



MCC Program Means Higher Incomes for Armenian Farmers

Sevan Jamalyan, a traditional Armenian farmer, has become a celebrity in his native village of Griboyedov. Not only is he among the first farmers in the Armavir region to complete the water management training offered by the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA)-Armenia but his farm has also been selected as a demonstration site for future Water-to-Market program trainings.

The Water-to-Market program is a \$33 million dollar initiative that will improve farmers' and Water Users Associations' water management skills and capabilities. As a result, farmers will increase their productivity and transition into higher value agricultural activities. The trainings started in April 2007 and so far 9037 farmers in 141 communities have participated. The program's goal is to train 60,000 farmers by the end of 2011.

MCA-Armenia provided Mr. Jamalyan's farm with technologies that will increase its production rate and demonstrate to other farmers how useful the new technologies can be. The equipment ranges from new irrigation pipes to sensors and water meters. He will now be able to replace wheat and grain crops with higher-value fruits and vegetables, spices, greens or flowers. His family's income will increase as a result.

According to Mr. Jamalyan, farmers have little access to basic information on how to improve farm production and management or how to integrate to a market economy. "Many farmers have no idea about such elementary things like fertilizing or irrigating, they do it intuitively or just follow what their senior or elder peers do," explains Mr. Jamalyan. "The MCA-Armenia program teaches practical things and it is also investing heavily in rural infrastructure for us to use."

Mr. Jamalyan's farm is a living illustration of how other farmers can develop a better farming business. By the end of the compact, MCA-Armenia expects there will be 220 demonstration sites all over the country -- 120 of them will illustrate water management techniques and the remaining 100 will be devoted to high value agriculture.



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*— Sevan Jamalyan,
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