



PRESS-RELEASE

MEETING OF "DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN PRODUCERS AND PROCESSORS OF HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTS OF FERGANA VALLEY AND COMMERCIAL COMPANIES FROM KAZAKHSTAN AND RUSSIA"

From the 15th to the 18th of April, there will be a meeting on: "Development of cooperation between producers and processors of horticultural products of Fergana Valley and commercial companies from Kazakhstan and Russia." at the hotel "Three Crowns" in the Issyk-Kul region.

The event is organized by a group of Central Asian organizations in cooperation with **Hilfswerk Austria International**, an Austrian International Organization, as part of the project "Economic development in Central Asia through the promotion of Business Intermediary Organizations and SMEs in the processing sector," which is funded by the European Union program "**Central Asia - Invest III**". Regional UNDP project "Aid for Trade project for Central Asia", funded by the **Government of Finland** joined the initiative for the organization of this meeting.

The purpose of this meeting is the development of a joint action plan for fresh and processed products from Fergana Valley (Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) to the markets of Kazakhstan and Russia. The meeting will focus on presenting information about the existing untapped export potential of Fergana Valley products for foreign trade companies, as well as a discussion of volumes, terms and quality of horticultural products (with high added value).

Business owners, exporters, directors (decision-makers), but also processing and trading companies from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, as well as representatives of several development projects and the Association of Fruit and Vegetable Enterprises of Kyrgyzstan (about 40 people) will attend this meeting.

A project implemented
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The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders. To this end the EU is active in Tajikistan since 1992 and provides approximately EUR 25 million annually in development assistance.

The international non-governmental organization **Hilfswerk Austria International** implements in equal partnership with regional organizations in Central Asia its third project as part of the “Central Asia – Invest” program of the European Union.

This series of projects, which have been implemented for the last five years by a joint team of six regional and international organizations, aims at Central Asia’s integration into the global economy by developing the fruit and vegetable processing sector as well as increasing the competitiveness and export capacity of SMEs.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

ASTI (Association of Scientific and Technical Intelligentsia) is a non-profit, non-governmental public organization promoting the development of democratic reforms and mitigating the problems of poor people in Tajikistan through the efficient use of the scientific and technical intelligentsia and through strengthening the role of the non-profit sector by implementing social, information, coordination, educational, consultancy and development programs. <http://www.asti.tj>.

NASMB (National Association of Small and Medium Businesses of the Republic of Tajikistan), registered in September 1993, is a non-profit membership organization uniting entrepreneurial structures on a free-will basis and representing the interests of a wide range of Tajikistan’s entrepreneurs. Its main goals include protecting and promoting the interests of entrepreneurs, providing, methodological and educational services as well as consultancy to businesses. <http://www.namsb.tj>.

TES center is a non-governmental organization from Kyrgyzstan, whose goal is to increase revenue of the people engaged in agriculture by means of high quality education and consultations. TES center is a non-profit education and consultancy organization acknowledged by the government of Kyrgyzstan, established by GTZ in 1999, together with Osh State University.

AFVE (Association of fruit and vegetable enterprises in Kyrgyzstan) was established in June 2003 and currently unites most fruit and vegetable enterprises in the country, developing the fruit and vegetable processing sector and enterprises by creating a favorable business environment and developing the market for processed products. The “**Association of fruit and vegetable enterprises**” is a non-governmental, non-profit organization uniting legal entities engaged in the production and processing of agricultural produce, on the basis of free will and common interests.

WIFI - The Institute for Economic Promotion

The Institute for Economic Promotion (**WIFI**) is a department of the **Austrian Federal Economic Chamber**. With a market share of 20 percent, the **WIFI** is the largest training and adult education institute in Austria. Beside the training courses, **WIFI**’s task is to provide advice and consultancy to businesses and thereby helping companies cope with the challenges of structural change by providing the information they need about new technologies. **WIFI** is the spring board for new training methods and products, innovations and SME programs.

In 1990, **WIFI** started to export its vast experience in adult education, which led to the **WIFI International Network**, which provides further education programs throughout the CEE / SEE regions. The **WIFI International Network** benefits from the vast expertise of its mother organization and with which it not only addresses the specific needs of local SMEs, but also generally promotes entrepreneurship.

