



FACT SHEET

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U.S. AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS IN IRAQ

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Agriculture serves as the foundation on which many developing countries build their economies. The U.S. Government is therefore helping Iraq rebuild its agricultural sector from the ground up.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service has accomplished the following:

Development. USDA's Cochran Fellowship Program in Iraq resumed for the first time since 1990 in December 2004. Thirteen individuals participated in agricultural education and extension training in the United States in 2005. Additional Cochran Fellowship training is anticipated. This program provides short-term, market-oriented agricultural training to help countries develop market-driven food systems.

Technical Assistance. In May 2006, two Iraqi scientists attended training on diagnostic testing for highly pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) at USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa. This training is a joint effort of Iowa State University and USDA. As part of the training, U.S. diagnostic experts will travel to Iraq to observe and provide feedback on the implementation of what was learned.

Food Aid. On June 30, 2005, USDA signed a \$10.8 million Food for Progress food aid agreement with the U.S. Grains Council under which USDA provided Iraq with 21,250 tons of corn and 8,750 tons of soybean meal. Commodities were delivered and sold in Iraq in early 2006. The Grains Council is using the proceeds from the sales to revitalize the country's poultry sector.

Advisors. USDA supports Iraq's reconstruction by placing individuals ranging from senior advisors to food advisors and from technical experts to development experts in the country. In July 2004, USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service began posting two U.S. agricultural officers at the American Embassy in Baghdad.

This June, a USDA Rural Business Cooperative Service employee went to Iraq to serve on a one-year detail as an agricultural development officer on a newly created Iraq Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) under an agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Three USDA agriculture advisors will be assigned to the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture later this year to build its capacity in agricultural extension, agricultural strategic planning, and food safety and inspection. In addition, USDA will provide a public affairs specialist to be part of the U.S. embassy's public affairs team.

Food Production and Trade. Iraq currently imports almost \$3 billion in food annually. Of that

amount, U.S. agricultural exports in 2004 totaled \$67.5 million, or nearly one-quarter of all imports. Iraq was the No. 2 buyer of U.S. hard red winter wheat in marketing year 2005-2006. In addition, Iraq was the No. 1 buyer of U.S. long grain milled rice in 2005. In the late 1980s, it was our top market for rice and one of our top 10 wheat export markets. USAID is helping Iraqi farmers improve production technologies for wheat, barley, rice, and maize.

The United States supports Iraq's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). To help Iraq gain a better understanding of U.S. trade policy and the WTO, a large Iraqi delegation, including representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Trade, and Investment, attended a WTO orientation workshop in Washington, DC, in November 2004. Prior to that, the United States and Iraq signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement to promote bilateral trade and investment. Discussions will likely focus on ways to accelerate Iraq's WTO accession efforts.

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

Through the Agriculture Reconstruction and Development Program for Iraq (ARDI), USAID has conducted the following activities:

Agricultural Production. ARDI has helped Iraq improve the production of wheat, livestock, dates, and honey.

- Distributed 169 seed cleaners to upgrade wheat seed stock.
- Rehabilitated 66 veterinary clinics in 17 governorates.
- Vaccinated more than 570,000 sheep against brucellosis in five southern governorates.
- Trained more than 80,000 people (primarily women) in zoonotic disease awareness.
- Established 20 private sector veterinary clinics that are owned and operated by previously unemployed veterinarians.
- Increased the area of 21 date palm mother orchards to preserve the more than 600 varieties of date palms.
- Replenished the orchards of 120 date producers in Muthanna, Basrah, and the Basrah Marshlands with 4,800 date palm offshoots.
- Enabled 290 new beekeepers to begin honey production through equipment and training grants.
- Helped establish regional beekeeping associations, providing business management training to increase the capacity of 14 associations.

Additional wheat, livestock, date, and honey projects are planned in the future.

Infrastructure and Machinery. ARDI has rehabilitated irrigation infrastructure, improving 773,500 acres of land and benefiting 132,700 families, and trained 170 Iraqi mechanics in machine repair and maintenance, which is now underway on at least 5,000 tractors. Future activities are planned.

Capacity Building. ARDI established a national pesticide dealer association and a wholesale price monitoring and information system for vegetables, fruits, meat, and dry goods in 18 major agricultural markets. It trained 24 people in the Ministries of Agriculture, Transportation, and Water Resources for the National Program in Agro-ecological Zone Mapping and more than 170 Ministry of Agriculture extension staff in methods to improve extension services. Additional assistance is planned.

Multi-National Force-Iraq Civil-Military Operations (MNF-I/CMO)

The MNF-I/CMO provides leadership in project development and coordination between MNF-I Strategic Operations, Multi-National Corps-Iraq Civil Affairs, USAID, the Iraqi Ministries of Agriculture and Water Resources through the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office, USDA, and

various military Civil Affairs Teams. Projects completed, underway, or planned include the following:

- Purchased and distributed 173 grain seed cleaners with fungicide treatment.
- Completed a broad national aerial spraying program for date palm trees and wheat.
- Developed a plan to clear more than 9,300 miles of irrigation and drainage canals.
- Developed a national vocational training and employment program to include agricultural trades.
- Developed a honey production and distribution program for each major region.
- Preparing to install 20 animal feed block factories and revive the aquaculture industry.
- Organizing a veterinary conference in cooperation with USDA and USAID to develop slaughterhouses, sheep dipping tanks, and national inoculation projects.
- Working to form agricultural producer associations that focus on grading and distribution and honey.
- Developing initiatives to renovate cold storage facilities and date fruit processing and tomato paste processing plants.

National Coordination Team (NCT)

The NCT oversees PRTs, which help Iraq's provincial governments develop and sustain the capacity to govern, maintain security and the rule of law, promote political and economic freedom, and administer programs to meet the population's needs. Accomplishments and future activities include the following:

- The Kirkuk PRT/Regional Embassy Office hosted an International Agricultural Symposium in February 2006.
- The NCT will hire an agricultural advisor to work with PRTs throughout Iraq to plan and develop strategies and programs for provincial-level agricultural projects.
- Two regional agribusiness conferences are planned to stimulate private sector agribusiness development among producers, distributors, provincial government representatives, and Ministry of Agriculture officials.

By providing aid and assistance, the U.S. Government is helping Iraq revitalize its agricultural sector so it can become an engine for economic growth.

General information about FAS programs, resources, and services is available on the Internet at the FAS home page: <http://www.fas.usda.gov>

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