

Building capacity of small vegetable growers inhabiting in the cold winter desert of Uzbekistan

International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas for Central Asia and the South Caucasus (ICARDA-CAC), in cooperation with the Research Institute of Vegetable, Melon and Potato Production of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan, conducted two training workshops, one each in Bukhara and Navoiy regions. The objective of the workshop was to improve nutritional security and increase income of the rural farmers living under harsh climatic conditions of cold winter desert through enhanced capacity.

There were 60 (34 female and 26 male) smallholder participants in the workshop, which was held on 28 February 2020 in the Durmon village, Karakul district, Bukhara region. There were 75 (33 female and male) smallholders who participated in workshop held on 29 February 2020 in the Chuya village, Nurata district, Navoiy region.

The participants farmers obtained information on package of practices on cultivation of 18 improved varieties of 15 vegetable crops. The interactive training session allowed the participants to learn about the technology of cultivating vegetable crops to obtain high yields. In particular discussion was held on the methods of growing high-quality seedlings and early production of vegetables using low-cost greenhouses with drip irrigation systems in household plots to increase food security in regions.

The representatives of the district *khokimiyats* (administrative office), village councils, the mahalla and women's committees, farmers, specialists and scientists and media representatives took part in the abovementioned workshops.

Besides technical presentations on vegetable production, information booklets and brochures on vegetable production technology and 18 sets of vegetable seeds were distributed to the participants. The seed packets of vegetables crops included tomato, sweet pepper, eggplant, cabbage, cucumber, carrot, onion, summer squash, red beet, turnip, radish, coriander, dill, melon and pumpkin.

The participants visited greenhouses constructed in both sites under the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) project to learn about raising vegetable seedlings during winter months for early spring planting in the field. Early planted vegetable crops mature before onset of extreme high summer temperatures under the desert climate.

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1. Workshop participants in Durmon



2. Training session in Durmon



3. Training session in Chuya



4. Participants visiting greenhouse in Durmon (left) and Chuya (right)



5. Vegetable seed packets and information brochures distributed to the farmers