



Trip Report

Project:

Developing institutions and capacity for sheep and fiber marketing
in Central Asia

Traveler (s): Carol Kerven, consultant to Colorado State University (CSU)_____

Location (s): Kazakstan_____ **Dates of Travel: 19 Nov-15 Dec 2003**

Purpose of Trip:

- Introduce the project goals and planned CSU activities to project research partners, and to district administrative officials and village leaders in the study area of Kyzl Orda Oblast.
- Design the producer household survey and select sample villages in Kyzl Orda Oblast study area, Activity 1.
- Initial assessment of options for developing a wool and fiber quality-assurance centre and training in Kazakstan, Activity 2.
- Make arrangements for training workshops for producers and traders in the Kyzl Orda study area, on sorting cashmere and assessment of quality differentials, Activity 3
- Discuss Year 1 work programme with CSU project partners in Kazakstan
- Ascertain data available for GIS indicators (Boone, Activity 1) and obtain data where possible.

Brief Summary:

- Government interest in wool and fibre exports

In the livestock sphere, government bodies now view wool as the priority export, with interest also cashmere and camel hair. Kazakstan's imminent entry into the WTO has raised the profile of wool and fibres exports. International demand for Kazak wool and cashmere is high now and marketing is profitable enough that the government has decided to take an interest. This could be good news for the GL CRSP project, as the timing coincides with high-level concerns, creating an opportunity for the project to have an effect beyond what was initially envisaged. Government organizations will be particularly interested in what the project can provide to help meet international requirements, in terms of information on standards, wool/fibre assessment equipment and training.

Activity 1:

- Work programme for Murat Otyshiev, project partner

Annex II is a draft terms of reference for a consultancy work programme in Year 1. These terms have been discussed with and agreed by Murat Otyshiev.



Project:

Traveler:

Dates of Travel:

- Farm household survey

Annex I is the draft questionnaire tested during the field trip. The survey of 60 village households in three villages of Zhane Kurgan district will be carried out in spring 2004 by Aidos Smailov who will enter the data into SPSS.

- Liaison with international commercial firms

Follow up will be made with the USDA and British Embassy commercial representatives in Almaty, providing them with data on investment potential in the wool and animal fibre sector which can be forwarded to potential USA and UK investors.

Activity 2

- Wool and fibre analysis equipment

Some of the main players in the wool and fibre business had already learned before this project began that the project planned to purchase wool/fibre assessment equipment. There is now serious jockeying to obtain this equipment. Some ill feelings may result, as some parties will be disappointed when they do not receive the equipment. Careful discussion and planning will be needed to ensure that the recipient organization can make the most effective use of the equipment.

- Training needed on international standards and use of new equipment

The institutions interested in obtaining analysis equipment seem to have overlooked the question of whether they have staff able to operate and interpret the analytical results. The experience of one informed trader on using the OFDA equipment with the Kyrgyz Sheep Breeders Association in Bishkek suggests that lack of proper training renders the equipment not useful.

Neither the staff of the new standards lab at the Livestock Research Centre nor the wool technicians at the Sheep Breeding Institute know the international standards for wool, cashmere and camel hair. They wish to obtain assessment equipment and probably can get government funds to buy this if not provided by our project. However, they do not have anybody trained in using this modern equipment. Their attention is focused on the hardware, which will be of no use unless someone is trained in its operation. There is an opportunity to train a person in using the OFDA equipment that the project plans to supply, and in the international standards for wool, cashmere and camelhair.

Activity 3

- Cashmere training workshop in Zhane Kurgan

The workshop will take place over two days in the first half of April 2004. Local residents have started to invite villagers and traders to the workshop. A proposal has been submitted to the British Embassy, Almaty, for funding support to complement the training programme activities.