



Republic of Moldova and FAO

Partnering to achieve sustainable food systems

The Republic of Moldova joined FAO in 1995. Since then, the country has benefited from FAO's support in implementing various development and emergency projects for increased agricultural productivity and improved national food security. More recently, FAO technical assistance has focused on increasing national capacities and piloting innovative practices, with the overall objective of transferring technologies and capacity development.

Agriculture in Moldova

Agriculture is a central pillar of the Moldovan national economy and the main source of livelihood in rural areas. It contributes close to 14 percent of the country's GDP, a figure that increases to 17 percent if the food processing industry is taken into account. Important crops are winter and spring grains, including wheat, barley and maize, as well as potatoes and other vegetables and horticultural crops and fruit.

Approximately 75 percent of the population live in rural areas and depend on agriculture and related activities for their livelihoods. About 60 percent of the country's agricultural output is produced by individual farmers and household plots of 10 hectares or less.

Addressing key challenges

Along with the improvement of agricultural practices and adoption of new technologies, FAO has helped Moldova to face two key challenges: increasing productivity and improving rural infrastructure and access to markets.

Matching FAO's expertise to Moldova's development priorities

Recent FAO assistance in Moldova has been shaped by the Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2014-2015, which focuses on four priority areas:

- **Alignment of agriculture and rural development policies with European Union standards**, through capacity development of national and regional institutions, technical assistance on international trade, sanitary and phytosanitary control systems, food safety, hygiene, food processing, and legislative harmonization.
- **Conservation and management of natural resources**, including animal and plant genetic resources and land tenure.
- **Mitigating the impact on agricultural production and rural livelihoods of exceptional climatic events (Disaster Risk Management)** through fodder conservation, use of appropriate seed varieties, improved agronomic techniques, pasture management and small-scale irrigation infrastructure.
- **Sustainable agriculture**, with particular focus on Integrated Pest Management (IPM), disposal of obsolete pesticides, and enabling conditions for food safety.

Formulation of the new CPF for 2016-2019 is at an advanced stage. The new programme will set priorities and outputs aligned with national policies for the agriculture sector, in particular the **National Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Moldova (2014-2020)**. Expected priority areas include a focus on increased competitiveness of the agri-food sector, sustainable agriculture and rural development, sustainable management of natural resources and disaster risk management.

Regional scope, country focus

Moldova is currently a focus country for two of FAO's Regional Initiatives for Europe and Central Asia:

- Empowering smallholders and family farms
- Agri-food trade and regional integration

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Strengthened country presence

The FAO Representation in Moldova was opened in Chisinau in 2014, during an official visit to Moldova by FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva. Following signature of a formal agreement for the establishment of the office and its ratification by the Parliament in June 2014, the Representation became operational in September of the same year.

“Agriculture and food security are the entry points for growth and development strategies in many countries.”

**José Graziano da Silva,
FAO Director-General**

The host country agreement set the stage for closer cooperation between Moldova and FAO, and broader technical assistance programmes.

Together with the appointment of an FAO Representative to Moldova, an Assistant FAO

Representative position was also established to ensure local management of FAO activities in the country. These changes have allowed FAO to bring its technical and operational expertise closer and to respond more efficiently to Moldova's needs, while making the best use of national capacities.

Working together

Ongoing FAO projects in the country include:

- **Eliminating and preventing recurrence of obsolete pesticides** – The general objective of this large, European Union-funded project is to contribute to reducing the risks to public health and the environment from pesticides. Major project activities include elimination and disposal of obsolete pesticides and contaminated materials, awareness-raising campaigns and training on pesticide life-cycle management.
- **Support to the design strategy for agricultural export promotion (2015-2016)** – This project is developing a medium-term programme for the promotion of agri-food exports for the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry. The goal is to facilitate access for Moldovan agri-food products on the European Union market.
- **Strengthening the food safety system in Moldova** – This project is designed to enhance country capacities for producing safe and quality food for the domestic market and for international trade, targeting high-value markets.

- **Increasing small-scale farmers' resilience to drought** – The concept behind this intervention is to ensure rural livelihoods are improved to allow adaptation to climate change, including increased resilience to drought. Among the measures promoted is the adoption of best irrigation practices and modern irrigation technologies.
- **Integrated Pest Management** – An IPM project is seeking to increase the adaptation of sustainable crop, land and water management practices so that farmers can contribute to mitigating the effects of climate change. The implementation of a viable plant quarantine system is also envisaged, involving the application of innovative plant protection methods to prevent the spread of quarantine pests.
- **Improved genetic resources in the livestock sector** – A Programme for Development of the National Strategy and Action Plan for Animal Genetic Resources and Dairy Cattle Genetic Improvement is being implemented to improve the country's management, monitoring and characterization of its dairy cattle genetic resources.
- **Phytosanitary inspection services** – With the aim of strengthening the capacity of the national phytosanitary inspection services in Eastern European countries, this initiative is working to create more efficient national services in this field. As a result, participating countries should strengthen their export potential while preventing or curbing the spread of harmful organisms in the region.
- **Plant Genetic Resources** – FAO is supporting the development of a National Programme for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in Moldova with a view to increasing the resilience of the plant production sector to climate change and contributing to improved agricultural production overall.

