

Defender's assessment of the RA Ministry of Agriculture activities in 2011

Shortcomings and problems identified

- New food safety public service of the Ministry of Agriculture has not fully taken control over the sale of meat, while among other functions food safety is also included into the functions of the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Agricultural insurance has not been invested yet; however, insurance can provide the agricultural sector entrepreneurs with assistance in case of damages caused by natural disasters.
- Despite the favorable business environment created for manufacturers and practical and positive steps undertaken by the Ministry, the results were not sufficient.
- State Security Service of the Ministry did not properly supervise the activities of the companies producing bread.
- There are not sufficient slaughterhouses in the country for performing butchering properly.

Positive developments

- In Agriculture the increase of gross product was around 14.1% compared to the last year, due to the increase in volume of livestock production, fisheries, vegetables, fruits.
- In 2011 production of grain crops has exceeded the previous year's level by 34.8 percent, the size of crop yield and production efficiency has significantly increased.
- Positive changes were registered in the field of horticulture. Fruit gross output increased by 83.7 percent over the previous year. Growth in the production of the crop was also registered.
- The provision of fruit and vegetable processing companies exceed the previous year's level, respectively, 1.7 and 3.9 times. Corresponding payments were fully made.
- Fairs for agricultural products were organized in Yerevan every Saturday and Sunday in order to support the sale process of agricultural products.
- Considerable work has been done in favor of entrepreneurs in terms of credit available to agriculture activities. By two phases of the project more than 25 000 unit credits were provided by interest rate subsidies with 17.4 billion AMD.
- Legislative changes have been made by the Ministry that allow to import agricultural tractors, other equipment, fertilizer, seed, pesticide, as well as by exempting the sale of the value added tax to promote the availability of their purchase by agricultural entrepreneurs as well as promote their import and expansion of the volume of their usage.
- Assistance was provided to increase the level of technical equipment of cooperatives. Consumer cooperatives were established in 33 communities of 5 marzes of Armenia specialized in cattle-raising.

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The list of the identified positive developments, gaps and shortcomings is not exhaustive.

The introduced Chapter (6) of the HRD Annual Report 2011 is available in full at http://pashtpan.am/pages/downloadPdf/file_id/564.

The HRD Annual Report 2011 was developed based on the complaints received by the Staff of the Human Rights Defender, legislation analysis, trustworthy and non-disclaimed publications in press, reports of the international and local organizations as well as information received during the interviews with field specialists and human rights defenders.