



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

AZERBAIJAN

CASE STUDY

Former Scientist Builds Apiary Business

Farming program helps farmer build a profitable apiary



Latif Ginyetoglu tends to his bees, which produce 12,000 kg of honey annually.

“Without the volunteers from the Farmer-to-Farmer Program, I wouldn’t be nearly as successful as I am today,” Latif Ginyetoglu said.

Telling Our Story
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Challenge

In the days of the Soviet Union, Latif Ginyetoglu studied chemistry at Moscow State University as an exchange student from Azerbaijan State University. After graduation, he worked in a lab in Moscow. In 1990 the Soviet Union collapsed, and support for various scientific institutions dwindled. Financially strapped, Latif returned to Baku, Azerbaijan, and worked for an energy research organization. As hyperinflation made his salary worth less and less, he had no choice but to return to his village, Bash Kujut. There, he taught chemistry in the local school and managed a small plot of land, some cattle, and 23 beehives. His income barely supported his family and parents.

Initiative

Since 1996, USAID has been funding a Farmer-to-Farmer program in Azerbaijan, designed to facilitate people-to-people learning and improve farm operations and agricultural systems. Latif was one of the first farmers to participate in the program. Over time, he hosted six volunteers who taught him about various aspects of beekeeping and how to expand his apiary business. One of the volunteers even invited him to the United States. Latif accepted and visited, using his own funds. In the U.S., he received advanced training in beekeeping.

Results

With ongoing help from volunteer farmers, Latif has made significant progress in developing his business. His production expanded from 23 beehives and 15 kg of harvested honey to 300 beehives and 12,000 kg of honey. Starting with a \$700 loan from his brother, Latif built his small apiary into a successful business with an annual revenue of \$120,000 that employs 13 permanent employees. He now has new equipment, hives, storage facilities, and trucks, all purchased from the honey profits. Latif not only improved his family’s living standards — he has also turned his business into a prominent registered corporation. He credits USAID’s Farmer-to-Farmer program, and the invaluable skills of its volunteers, with providing him with the skills and expertise needed to build his business.