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ЕСТАР



ENHANCED COMPETITIVENESS
OF TAJIK AGRIBUSINESS PROJECT



**SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE TAJIK
FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SECTOR**

**ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ ПОТЕНЦИАЛА
ПРОИЗВОДСТВА ФРУКТОВ И ОВОЩЕЙ
В ТАДЖИКИСТАНЕ**

**ИСТИФОДАБАРИИ ИМКОНИЯТҶОИ
ИСТЕҶСОЛИ МЕВАҶОТ ВА САБЗАВОТ
ДАР ТОҶИКИСТОН**

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European Union in partnership with the Sughd Administration of the Republic of Tajikistan

Sixth International ECTAP Agribusiness Investment Forum in Tajikistan

October 30th-31th 2018 Guliston, Sughd Region

Promoting the modernization of the fruits and vegetables value-chains in Tajikistan Think together, Act together

The EU Enhanced Competitiveness of the Tajik Agribusiness Project (ECTAP) is a leading development project in the field of agribusiness development in CIS countries. It aims at fostering the modernization and competitiveness of selected value chains (fruits, vegetables, beef and dairy, poultry and honey) in a holistic way (from input providers down to farmers, agroprocessors to the final consumers) and with a socially inclusive approach.

The implementation of ECTAP takes place at a critical period of time. Even though Tajikistan has been achieving one of the highest GDP growth rates in the world since the end of the 1990s while drastically reducing its poverty rate, the country remains too dependent on external factors of growth. Against this background, Tajikistan now aims at making its development more sustainable and comprehensive through the promotion of labour intensive activities in agriculture (which still employs most of the workforce) and in the manufacturing industry.

Building on structural reforms implemented a decade ago, the Tajik agriculture output has also grown at fast speed. But labour productivity remains low, partly because most acreage is used for products for which income per ha is low and because most high value products such as fruit, vegetables and animal products are not part of integrated value-chains. De facto, only a very small part of them is either stored, processed or exported.

In the near future, we expect Tajikistan to focus more on its natural competitive advantages in terms of crop selection. Already, the acreage of high value-added products (such as fruits and vegetables) is on the rise. In parallel, a new generation of entrepreneurs is actively engaged in rebuilding modern processing capacities despite a still imperfect business environment linked in particular to a poorly performing financial sector.

For fruits and vegetables, Tajikistan benefits from three key strategic assets: it can rely on a privileged access (with no custom duties) to the Russian market. It can also rely on very favorable agronomic conditions with cool winters and dry and hot summers that have allowed Tajikistan and Central Asia to be the birthplace of apples, pears, prunes, apricots, cherries, plums, almonds and walnuts. And finally, Tajikistan benefits from a comparatively cheap, hard-working and fast-growing workforce making it competitive for labour intensive activities.



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For those reasons, many leading international companies in fruits and vegetables are increasingly interested by the development prospects of Central Asia in general, and of Tajikistan in particular. Some of them see these countries as potential clients for their sales of inputs, genetics and equipment. Others are eyeing at them as potential foreign direct investors. And others are also interested to import their high-quality products. Finally, many seeds and seedlings companies are fully aware of the impressive bio-diversity of the region which could be mobilized to produce new varieties more resilient to the frightening impact of climate change.

Against this positive background, the EU ECTAP and the Sughd Administration of the Republic of Tajikistan are organizing the Sixth International ECTAP Agribusiness Investment Forum in Tajikistan. It will take place on *October 30th-31th 2018 in Sughd*, a key region for fresh fruits, dried fruits and vegetables,

The aim of the Forum is to:

- Think together, through a combination of plenary sessions, visits of fields and factories, and interactive working groups;
- And Act together by connecting all interested stakeholders, private businesses from Tajikistan and abroad, including from nearby Central Asian countries such as Uzbekistan, Kirghizstan and Kazakhstan, State agencies, international and local providers of finance, development agencies and others.

The Forum is free of charge and the organizers will provide free accommodation and catering for up to 20 international EU participants (individuals or EU companies on the basis of first applying, first served with a maximum of one person per company not already established in Tajikistan and which has not benefited from such support during the previous two ECTAP forums) during their stay in Tajikistan, related to their participation in the Forum. The cost of economy class air tickets will be also be covered by the organizers for up to 20 international EU participants who will make a presentation during the Forum (guest speakers). This support will be conditional upon receiving confirmation by the participants at least two weeks prior to the Forum. Documents to be presented by guest speakers should be sent at least one week prior to the Forum to allow for quality translation.

Should you be interested to participate in the Forum please contact the organization team at ectap-investment@int.fs.de, so as to include you in the list of guest speakers or participants. ECTAP will then after contact you to define the concrete modalities of your involvement in the Forum.

Sincerely yours,

Dr Christophe Cordonnier
Team Leader

EU ECTAP
Serena Office Complex, 14, Rudaki Avenue, Dushanbe
734013, Republic of Tajikistan