

Armenia Fact Sheet

Background: Armenia

Agriculture is a strong pillar of the Armenian economy. In 2012, agriculture represented 21% of Armenia's GDP (CIA, 2013). In addition to agriculture making up a high percentage of the economy, it has an even higher influence over employment with an estimated 457,356 Armenians or roughly 39% of the Armenian work force employed within the industry.² Despite the high employment rates in agriculture, poverty remain high with an estimated 36% of the population living in poverty in 2010. These statistics highlight both the importance of agriculture to the Armenian economy and the need for agricultural education and training to be more formally develop to assist the agricultural industry in growing and maturing so that more and more Armenians are able to be lifted out of poverty.



(Map from ezilon.com)

Present Status

There are 26 state sponsored universities and 40 private universities serving 123,700 students in Armenia.³ However, there are only a handful of institutions (including universities and technical and vocational schools) that offer agricultural courses. The main institution offering agricultural training and education at the university level is the Armenian National Agrarian University. The University has 7 degree granting faculties with numerous areas of focus. Of particularly interests to agricultural education and training and innovATE's mission is the Agribusiness Teaching Center within the International Center for Agribusiness Research and Education. The Agribusiness Teaching Center provides agribusiness education to support sustainable entrepreneurial activities in the food and agriculture sector in Armenia and the region. The curriculums are western-structured and based on the agricultural economics curriculum of Texas A&M University

1 CIA-Central Intelligence Agency (2013). The World Factbook: Armenia. Retrieved on November 11, 2013 from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/am.html>

2 USAID (2012). Armenia Economic Growth Assessment: Business Environments for Agile Markets (BEAM). United States Agency for International Development. Prepared by CARANA Corporation.

3 Higher Education in Armenia (2013). Higher Education in Armenia from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia. Retrieved on November 7, 2013 from <http://studyinarmenia.org/>

Universities with Agricultural Curricula in Armenia

- Armenia National Agrarian University
 - International Center for Agribusiness Research and Education
 - Agribusiness Teaching Center

Technical/Vocational Schools of Agriculture in Armenia

- S. Lukashin State Agricultural College
- Gavar State Industrial and Pedagogical College
- Goris Agricultural College
- Masis State Agricultural College
- Nor-Ghehi State Agricultural College
- Stepanavan National Agricultural College
- Spitak State Agricultural College
- Vanadzor State Agricultural College
- Gyumri State Agricultural College
- Yerevan State Agricultural College



Challenges and Issues

Challenges facing Armenia as it tries to grow the agricultural industry are limited export markets, meeting the food processing standards of Western export markets, growing local demand for Armenian products, and producing a workforce that has the capabilities to address current and future challenges facing the industry. Agricultural education and training is poised to play a large role in helping overcome these challenges by focusing the curriculum on the many geo-political issues Armenian agribusinesses face in this globalized world. Another challenge for agricultural education and training is the need to become more relevant to younger generations deciding on career paths. Being able to continually attract and train Armenian's brightest students in the field of agriculture is an important aspect of agricultural education and training's future sustainability in Armenia.



Recommendations

- Concentrate on improving agricultural education and training within the Agribusiness Teaching Center first.
- Work on developing the food processing industry in an effort to increase exports, decrease imports, and reduce agricultural waste from supply and demand inefficiencies. This should include a focus on agricultural products Armenian has a natural comparative advantage in producing and how to turn that comparative advantage into a competitive advantage
- Expand agricultural education and training education into secondary schools' curriculum.
- Further develop the agri-tourism industry around unique agricultural products that are commonly associated with Armenia (i.e. Armenian brandy and apricots).

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