



PRESS RELEASE

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Wholesale Market Links Farmers with Traders in Badghis Province

QALA-E-AW, BADGHIS, DECEMBER 19, — Yesterday Badghis Provincial Governor, Mohammad Tahir Sabari, Head of the Provincial Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock Hafizullah Benish, members of the Provincial Council, representatives from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and other Afghan Government and U.S. Government officials marked the opening of a fruit and vegetable wholesale market in Qala-e-Aw.

The market was designed and constructed under USAID's Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East, West (IDEA-NEW) Project aimed at agricultural development in Afghanistan. The market will serve as a hub for a variety of fruits, vegetables, and staple crops grown throughout the districts of Badghis, and will help boost agricultural sales from across the province.

The wholesale market is a 6,050 square-meter large area with 70 covered stalls, a fully furnished office for the Badghis Wholesalers Association, a large open space for loading and unloading of trucks, and a water supply system composed of a well, a water pump and elevated water reservoir.

"Construction of Badghis Wholesale Market was one of the vital necessities of farmers of this province and USAID has now fulfilled it. This market benefits both farmers and their customers," said Hafizullah Benish,

Previously, wholesalers operated in an undeveloped area of downtown Qala-e-Aw. Fruit and vegetables were exposed to damage from sunlight and changing weather conditions. During seasons rain and snow, the location was flooded with water and would be impassible due to excessive mud.

The new market will be able to operate 365 days a year. Poor weather conditions won't prevent the traders from coming together in the new market. In addition, this market provides permanent job opportunities for hundreds of traders, porters and transporters. Construction of the market was completed in three years during which 60 to 85 people had the opportunity to work as daily wage laborers.

USAID's agricultural assistance in Afghanistan focuses on creating agriculture jobs and increasing both incomes and Afghans' confidence in their government. USAID's projects improve productivity, regenerate agribusiness, and strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock to deliver services effectively.

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