



USAID
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AFGHANISTAN

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FACT SHEET

Cashmere Value Chain

OVERVIEW

Afghanistan is the world's third largest cashmere producer and has the potential to dramatically increase its production of the valuable commodity. Building awareness and training Afghan goat herders in proper methods to harvest cashmere will provide lucrative business opportunities to many in Afghanistan.

USAID's Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program (ASAP) is developing the cashmere supply chain in Afghanistan. Under nationwide cashmere value awareness campaigns, goat herders are encouraged to comb goats as a preferred method of harvesting cashmere and to use parasite control and mineral supplements to increase goat health. Additionally, ASAP is working with Afghan regional cashmere traders in strategic locations throughout the country to engage them in the supply chain and strengthen the cashmere industry. ASAP has introduced these regional traders to international cashmere buyers and assisted in brokering valuable business partnerships.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- **Raise awareness:** Educate goat herders on the value of cashmere through practical training in the field, educational fliers and radio messages broadcast throughout Afghanistan
- **Training:** Provide training courses to herders, veterinary field units, AgDepot staff and traders
- **Supply chain:** Facilitate veterinary field units and regional trader's purchase of cashmere from the herders and arrange international buyers' visits to facilitate sales with regional buyers
- **Cashmere processing facility:** Support the establishment of a scouring and dehairing facility in Hirat Province, to make scoured and dehaired cashmere available from Afghanistan for the first time
- **Cashmere association:** Establish a local cashmere association that will support the cashmere industry and expand Afghanistan's sales and exports of the product

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Established a nationwide cashmere association to encourage growth of the cashmere industry
- Provided financial and technical support to local cashmere traders
- Supported farmers in the production and harvesting of more than 1,000 metric tons of cashmere
- Facilitated exports of more than 793 metric tons of sorted and graded Afghan cashmere
- Participated and supported the participation of Afghan cashmere exporters in three international cashmere trade fairs and invited 10 international buyers to Afghanistan's AgFairs
- Trained more than 400,000 herders (20 percent were women) in the value of cashmere and proper harvesting
- Distributed half a million combs to promote the preferred harvesting method, more than 253,000 radios to spread messages on cashmere harvesting and livestock productivity, and more than 418,000 cashmere awareness fact sheets and posters
- Provided training for more than 400 AgDepot staff and local traders in cashmere value awareness and proper harvesting methods to strengthen linkages in the cashmere value chain