing productivity, generating income and reducing poverty and hunger in rural Artsakh -Armenia.

ATG is creating sustainable economic structures that will lead to the growth necessary to revitalize Armenia's economy. Creating jobs for locals improves their self-esteem, leading to a healthier environment.

True to its creed, ATG has initiated the transfer of management and decision making for some of its projects to newly trained local nationals, preparing for the day when our presence in those areas is no longer needed.

ATG is audited annually and copies are filed with the US office of Management and Budget (OMB) as required by OMB Circular A-133.

Thank you to our major partners/sponsors: USDA/FAS(Foreign Agricultural Service) The Lincy Foundation, The Garabedian Foundation, Organizations and Individuals like you!

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