

Editorial – “How to provide economic services to its members?”

As a side event of the Farmers’ Forum, the SFOAP steering committee met in Roma, the 10th and 11th February 2016. One learning session was dedicated to FOs experiences on the provision of economic services to their members. These discussions highlighted the importance of coordination between different levels of organization, trust among stakeholders, policy dialogue, partnerships developments, sustainability and funding issues, and finally, the importance of leaders’ role. These exact lessons are continuously mainstreamed and tested during the implementation of the pilot projects in North Africa.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT

ALGERIA – Climate change and supplemental irrigation of cereals

In the context of climate change, farmers from Setif Wilaya are facing the worsening of water deficit, forcing them to have a supplemental irrigation of their cereals and to adapt the technical itinerary of these crops.



On 29th and 30th March 2016, around twenty farmers from several associations in the Wilaya discussed the water stress symptoms, the needs in water of cereals, the irrigation equipment, including reels, and the irrigation management techniques.

A demonstration session, conducted on Ain Oulmane farm (South Setif) with the support from the National Institute of Soils, Irrigation and Drainage, helped farmers, on the basis of theoretical knowledge build earlier, to practice on the technical switch on of the reel, the speed setting of the reeling, the respect of the pressure, the strategical choice of the nozzle, the management of the area covered by the reel, etc.

TUNISIA – New technologies to facilitate sheep flocks management

The agricultural development group of sheep farmers from the North (GDAEBN) acquires and tests new flock identification technologies: SIGEO (information and sheep flocks’ management system). This tool, developed locally by a multidisciplinary team (farmers, veterinarians, researchers, software developers, etc.), integrates multiple communication technologies such as RFID (radio frequency identification) and GPS, and allows reading and recording of RFID tags, as well as remote data consulting and management.



Coupled to an RFID tunnel prototype, the SIGEO allows automatic registrations of weighing, counting, vaccination, etc.

These new technologies, allowing automatic management and processing (according to several parameters set by the breeder) of a significant number of information, inexorably facilitate the management of flows, weighing, batching, etc. within the flocks, which represents a challenge in terms of costs reductions and productivity of these livestock.

BUILDING ENTREPRENEURIAL CAPACITIES OF FARMERS ORGANIZATIONS AND SUPPORTING THEIR INTEGRATION INTO VALUE CHAINS

EGYPT – Linking farmers to exporters via matchmaking activities

As a new approach, several matchmaking activities targeting exporting companies specialized in onions and some other exportable products were conducted to tackle marketing issues of local associations and farmers from Sohag, and to support the farmers in having better channels for marketing and in limiting the value loss due to intermediaries.

In April, an event was organized at Beet Dawood Association in Gerga (Sohag), with the attendance of the Agrofood LTD chairman, one of the leading companies in the field of organic production. Besides discussing quality requirements and potential areas of collaboration, the company agreed on a 50 tons of onions supply contract, from the local farmers.



Horus Company for Fruits and Vegetables chairman also visited several associations in Sohag. He acknowledged their onions' high quality and collected samples from local varieties to be shipped to his costumers in Italy.

MAROC – Blida, a new stage for regional cohesion in beekeeping

Last March, beekeepers from Taza (Morocco) visited Blida (Algeria) in order to continue discussions they initiated with their Algerian counterparts during the first exchange trip they had in Morocco late 2015.



They will apply the knowledge they build during this trip, in terms of queen breeding and artificial insemination, at several apiaries in Taza region and will disseminate it to other members of the union through technical trainings.

In addition to these technical benefits, this trip strengthen the dialogue between beekeepers from these two countries; the “Saharan bee” protection and the improvement of hive products value are still at the heart of their concerns and will be deepened during the next Apimed show, held in Morocco in November 2016.

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AGENDA



- ⇒ **22 April**, Signature of FIMAP-ONCA agreement for supporting beekeeping cooperatives (Morocco)
- ⇒ **23-24 April**, Training on queen breeding and artificial insemination (Taza, Morocco)
- ⇒ **April**, Initiation of a technical and economic observatory in the beekeeping value-chain (Blida, Algeria)
- ⇒ **27 April to 1st May**, SIAM 2016, “Best use of resources for a sustainable agriculture” (Meknes, Morocco)
- ⇒ **30 April**, Conference/debate “A productions’ and market observatory, a key to strengthen the strategic sectors of fruits and vegetables in the Mediterranean region” (SIAM Meknes, Morocco)
- ⇒ **22-26 May**, “Capitalization and know-how transfer” regional workshop (Tunis)
- ⇒ **May**, Training and demonstration on the use of fodder in cereal agrosystems and pasture improvements (Setif, Algeria)

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