
Ashtarak Kat To Establish Three Milk Collection And Marketing Units In Tavush Region

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Today during a press-conference at the UN House, the United Nations Development Programme, Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development and Ashtarak Kat Closed Joint Stock Company signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish three Milk Collection and Marketing Units in Tavush marz.

The press release by UNDP says that the goal is to establish milk collection and marketing units in Varagavan, Tovuz and Nerkin Karmiraghbyur located in Tavush marz to assist local dairy farmers from nearly 10 neighboring villages to organize milk collection and distribution processes and contribute to the sustainable growth of the marz.

The units will be located in physical premises provided by the community, which will be renovated according to the international food safety standards and equipped with contemporary testing and cooling equipment. Centers will be operated by community based organizations (cooperatives) and supported by large dairy producers.

The UNDP Resident Representative Ms Consuelo Vidal told the audience that the Milk Collection and Marketing Units will serve local communities of Tavush marz and more than 200 farmers will benefit from them. She also added that partnership with private companies like Ashtarak Kat help ensure the sustainability of the economic development activities, such as this centers, leading to poverty reduction through the creation of new jobs and business opportunities in this case, in the dairy sector.

During the event Charge d'Affaires of the US Embassy Anthony Godfrey said: "The US Government is happy to support through CARD this joint initiative with UNDP aimed at strengthening private initiative in the agricultural sector."

Within the scope of this Memorandum the parties agreed to share the following responsibilities:

The UNDP "Performance Budgeting at the Local Level" and "Global Compact Armenia" projects will renovate the buildings for the milk collection centers provided by the communities in Varagavan, Tovuz and Nerkin Karmiaghbyur and provide two milk collection trucks to organize the milk collection in the communities.

The Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development (CARD) will install milk collection and testing equipment. In addition CARD will provide technical assistance to the local farmers to establish and operate legal entities such as the cooperatives that will be formed.

Ashtarak Kat CJSC will buy the collected milk from the Milk Collection and Marketing Units

Ashtarak Kat is a private sector dairy producer in Armenia. It cooperates with 4,500 farms located in 55 villages throughout the country. In 2001 URS provided the company with ISO 9001:2000.
