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A Farm Gets a Boost from Legal Aid

A legal educational seminar helps a farmer increase his income



Photo: L.Slominska

Legal aid helped farmer Stanislav Sych increase his income and enlarge his farm.

Stanislav Sych, a miller from Nykyforivtsi village in Vinnytsia Oblast, Ukraine, inherited his 3 hectares of land. He had little experience farming and wanted to lease out his new parcel. However, the land had lain unplowed for three years, so to generate some profit from it, he would have to roll up his sleeves.

Stanislav worked persistently. He assembled a grain-harvesting combine from a junk heap and rented 20 more hectares from the village council, but he had a tough start. In 2002 and 2003, bad weather killed almost the whole crop.

Help came when his hope had almost faded. Lawyers from the USAID-supported Vinnytsia Legal Aid Center held an educational seminar in Nykyforivtsi that offered free legal and farm advice. Stanislav attended, asking which easy-to-grow crops would suit his fields best, while generating a decent income. He was advised to plant no more than three cultures, with winter wheat, barley and oats the best options, given market prices. In addition, the equipment for sowing, growing and harvesting these

crops is similar, so he would be able to use the same agricultural machinery, saving time and money.

Stanislav's good management coupled with USAID's recommendations brought him more than 4.4 tons of winter wheat, 3.5 tons of barley and 2.9 tons of oats per hectare in 2004. His sales generated him an excellent income, so Stanislav decided to enlarge his farm and rent land shares that had previously lain fallow to his fellow villagers.

Telling Our Story

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