

FEATURE – USDA ASSISTS IRAQI POULTRY PRODUCER

INTRO: The U.S. Department of Agriculture is in Iraq to help agricultural producers there stabilize and develop their agricultural system. The U-S-D-A's Bob Ellison has more. (1:58)

MISMANAGEMENT, DICTATORSHIP AND WAR HAVE DEVASTATED IRAQ'S AGRICULTURE SYSTEM. TO GET IT ON ITS FEET, THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE HAS SENT ADVISORS TO HELP IRAQI PRODUCERS. U-S OFFICIALS EMPHASIZE THAT THE ADVISORS ARE HELPING THE IRAQIS RATHER THAN TELLING THEM HOW TO DO THINGS.

Ryan Crocker, U.S. Ambassador to Iraq: USDA, like the U.S. government generally, is really focusing on capacity building than reconstruction per se. We are trying to help the Iraqis do things more effectively themselves instead of doing it for them. It's all about Iraqis trying to get the work done rather than doing it ourselves.

A POULTRY FACILITY AROUND ONE HUNDRED MILES WEST OF BAGHDAD IN IRAQ'S ANBAR PROVINCE IS THE FOCUS OF ONE EFFORT. USDA ADVISORS ARE HELPING THIS PRODUCER MODERNIZE HIS OPERATION.

Dr. Richard Whitten, Poultry Veterinarian, USDA Agriculture Advisor: I have expertise in poultry. I will tend to share that with him, if he asks me to do it. He wants to be a very large if not the largest poultry operation in Iraq. And my belief is if that what he wants then I will try to help him do that.

Tasheen Ali Mohammed, Poultry Producer, Anbar Province, Iraq: They cooperate with our company and let us grow and grow and grow by their experience. We need experience and especially foreign experience.

BEYOND ADVICE, U-S ADVISORS SEE OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP WITH INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATION IMPROVEMENTS.

Whitten: His road between here and the far end down there is basically scraped out of the desert and that causes a problem for him and his trucks getting in and out. So we attempted to get the military to work with him to make that a better road and they are going to do that.

WHITTEN ALSO SAYS IRAQI POULTRY PRODUCERS NEED HELP WITH FEED PRODUCTION, ANIMAL VACCINES AND RESEARCH. ALI MOHAMMED AND OTHER PRODUCERS WANT TO VISIT THE U-S FOR NETWORKING AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES. FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M BOB ELLISON.

