



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS**

# AGRICULTURAL LINKAGES PLUS PROJECT (ALP UZBEKISTAN)

## QUARTERLY REPORT (Q2 FY 2012)

JANUARY 2012 – MARCH 2012

**APRIL 2012**

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by DAI.

# AGRICULTURAL LINKAGES PLUS PROJECT

(ALP)

## Q2 FY 2012 QUARTERLY REPORT

**JANUARY 2012 – MARCH 2012**

**AgLinks Uzbekistan**  
**12 Afrosiab Street – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor**  
**Tashkent, Uzbekistan**

Telephone: (998) (71) 252-5414

Fax: (998) (71) 252-6756

For the

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

RAISE Plus IQC

Contract No. EDH-I-00-05-00004-00

Task Order No. AID-176-TO-11-00002-00

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **Acronyms**

#### **A. ADMINISTRATION**

- A.1. USG Related
- A.2. Other bilateral partners and programs
- A.3. Other multilateral partners and programs
- A.4. Issue(s)

#### **B. TECHNICAL**

- B.1. Producers - AgriFirm & Water User Association (WUAs) Farmers
- B.2. Private Sector
- B.3. Public Sector
- B.4. Issue(s)

#### **C. ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

- C.1. Monitoring
- C.2. Mitigation
- C.3. Issue(s)

#### **D. FINANCE**

- D.1. Disbursements
- D.2. Commitments
- D.3. Obligations
- D.4. Issue(s)

### **Annex A**

Monthly Report – January 2012

Monthly Report – February 2012

## ACRONYMS

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>ALP</b>     | Agricultural Linkages Plus project  |
| <b>ADB</b>     | Asian Development Bank  |
| <b>BDS</b>     | Business Development Services   |
| <b>BEO</b>     | Bureau Environmental Officer  |
| <b>BFU</b>     | Business Forum of Uzbekistan  |
| <b>CAR</b>     | Central Asian Republics   |
| <b>CCI</b>     | Chamber of Commerce and Industry  |
| <b>CE</b>      | Categorical Exclusion   |
| <b>CIS</b>     | Commonwealth of Independent States  |
| <b>CNFA</b>    | Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs  |
| <b>COP</b>     | Chief of Party  |
| <b>CPS</b>     | Crop Protection Services  |
| <b>DAI</b>     | Development Alternative Inc.  |
| <b>Dekhan</b>  | backyard farm   |
| <b>DPP</b>     | Dynamic Planning Process  |
| <b>EU</b>      | European Union  |
| <b>FFP</b>     | Food For Progress   |
| <b>FtF</b>     | Farmer to Farmer  |
| <b>FY</b>      | Fiscal Year   |
| <b>G&amp;A</b> | General and Administrative  |
| <b>GOU</b>     | Government of Uzbekistan  |
| <b>GSB</b>     | Growing Sustainable Businesses Initiative (UNDP)                            |
| <b>ha</b>      | hectare (10,000 square meters, 100 meters by 100 meters, 2.47 acres)        |
| <b>HACCP</b>   | Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points                                 |
| <b>HO</b>      | Home Office   |
| <b>HPLC</b>    | High Performance Liquid Chromatograph                                       |
| <b>IEE</b>     | Initial Environmental Examination   |
| <b>IER</b>     | Initial Environmental Review  |
| <b>IKS</b>     | Islohotkonsaltservis, Ltd. (local consulting firm)                          |
| <b>ISO</b>     | International Organization for Standardization                              |
| <b>JICA</b>    | Japan International Cooperation Agency                                      |
| <b>JSC</b>     | Joint Stock Company   |
| <b>Kholhoz</b> | collective farm (during Soviet era)   |
| <b>LLC</b>     | Limited Liability Company   |
| <b>LOP</b>     | Life of Project   |
| <b>LSP</b>     | Local Service Provider  |
| <b>MASHAV</b>  | Agency for International Development Cooperation (Israel)                   |
| <b>MAWR</b>    | Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of Uzbekistan                   |
| <b>M&amp;E</b> | Monitoring and Evaluation   |
| <b>MERIT</b>   | Ministry of External Economic Relations, Investment and Trade of Uzbekistan |

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>MOU</b>     | Memorandum of Understanding                              |
| <b>NDC</b>     | Negative Determination with Conditions                   |
| <b>NGO</b>     | Non-Governmental Organization                            |
| <b>ODC</b>     | Other Direct Costs                                       |
| <b>OH</b>      | Overhead   |
| <b>PD</b>      | Positive Determination                                   |
| <b>PERSUAP</b> | Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safe Use Action Plan     |
| <b>Pudrats</b> | Family-based agricultural production units               |
| <b>RBS</b>     | Royal Bank of Scotland                                   |
| <b>SABIT</b>   | Special American Business Internship Training            |
| <b>SDC</b>     | Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation             |
| <b>SEAF</b>    | Small Enterprise Assistance Fund                         |
| <b>Shirkat</b> | production cooperative (Uzbek)                           |
| <b>SISF</b>    | Social Initiative Support Fund                           |
| <b>SME</b>     | Small and Medium size Enterprises                        |
| <b>Sovhoz</b>  | state farm enterprise (during Soviet era)                |
| <b>TA</b>      | Technical Assistance                                     |
| <b>TCN</b>     | Third Country National                                   |
| <b>TIKA</b>    | Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency |
| <b>TQSA</b>    | Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance                 |
| <b>TCCTC</b>   | Tashkent City Center for Testing and Certification       |
| <b>Tuman</b>   | rayon (district) in Uzbek                                |
| <b>UNDP</b>    | United Nations Development Program                       |
| <b>USDA</b>    | United States Department of Agriculture                  |
| <b>USG</b>     | United States Government                                 |
| <b>USAID</b>   | U.S. Agency for International Development                |
| <b>UzKDB</b>   | Uzbek-Korean Development Bank                            |
| <b>VAT</b>     | Value Added Tax  |
| <b>Viloyat</b> | Oblast (province) in Uzbek                               |
| <b>WFLO</b>    | World Food Logistics Organization                        |
| <b>WUA</b>     | Water User's Association                                 |
| <b>WUASP</b>   | Water User's Association Support Project                 |

This report covers the second quarter (January-February-March 2012) of the first fiscal year (FY) activities of the AgLinks Plus (ALP) Project in Uzbekistan. This is the second quarter of ALP activities since contract award.

## **A. ADMINISTRATION**

This quarter, two (2) new staff members were added to the team, Dmitriy (Dima) Lunev (Irrigation Specialist), and Ibragim Tahoev (Driver). The total number of full-time AgLinks Plus (ALP) staff members is now twelve (12).

The final AgLinks report was submitted to USAID on March 30, 2012, as well as the quarterly travel plan and monthly activities plans for January and February 2012.

### **A.1 USG Related**

**USAID/Central Asia Contracts Officers visit to Samarkand Province.** On March 12-13, 2012 Ms. Deborah Simms-Brown, Supervisory Contracting Officer, and Mr. Albert Carrera, Contracting Officer, from the USAID Central Asian Regional Mission visited project sites in Samarkand Province. The delegation, accompanied by ALP COP Chuck May and Regional Adviser Ulugbek Bekchanov, visited both existing and planned demo plots in the Taylak and Samarkand districts. These included nursery, grape orchard on trellises, cold storage facilities and intensive apple and pear orchards that will be provided with trellises by the project in upcoming growing season of 2012.

**USAID Project Visitors.** During this quarter, ALP staff met with Fabian Olarte, AmCham Uzbekistan Business Advisor, and Volunteer for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA) to discuss potential areas of collaboration.

**Participation in U.S. Embassy event.** Dima Lunev participated in a U.S. Embassy sponsored event on March 28, 2012 dedicated to World Water Day. Mr. Lunev made a presentation on "ALP's Approach to Water and Environmental Issues: Modern Irrigation Technologies". Participants (mostly students) had a chance to learn about project activities related to water conservation, including drip irrigation demo plots.

### **A.2. Other Bilateral Partners and Programs.**

The USAID/AgLinks Plus project is open for cooperation and collaboration with other projects and donor organizations to exchange ideas, identify and initiate mutually beneficial activities in technical assistance, training opportunities, and financing options. Partners and programs include USG-funded activities implemented through other agencies and departments, other donor-funded activities and multi-donor opportunities.

### **A.3. Other Multilateral Partners and Programs**

**MASHAV Study Tour.** ALP irrigation expert, Dima Lunev, attended a MASHAV training entitled “Management of Scarce Water Resources and Irrigation Systems: Environmental Aspects” in Israel during the first two weeks of February 2012. The training presented Israeli knowledge and experience in formulating water and soil-saving irrigation technologies under arid conditions. ALP intends to promote these advanced water management technologies (e.g., sprinkle, mist and drip) in demonstration plot fruit orchards to introduce these techniques to partner organizations and farmers.

**Meetings with other projects and donors.** The development of the horticulture sector in Uzbekistan has started to attract attention from other donor organizations. This quarter, staff met with the following organizations:

- Adam Davino and Alisher Ergashev, representatives of “Theodor Wille Intertrade”, to discuss buy-consolidate-store opportunities in the Uzbek fruit sector.
- Donald Larson and Irina Ramniceanu from the World Bank design team tasked to develop a horticultural policy note to describe the subsector and related policies, which will serve as a background document for future lending decisions.

#### **A.4. Issue(s).**

The major issue for ALP implementation remains the lack of an approved MOU to expand project activities to the targeted new provinces and districts. Progress is being made but seasonal activities have begun and the project remains limited to legally work only in the original provinces and districts identified in the MOU for the predecessor AgLinks project. Until further amended, the existing MOU is valid through November 2015.

## **B. TECHNICAL**

The second quarter of the 2012 fiscal year is characterized by intensive training, study tours and preparation activities for the upcoming agricultural season.

### **B.1. Producers - AgriFirm and Water User Association (WUAs) Farmers.**

**Trainings.** A total of 322 participants attended producer-level trainings this quarter, including topics nursery development and intensive pome fruit pruning.

| Province                          | Type | Name                     | Nursery Development (John Driver) |     | Intensive Pome Fruit Pruning (Tim Mitchell) |     |
|-----------------------------------|------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----|---|-----|
|                                   |      |                          | F                                 | M   | F   | M   |
| Dates                             |      |                          | 25 Jan - 3 Feb                    |     | 22 Feb - 1 March                            |     |
|                                   |      |                          | F                                 | M   | F   | M   |
| Samarkand                         | WUA  | Bulungur Irmogi          | 0                                 | 23  |   |     |
|                                   | WUA  | Hujabuston Suv Tarmogi   |                                   |     | 1   | 20  |
|                                   | WUA  | Karshiboy Mirob          |                                   |     | 1   | 14  |
|                                   | AF   | MevaSabzovot             |                                   |     | 0   | 23  |
|                                   | AF   | Dilkusho Sifat           |                                   |     | 0   | 21  |
| Ferghana                          | AF   | Muyan                    | 0                                 | 34  |   |     |
|                                   |      | Ferghana Tola Baza       |                                   |     | 0   | 13  |
|                                   | AF   | Kuvasoy Behizor          |                                   |     | 0   | 52  |
|                                   |      | Sorik kurgon AGRO impeks |                                   |     | 0   | 7   |
| Namangan                          | AF   | Turakurgan Sohibkorlari  | 0                                 | 36  | 0   | 36  |
| Tashkent                          | RI   | Shreder                  | 15                                | 16  | 0   | 10  |
| Total - 322 (17 Female, 305 Male) |      |                          | 15                                | 109 | 2   | 196 |

**Table 1:** Attendance at Trainings Held by Province and Partner – 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter FY 2012

**Horticultural Exchange Program (HEP).** ALP initiated an exchange visitor program in collaboration with subcontractor International House - Davis. The “Horticultural Exchange Program” (HEP) is designed to expose Uzbek visitors to training and practical experience in the United States that they can adapt to their own circumstances. The HEP, which occur approximately each quarter, focuses on a main theme and supports sub-themes of relevant agricultural activities which correspond to the time of year and agricultural calendar.



The first HEP theme was “Planting, Pruning, and Trellising of Fruit Trees and Grapes” with three (3) public, seven (7) private sector and one (1) ALP staff member as participants. The public sector representatives included one (1) employee from the Horticultural Research Institute (Shreder) and two (2) from the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources (MAWR). All private sector participants were farm owner-operators. During the three week exchange, the visitors participated in hands-on and interactive visits to over twenty-five (25) sites in northern and central California including farms, private companies and organizations involved in orchard production, sorting and packing, storage (including cold storage), processing, retailing and consumption.

During the exchange program participants learned new techniques in trellising, grafting, budding and pruning methods used throughout the California horticultural industry and noted how to best adapt these practices to their own circumstances upon return to Uzbekistan.

A de-briefing by the delegation was held at the ALP offices one week after their return. Participants noted that the study tour exceeded their expectations and shared their plans on how they will use their new knowledge in their professional work. The United States organizers at iHouse-Davis commented that this “HEP01 group was excellent, cooperative and asked good questions.”

The second HEP is scheduled for May 12 – June 2, 2012 and will focus on best nursery practices. The list of participants for this HEP has been finalized and necessary documents submitted to generate United States visas.

**India study tour.** The ALP Environmental Officer, Sunnat Djalalov, along with three (3) partners representing horticultural research, grape farmers and plant protection, participated in a one-week study tour to witness the “Cold Dip” raisin production techniques being developed in India. Advantages of this method include: shorter production time (2-3 times faster) and better raisin quality (no damage or cracking the grape skin). In addition to experiencing the step-by-step “cold dip” process, the participants visited local sites for grape production, sorting, processing and packaging.



Each of the three Uzbek participants in the study tour have taken what they observed in India and have begun to apply the lessons learned in Uzbekistan. The researcher who participated in the study tour has since decided to disseminate this new method of raisin processing by building demonstration drying sheds, based on what he observed

and learned from the visit. The grape farmer was impressed with an Indian cap stemmer machine and plans to modify his own design by adding a vacuum system. The pest and disease expert agreed that the Plant Protection Institute will provide assistance to test the product line in Uzbekistan and a MOU was signed with Indian supplier (Omega Fine Chemicals).

**Advanced Winter Pruning Techniques.** Ministry figures indicate that over 2,000 intensive orchards have recently been established in Uzbekistan, which has greatly increased demand for orchard management training as this type of horticulture is new to Uzbekistan. AgLinks Plus began the 2012 orchard management trainings in February 2012, including new methods of winter pruning in new and existing, as well as traditional and intensive, orchards. Almost 200 people were trained in nine (9) locales, including five (5) in the Fergana Valley and four (4) near Samarkand, including the provincial Shreder Horticultural Research Institute.

**Advanced Nursery Development Techniques trainings.** AgLinks Plus consultant John Driver visited Samarkand, Ferghana, Namangan and Tashkent provinces to conduct trainings on best grafting and budding practices. The theoretical portion of



these trainings described the necessary equipment and cuttings of “true-to-type” fruit varieties to improve nursery productivity and increase fruit sapling quality. Participants discussed their business objectives as nursery owner-operators and the problems they encounter. Digital video materials demonstrated nursery production techniques employed in the California fruit industry. The practical part of the training consisted of hands-on demonstration of

budding and grafting techniques including how and when to chose, and how best to implement, whip versus bark grafting as well as chip versus T-budding in both nurseries and orchards. A total of 124 people attended these trainings.

**Bee pollination demo plots.** Under the ALP predecessor project, Aglinks conducted an assessment on the impact of honey bee pollination of fruit trees, both in terms of quantity and quality of the orchard yield. Studies demonstrated that bees significantly increase yields 5-20 times, depending on the crop. Based on these results it was decided to expand bee pollination demonstrations under the ALP project. During this quarter, ALP identified sixteen (16) farmers in Ferghana and Namangan provinces willing to install bee hives in their orchards. An arrangement was made with the Ferghana Beekeepers’ Association to provide the necessary number of hives. This partnership is mutually beneficial for both farmers (who in the end realize increased yields) and beekeepers (who will have additional honey production).

List of ALP's bee pollination demonstration plots in 2012

| #   | Farmer                | Area, ha    | Crops  | Required bee hives |
|---|-----------------------|-------------|--|--------------------|
| <b>Turakurgan District of Namangan Province</b> |                       |             |  |                    |
| 1   | Yakubjon Boymirzaev   | 2           | Apricot, Cherry  | 8                  |
| 2   | Muhtorjon Rahmonov    | 2           | Apricot and Cherry                                     | 8                  |
| 3   | Mirzabekov Solijon    | 1           | Cherry and Apricot                                     | 4                  |
| 4   | Ilavuddinov Solijon   | 5           | Apricot  | 8                  |
| 5   | Tursunov Shermuhammad | 2           | Persimmon, Cherry, Almonds, Apple, Pomegranate, Quince | 4                  |
| 6   | Karimjon Hojamov      | 1           | Apricot, Cherry, Pomegranate                           | 4                  |
| 7   | Mahmudjon Isroilov    | 1           | Apricot, Cherry, Peach                                 | 4                  |
| 8   | Abdulhakim Haknazarov | 2           | Cherry, persimmon, pomegranate                         | 2                  |
| 9   | Mirzabekov Komiljon   | 2           | Apricot, persimmon                                     | 8                  |
| <i>Sub-total</i>                                |                       | <i>18</i>   |  | <i>50</i>          |
| <b>Quvasay District of Fergana Province</b>     |                       |             |  |                    |
| 1.  | Murodjon Boymatov     | 1           | Plum   | 4                  |
| 2.  | Akram Juraev          | 3           | Cherry   | 12                 |
| 3.  | Ganijon Olimjonov     | 0.2         | Cherry   | 2                  |
| 4.  | Bahodir Yusufjonov    | 1           | Apricot, apple   | 8                  |
| 5.  | Shuhrat Razzoqov      | 1           | Plum   | 4                  |
| 6.  | Rahmonali Sharipov    | 1           | Plum   | 4                  |
| 7.  | Maqsud Tursunov       | 4           | Cherry   | 16                 |
| <i>Sub-total, ha</i>                            |                       | <i>11.2</i> | <i>Sub-total hives</i>                                 | <i>50</i>          |
| <b>Totals</b>                                   |                       | <b>29.2</b> | <b>Total number of hives</b>                           | <b>100</b>         |

The Beekeepers Association's specialists visited orchards to determine points where bee hives should be placed and the required number of hives to ensure optimal coverage. During the field visits, they instructed the farmers/owners of the demo plots how to monitor the bee hives and use agrochemicals in a manner that would not hurt the bees. Farmers will be responsible of taking care of the bee hives during the process. Hives will be on farmers' plots from mid-March 2012 until harvest of the particular crops, with the latest harvest being pomegranate and persimmon orchards in October 2012. The activity is based on a cost sharing basis: bee keepers do not charge for the "renting" of bee hives, farmers cover expenses related to guarding the hives, and the project covers only the cost of transportation for the hives.

**Production of training videos.** One of innovations proposed to be implemented within ALP was development of a Mobile Extension Value Added (MEVA) application for farmers. The MEVA system will contain training materials in the Uzbek language, both

written and video format (hands-on, do-it-yourself (DIY) style). To produce video content customized to the Uzbekistan environment, the video production company Case By Case was contracted to develop the scenes and filming of the training videos. By the end of the quarter for this reporting period, the video crew arrived and started to produce training films that cover stone, pome, grape and nut tree maintenance in preparation for the upcoming 2012 and subsequent agricultural seasons.

## **B.2. Private Sector.**

**ProdExpo Russia.** In February 2012, Shuhrat Abrorov, one of ALP's three Regional Advisory Managers, four ( 4) agrifirm members, and one (1) agroprocessor attended PRODEXPO, the largest annual specialized food and beverage trade show in Russia and Eastern Europe. PRODEXPO offers the most efficient means to meet a large number of prospective buyers, learn new techniques and technologies, and source equipment. It has been held every year since 1994 and attracts over 50,000 people from more than 55 countries with 2,000 exhibitors. The Russian market is important to Uzbek fruit exporters because it was the world's largest importer of apples and pears during 2011 according to the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Of greatest interest to the Uzbek participants were contacts made with "Solntse Vostoka," for dried fruits, and "Lanit 99," a trading house that specializes in dried fruits and vegetables for the Russian market. Participants also visited the Moscow fresh fruit wholesale market to experience the handling, market requirements, packaging and import procedures.

## **B.3. Public Sector.**

**Tissue Culture Laboratory Assessment.** ALP consultant John Driver, an industry leading plant breeder and apricot farmer, conducted an assessment of the existing lab at the Horticulture Research Institute (Shreder) to determine the potential of rehabilitating and upgrading the lab to allow modern tissue culture methods for accelerated propagation of virus free plant material. Plant tissue culture (micro-propagation) is used extensively in the nursery business and in plant biotechnology. It is a useful tool for the rapid production of many genetically identical plants using relatively small amounts of space, supplies and time. ALP anticipates participating in the bilateral science and technology agreement signed by Secretary Clinton during her last visit to Uzbekistan as justification for bringing tissue culture equipment and supplies into Uzbekistan duty-free. Initial discussions have been held with the Uzbek Science and Technology Committee regarding this idea and the next meeting will focus on how to move this idea forward by identifying the process required to qualify under the US-Uzbekistan Science and Technology Agreement. That meeting will include representatives from Shreder, ALP and USAID along with the Uzbek Science and Technology Committee staff. The goal of the meeting will be to identify the required paperwork and format to get the procedure started.

**Advanced Irrigation.** This season's advanced irrigation installation will focus on the Shreder Horticultural Research Institute. The project has designed a demonstration system for Shreder that showcases mist, spray, sprinkle, and drip irrigation techniques on approximately 2.5 hectares just outside of Tashkent at their central headquarters. The tender was announced and bids were received during the quarter. The selection and installation is planned for next quarter.

#### **B.4. Issue(s).**

There were no major technical issues this quarter other than the delay in expanding official activities to the two (2) new provinces mentioned in Section A.3 above due to the lack of a signed MOU giving authority to the project to enter these new areas.

### **C. ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

#### **C.1. Monitoring.**

**Development of EM/FMMP.** Dr. Steven Romanoff, Environmental Specialist from DAI's Economic Growth Office, performed the field work portion of the Environmental Manual and Framework Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EM/FMMP) for ALP. Dr. Romanoff conducted an initial training workshop for staff members on USAID environmental rules and regulations for project implementers. He was accompanied by ALP Environmental Compliance Officer, Sunnat Djalalov, on field site visits to both existing and planned locales in the Ferghana Valley and Samarkand. The locales included drip irrigation, small scale cold storage, vineyards, trellised fruit tree demo plots, WUA's and Agrifirms. At the end of his stay Dr. Romanoff conducted a final workshop for project and USAID staff on his findings, recommendations and implementation guidance, while brainstorming major activities for potential environmental impacts to address in the mitigation plan.

Initial Environmental Screening documents were prepared for the: (1) HEP exchange program, (2) ProdExpo, (3) MASHAV training, (4) "cold dip" exchange tour, (5) Tissue culture assessment and nursery training, (6) Nursery assessment and pruning training, (7) CoolBot purchase, (8) Fruit Tree Bee Pollination practice, (9) grape best practices training, (10) Sweet Cherry Production practice, (11) production of training video materials, (12) procurement of Trellises for vineyards and orchards, (13) Procurement of tools and testers, (14) Survey of domestic cold store and related fresh produce markets, and (15) Procurement of plant materials.

**PERSUAP.** The project's Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safe Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) for Uzbekistan remains the basic guidance for most all environmental activities under the project. PERSUAPs are required for all USAID-funded projects and activities which have an agrochemical component. The PERSUAP has not been updated since the original document was prepared for USAID in early 2009. This is

primarily because the Uzbek national plant protection service has not publicly released an updated list of approved agrochemicals since that time.

PERSUAP specialist Uwe Scholz was contracted by the project to conduct an “umbrella” PERSUAP. The draft PERSUAP will be submitted next quarter. AgLinks staff will use the PERSUAP guidance to make informed decisions on equipment purchases (sprayers), reference materials (pesticide management, safety and use) from UC Davis and the resultant farm level trainings and additional support.

## **C.2. Mitigation.**

AgLinks Plus promotes environmentally friendly agrotechnologies and techniques to mitigate possible adverse impact of agricultural activities. The proper use of agrochemicals as a means for pest and disease control in orchards is always on the project agenda. The basis for the mitigation of potential negative environmental impact of agrochemicals use is the PERSUAP and pest and disease control manual published by the project in cooperation with National Plant Protection Institute. In every single pest and disease control training program a special session is reserved for the safe use of agrochemicals. Trainers always highlight this key aspect. New project activities, such as using pheromone traps for optimal scheduling of chemicals application, also helps to mitigate undesirable environmental side effects. Farmers will know exactly when to apply chemicals and how much to apply, instead of using them blindly. Another activity of the project, promoting drip irrigation systems, is also directly linked to improving environmental issues of irrigated agriculture through the mitigation of water loss and water erosion of arable lands.

## **C.3. Issue(s).**

No other major issues were identified during this quarter.

## **ANNEX A**

- Monthly Report for January 2012
- Monthly Report for February 2012

**USAID AgLinks Plus Project**  
Monthly Report #03 – January 2012

Contract # EDH-I-00-05-00004-00  
TO # AID-176-TO-11-00002-00

**ADMINISTRATION.** Dmitriy (Dima) Lunev, Irrigation Specialist, was added to the team at the beginning of the year to yield a total of 11 full-time AgLinks Plus (ALP) staff members. Staff met with Fabian Olarte, AmCham Uzbekistan Business Advisor and Volunteer for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA), to discuss potential areas of collaboration. ALP also met representatives of Theodor Wille Intertrade, Adam Davino and Alisher Ergashev, to discuss buy-consolidate-store opportunities in the Uzbek fruit sector. Staff also met Donald Larson and Irina Ramniceanu, a World Bank design team, tasked to develop a Horticultural Policy Note to describe the subsector and related policies to serve as a background document for future lending decisions.

**TECHNICAL.** *Horticultural Exchange Program (HEP) #1.* ALP initiated an exchange visitor program in collaboration with subcontractor International House - Davis. The “Horticultural Exchange Program” (HEP) is designed to expose Uzbek visitors to training and practical experience in the US that they can adapt to their own circumstances. HEP focuses on a main theme and supports sub-themes of relevant agricultural activities which correspond to the time of year and agricultural calendar. The first HEP theme is “Planting, Pruning, and Trellising of Fruit Trees and Grapes” with 3 public and 7 private sector participants departing for California in January. The public sector representatives included one from the Horticultural Research Institute (Shreder) and two from the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources (MAWR). All private sector participants were farm owner-operators.



*Uzbek Participants Examine V-trellised Peach Trees*

*Tissue Culture Laboratory Assessment.* Plant breeder and apricot farmer, John Driver, conducted an assessment of the existing lab at the Horticulture Research Institute (Shreder) to determine the potential of rehabilitation and upgrades to allow modern tissue culture methods for accelerated propagation of virus free plant material. Plant tissue culture (micro-propagation) is used extensively in the nursery business and in plant biotechnology. It is a useful tool for the rapid production of many genetically identical plants using relatively small amounts of space, supplies and time. His draft report should be available by the end of February and will inform future ALP decisions on how best to proceed in this area.

*Advanced Pruning Techniques trainings.* John Driver, also visited Samarkand, Ferghana, Namangan and Tashkent provinces to conduct trainings on best grafting and budding practices. The theoretical portion of these trainings described the necessary equipment and cuttings of “true-to-type” fruit varieties to improve nursery productivity and increase fruit sapling quality. Participants discussed their business objectives as nursery owner-operators and the problems they encounter. Digital video materials demonstrated nursery production

techniques employed in the California fruit industry. The practical part of the training consisted of hands-on demonstration of budding and grafting techniques including how and when to choose, and how best to implement, whip versus bark grafting as well as chip versus T-budding in both nurseries and orchards. A total of 124 people attended these trainings.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE.** Dr. Steven Romanoff, Environmental Specialist from DAI's Economic Growth Office, performed the field work portion of the Environmental Manual and Framework Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EM/FMMP) for ALP. Dr. Romanoff conducted an initial training workshop for staff members on USAID environmental rules and regulations for project implementers. He was accompanied by ALP Environmental Compliance Officer, Sunnat Djalalov, on field site visits to both existing and planned locales in the Ferghana Valley and Samarkand including drip irrigation, small scale cold storage, vineyards, trellised fruit tree demo plots, WUA's and Agrifirms. At the end of his stay Dr. Romanoff conducted a final workshop for project and USAID staff on his findings, recommendations and implementation guidance while brainstorming major activities for potential environmental impacts to address in the mitigation plan.



*Driver demonstrates advanced budding & grafting techniques*

**NEXT MONTH.** The following major activities are anticipated for February 2012:

- 1<sup>st</sup> week – Return of HEP01 participants; departure of John Driver
- 2<sup>nd</sup> week – Post exchange visit workshop with HEP01 participants
- 3<sup>rd</sup> week – ProdExpo Exhibition in Moscow (4 farm owner-operators, 1 processor)
- 4<sup>th</sup> week – Return of grape-to-raisin processing exchange visit participants from India (2 farm owner-operators, 1 exporter)

**USAID AgLinks Plus Project**

Monthly Report #4 – February 2012

Contract # EDH-I-00-05-00004-00

TO # AID-176-TO-11-00002-00

**ADMINISTRATION.** The major issue for ALP implementation remains the lack of an approved MOU to expand project activities to the targeted new provinces and districts. Progress is being made but seasonal activities have begun and the project remains legally limited to only work in the original provinces and districts identified in the still valid AgLinks (predecessor project) MOU (valid through November 2015 until amended).

**TECHNICAL.** February marked the end of winter study tours and the beginning of training activities to impact the 2012 horticultural season.



*Fruit Tree Nursery Visit, California*

**Horticultural Exchange Program (HEP).** The first HEP program concluded for the 10 participants studying “Planting, Pruning, and Trellising of Fruit Trees and Grapes” in California. A de-briefing of the 3 public sector and 7 private sector participants was held at the ALP offices one week after their return. Participants noted that the study tour exceeded their expectations and shared their plans on how they will use their new knowledge in their professional work. The US organizers at iHouse-Davis commented that this “HEP01 group was excellent, cooperative and asked good questions.”

**Advanced Winter Pruning Techniques.** Ministry figures indicate that over 2,000 intensive orchards have recently been established which has greatly increased demand for orchard management training as this type of horticulture is new to Uzbekistan. ALP began the 2012 orchard management trainings this month including new methods of winter pruning in new and existing, as well as traditional and intensive, orchards. More than 200 people were trained in 9 locales, including 5 in the Fergana Valley and 4 around Samarkand, including the provincial Shreder Horticultural Research Institute.



*Winter Pruning Training, Ferghana Province*

**ProdExpo.** ALP Agricultural Production Adviser, Shuhrat Abrorov, along with 4 agrifirm members and 1 agroprocessor visited PRODEXPO (<http://www.prod-expo.ru/>), the largest annual specialized food and beverage trade show in Russia and Eastern Europe. PRODEXPO offers the most efficient means to meet a large number of prospective buyers, learn of new techniques and technologies, and source equipment. It has been held every year since 1994 and attracts over 50,000 people from more than 55 countries with 2,000 exhibitors. The Russian market is important to Uzbek fruit exporters because it was the world’s largest importer of apples and pears during 2011, according to the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Of greatest interest to the Uzbek participants were contacts made with “Solntse Vostoka,” for dried fruits, and “Lanit 99,” a trading house specialized in dried fruits and vegetables for the Russian market. Participants also visited the Moscow fresh fruit wholesale market to experience handling, market requirements, packaging and import procedures.

*India Study Tour.* The ALP Environmental Officer, Sunnat Djalalov, along with 3 partners representing horticultural research, grape farmers and plant protection, participated in a one-week study tour to witness the Indian experience with “Cold Dip” raisin production techniques. Advantages of this method include shorter production time (2-3 times faster) and better raisin quality (no damage or cracking the grape skin). In addition to experiencing the step-by-step “cold dip” process, the participants visited locales for grape production, sorting, processing and packaging. The researcher decided to disseminate this method by building demonstration drying sheds based upon this visit. The grape farmer was impressed with an Indian cap stemmer machine and plans to modify his own design by adding a vacuum system. The pest and disease expert agreed that the Plant Protection Institute will provide assistance to test the product line in Uzbekistan and presented a draft MOU to the Indian supplier (Omega Fine Chemicals).



*Grape Drying Shed, India*

*MASHAV Study Tour.* ALP irrigation expert, Dima Lunev, attended a MASHAV training entitled “Management of Scarce Water Resources and Irrigation Systems: Environmental Aspects” in Israel during the first two weeks of February. The training presented Israeli knowledge and experience in formulating water and soil-saving irrigation technologies under arid conditions. ALP intends to promote these advanced water management technologies (ex., sprinkle, mist, drip, etc.) in demonstration plot fruit orchards to introduce these techniques to partner organizations and farmers.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE.** Initial Environmental Screening documents were prepared for: (1) ProdExpo, (2) MASHAV training, (3) “cold dip” exchange tour, (4) tree nursery training, (5) pruning training, (6) CoolBot purchase, (7) fruit tree pollination by bees, and (8) grape best practices training.

**NEXT MONTH.** The following major activities are anticipated for March 2012:

- 1st week – Finalize trellis order technical due diligence with local supplier
- 2nd week – USAID CO delegation visit to Samarkand Province sites
- 3rd week – Preparations for bee hive installation on farmer plots for pollination
- 4th week – Best grape production practices training by Andrew Tuebes