

WORK PLAN
OF
THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA
AND
THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND
THE BULGARIAN FOOD SAFETY AGENCY

PREAMBLE

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency within the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of Bulgaria, and the Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia, hereinafter referred to as the Participants, wish to cooperate in a joint effort to promote economic growth and trade and build Georgia's trade capacity, in line with its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) agreement with the European Union (EU), and to improve Georgia's capacity to assess and address risk in animal products. Accordingly, the Participants have concluded the present Work Plan, hereinafter referred to as the "WP", to set forth their understandings with respect to the stated purpose.

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this WP is to describe a collaborative effort among the Participants in promoting economic growth and trade and building Georgia's trade capacity, especially as it relates to the country's DCFTA agreement with the EU. By strengthening risk assessment and risk management capabilities, Georgia should be able to meet international standards for animal meat products to become a more viable trading partner to the EU and the United States. To achieve these goals, the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency and USDA each intend to provide 50 percent of the budget.

The Project, entitled "Partnership with Bulgaria on Risk Assessment and Risk Management during Food Animal Slaughter Processing," will be implemented by the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service and Bulgarian Food Safety Agency within the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of Bulgaria in partnership with the National Food Agency (NFA) of the Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia.

The Participants intend for the Project to commence as soon as practicable following Participants' signature of this WP and for the Project to continue through the end date established in the Project Description in the USDA – Bulgaria joint proposal for the Emerging Donors Challenge Fund.

SECTION 2. INTENTIONS OF THE BULGARIAN FOOD SAFETY AGENCY

The Bulgarian Food Safety Agency (BFSA) is positioned to offer expertise and training in regard to animal health and disease mitigation. The BFSA is the successor of the National Service for Veterinarian Medicine, the National Service for Phytosanitary Protection, and the National Service for Corn and Feed. Pre-accession and post-accession experience and direct mentoring by the European Commission to align with EU legislation gives BFSA a unique perspective and skillset from which to mentor Georgia. BFSA experts were directly involved in Bulgaria's EU-accession process. These experts are still involved in EU-level decision making and are actively engaged in assisting with the implementation of new EU legislative acts in Bulgaria.

The BFSA manages a large staff with significant competence in animal health and risk evaluation. The BFSA intends to assist in establishing a similar structure under the NFA of Georgia to improve its performance and administrative capacity related to risk evaluation. Activities proposed by the BFSA are:

- Assessment of the administrative capacity of the NFA of Georgia. Evaluation of decision making processes, current system for animal health and food safety management and controls and current procedures for risk assessment and risk mitigation in the field of animal healthcare and the production of and trade with products of animal origin.
- Sharing Bulgaria's experience in developing and implementing policies and procedures for animal health, food safety and risk assessment and mitigation.
- Technical assistance and practical training in Georgia on developing and implementing procedures for surveillance, control and eradication of contagious animal diseases, contingency planning and risk assessment and risk mitigation in animal healthcare and trade with animals and animal products. Establishing links between the state and private sectors in regard to these areas.
- Workshop/Study visit to BFSA to introduce EU standards in surveillance, control, contingency planning, risk assessment and management in the field of animal health and trade.
- Workshop and training on the principles and requirements of the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP). Introduction of HACCP protocols and methods for risk mitigation in compliance with EU standards. Dissemination of information to the industry.

SECTION 3. INTENTIONS OF USDA/FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA/FAS) intends to assist with:

- Continuation of implementation of project activities started by the BFSA experts;
- Coordination of Project activities through the National Animal Health Program Steering Group and task force meetings at the implementation level;
- Co-funding of a study tour for Georgians to Bulgaria;
- Conducting training and providing technical assistance by USDA experts, which will enhance the capacity of NFA to carry out risk assessments and define critical control points in animal processing to mitigate food safety and public health hazards.

SECTION 4. INTENTIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OF GEORGIA

The Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia (MoA) intends to:

- Actively participate in the project implementation process and play a key organizational role;
- Provide transportation for experts and MoA staff for travel within Georgia;
- Provide training space during the experts' visits and workshops;
- Ensure staff are available to work with Bulgarian and U.S. experts and that their domestic and international travel is approved;
- Provide information and documentation on ongoing projects and work in an open and transparent way;

All Participants intend to share findings of any programmatic site visits, evaluations, and other reviews, as well to share copies of all relevant reports or other information relevant to the Project.

SECTION 5. STANDARD PROVISIONS

4.1 Legal Effect and Availability of Funds: This WP is not legally-binding upon the Participants and does not create any right or obligation in domestic or international law for any Participant. In order to provide the assistance described above, USDA may enter into such contracts and other instruments with public and private organizations as USDA deems appropriate. All activities of USDA pursuant to this WP are subject to the availability of funds and to further agreement or arrangement between USDA and such

public and private organizations, regarding the provision of in-kind assistance. This WP is not intended to effect an obligation of funds by USDA.

4.2 Modification: This WP may be modified in writing by the Participants.

4.3 Discontinuation: Each Participant may discontinue this WP at any time by giving the other Participants written notice.

4.4 Resolution of Disputes: In the event that there are any questions or disputes among the Participants concerning the terms of this WP, or activities carried out under this WP, the Participants intend to resolve such questions or disputes through meetings and exchanges of letters.

4.5 Publicity: The Project may include public events to recognize the support of Participants for the Project as a part of Participants' support for Georgia's democratic and free-market reforms and Georgia's European integration. The Participants are to coordinate all public events for the Project. All communications regarding the Project should include the branding and marking of the Participants, as specified in their respective policies.

4.6 Language: Done in English in three original copies and signed in Tbilisi on September, 26, 2016.

For the Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia

Minister

Mr. Levan Davitashvili

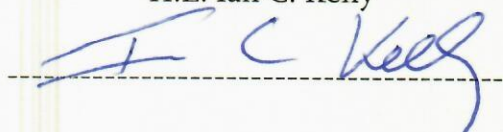


For the United States Department of

Agriculture

Ambassador

H.E. Ian C. Kelly



For the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency

Ambassador

H.E. Dessislava Ivanova



ANNEX: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The United States Department of Agriculture and the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency within the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of Bulgaria each intend to provide 50 percent of the cost of the \$280,241 project. The total period of performance is intended to be 15 months, ending on December 30, 2017.

NFA currently faces many of the same challenges faced by BFSA in the late 1990's and early 2000's. The sharing by BFSA and USDA of expertise and experience should provide valuable assistance to NFA. Experts from BFSA and USDA intend to provide technical assistance by training Georgian policy makers and risk assessors.

Bulgaria intends to contribute the following to the project:

- Salary of Bulgarian experts to conduct an evaluation of current risk mitigation procedures in Georgia;
- Salary of Bulgarian experts to conduct two trainings and technical assistance trips to Georgia, as well as one in Sofia and one in Brussels;
- Travel expenses for Bulgarian experts to travel to Georgia twice; and,
- Fifty percent of travel expenses for Georgians to travel to Bulgaria twice.

The U.S. financial contribution to the project is intended to cover the following:

- Salary of USDA staff to participate in training sessions in Georgia and Bulgaria;
- Travel for USDA experts to Georgia and Bulgaria; and,
- Fifty percent of travel expenses for Georgians to travel to Bulgaria twice.

Bulgarians are to be selected to participate in the program based on their positions within their organizations, experience, technical skills, and their ability to affect change upon completion of their training.

Project activities are intended to include:

- 1) Evaluation of current processes in decision making, animal health, food safety, risk assessment, and risk mitigation, and identification of gaps to address international standards for trade with live animals and products of animal origin. The team intends to select a product as a case study in which to apply the concepts and to create a process in line with EU standards. The Participants intend for this work to be conducted in Georgia by a team of Bulgarian and U.S. experts (Fall 2016);
- 2) Workshop and field visits on risk assessment and management programs, conducted in Bulgaria, by a joint team of Bulgarian and USDA experts (Fall 2016);

- 3) Technical assistance trip to Georgia by joint team to work with Georgians on conducting and writing contingency plans and surveillance, control and eradication programmes for contagious animal diseases and risk assessments (FY 2017);
- 4) Study tour at BFSA in Bulgaria to review international requirements for animal health and risk assessment (FY 2017); and
- 5) Facilitate NFA's work with key stakeholders in the case study project to design risk mitigation techniques, including contingency plans, surveillance, control and eradication programs in the area of animal health and HACCP protocols to align with EU standards. Design and develop plan for disseminating information to industry. This is intended to be conducted in Georgia, by a joint team of experts (FY 2017).

Results of the Project

The following results are expected from the project:

- 1) NFA staff will be proficient at conducting animal health contingency planning, surveillance and control and risk assessment for products of animal origin to provide information to the EU for trade;
- 2) NFA staff will develop protocols for stakeholder engagement in animal health prophylaxis and control and implementing risk management; and
- 3) NFA staff will understand EU regulations for animal health, food safety and risk assessment.