



Agenda

National Workshop on **Saffron: Production, Processing, Quality Control, Marketing**

Organized by:

DACAAR and RALF*-ICARDA

**in Collaboration with RALF Project 02-02 Implementing Partners:
Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation-Herat
Washington State University
Herat University,**

and

RALF Project 01-16, Lead by Catholic Relief Services, Herat

Park Hotel, Heart City, November 14-16, 2006

**Includes Field Trips to Gozara, Kahdastan Farms and
Pashtun Zarghun**

***RALF (Research in Alternative Livelihoods Fund) is a 3-year research program, funded by DFID-UK, managed by ICARDA, and implemented by 25 national and international organizations in 17 provinces of Afghanistan**

**RALF Website: www.icarda.cgiar.org/RALFweb/RALF.htm
DACAAR Website: www.dacaar.org**

Introduction:

Saffron was first introduced into Herat Province by returning Afghan farmers who had worked on saffron farms in the Khorasan Province of Iran in early 1990's but it was not until 1998 when DACAAR initiated a systematic and long-term research and development program in 1998, aimed at sustainable production, processing, quality control and marketing of saffron. In 2005, ICARDA joined efforts with DACAAR under the RALF Program and a 3-year research project was initiated in collaboration with Washington State University and MAI-Herat. Another RALF Partner, CRS-Herat, has also been involved in multi-year agronomic studies on saffron in Herat.

It has been heard that several other national and international organizations are also involved in research or development on saffron in other parts of the country. It is not really known who is doing what on saffron. There may be duplication of efforts, and resources may have been wasted unproductively in parts of the country where saffron has no adaptation. There may be conflicting and unsustainable approaches (organic vs. non-organic production) under consideration with the simplistic assumption that saffron is an easy alternative to opium poppy cultivation.

It is high time for a “national forum on sharing lessons learned” on saffron.

Objectives:

- To assess the potential of saffron as a viable alternative livelihood for rural communities in Afghanistan
- To share lessons learned on production, processing, quality control and marketing of saffron
- To disseminate research results obtained to-date, to all stakeholders
- To enable the farmers/saffron growers associations to develop linkages with various stakeholders in Afghanistan and abroad
- To explore international market opportunities
- To enhance capacity building of Afghan institutions (MAI, Afghan universities), NGO partners and farmers associations
- To analyze potential impact of saffron production on rural livelihoods (including gender analysis)
- To determine how future research and development activities on saffron could be coordinated

Participants:

-Saffron Growers, Afghan Traders of Saffron, Saffron Growers Associations.
-MAI-Kabul, MAI-Herat and Other Provincial Departments.
-Ministry of Counter Narcotics
-Herat Directorate of Economic-FAO (Kabul, Helmand, Balkh, Herat)
-NGO's/institutions involved in research, processing and marketing of saffron: ZOA, French Cooperation, others.

Universities:

- Herat University
- Kabul University
- Washington State University
- Ferdowsy University/Khorasan Science Research Park, Mashhad, Iran
- Balkh University
- Paktia University
- Kandahar University

Governor of Herat

Provincial Shura Members

DACAAR, CRS, ICARDA (Kabul, Nangarhar, Helmand)

Monday, November 13:

13:00-14:15: Arrival of MAI, MCN, ICARDA, Kabul Univ. and Paktia Univ. participants aboard Kam Air flight from Kabul

Tuesday, November 14

08:30-09:00 Registration

09:00-09:05 Recitation of the Holy Quran

09:05-09:15 *Introductions*

DACAAR and ICARDA

B. Werge, N. Malik

09:15-10:15 *Opening Remarks*

H. E. Governor of Herat,
Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation
MAI-DG of Herat Province
Herat University
Ministry of Counter Narcotics
Herat Dept of Economics

Alhaj S. Hussain Anwari
Mr. S. Shairzad
Eng Ismail
Prof. A. R. Omaid
Dr. N. Hussaini
Eng. Ali Ahmad Mansoor

10:15-10:30 Break

Keynote Presentations:

10:30-10:45 Overview of RALF-ICARDA

N. Malik

10:45-11:00 Overview of DACAAR

M. S. Rauf, B. Werge

11:00-11:25 DACAAR's Pioneering Research on Saffron in Herat: Achievements to-date and Challenges Ahead

J. Khan & M. H. Aslami

11:25-11:45 Production Technology and Processing of Saffron in Khorasan Province of Iran

Dr. M. Filabi

11:45-12:30 Discussion

12:30-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00 *Session 1- From Planting to Harvesting to Processing*

-Saffron as A Livelihood in Heart Province M. H. Aslami
-CRS's Collaborating Farmers Dr. K. Bhattacharyya
-MAI-Herat
-ZOA's Development Program in Afghanistan
-Effect of Phosphorus and Plant Density on Floral Yield and Corm
Production of *Crocus sativa*, Kabul University M. Sayed
-Other Institutions and NGO's Experience in Afghanistan

15:00-15:45 Lessons Learned and Discussion

15:45-16:00 Break

16:00-17:15 *Session 2- Quality Control and Marketing*

- Economics of Saffron Production in Herat S. Rauf/M.H. Aslami
- Entering the US Saffron Market Prof. Peter Wyeth (WSU)

- Private Enterprise Approach to Saffron Processing, Packaging, -
Marketing and Quality Control, CRS and Collaborating Afghan Trader,
Hamidzai Co.
Saffron Growers Association's Experience
Lessons Learned and Discussion

Wednesday, November 15

08:30-11:30: *Session 3- Impact of Saffron on Livelihoods including Women's Livelihoods*

Moderator: *Aziza,, RDP-Herat, DACAAR*

- The PEAR Approach to Effecting Change in Behavior, K. Bhattacharyya
- Women and Saffron: Aziza, RDP-Herat, DACAAR
- The Economic Impact of Saffron on Women's Livelihoods: Local Female Saffron Grower.
- Social and Cultural Effects of Saffron on Women's Livelihoods: Local Female Saffron Worker
- Social and Economic Impact of Saffron Cultivation on Non-Saffron Female Farmers.
- Saffron Poem.
- Evidence of Impact as Demonstrated by Farmer's Panel.
- Lessons Learned and Discussion

11:30-12:30 *Session 4- Sustainable Approaches and Coordination of Future R&D*

Discussion:

- Do we know who is doing what on saffron?
- Is there duplication of efforts?
- Are there conflicting approaches?
- Is there a need for a coordination body?
- Should we have quarantine requirements, to ensure quality standards are maintained, for import of corms and to safeguard against transferable pests and diseases

Formation of a Coordination Team (*MAI-Kabul, MAI-Herat,, MCN, Afghan universities, DACAAR, ICARDA, CRS, Saffron Associations and Traders*)

12:30-13:30 **Lunch**

13:30-14:30 **Discussion on Coordination of Future Efforts**

- 14:30-15:00** Video Presentation: A documentary video presentation on saffron
15:00-17:00 Field Trips (Simultaneous Visits)
-Group A: Commercial Production of Saffron at Kahdastan Farms
-Group B: Saffron Growers in Gozara

Thursday, November 16

- 07:30-9:30** Travel from Herat to Pashtun Zarghun (1-2 stops along the route)
9:30-12:00 Field Visits
12:00-13:00 Lunch
13:00-14:00 Meeting with Farmers Associations
14:00-15:00 - Presentation of Highlights of the Workshop and Field Visits
- Next Steps
15:00-16:30 Return Trip to Herat
16:30-17:30 Evaluation of the Workshop
Concluding Remarks

Friday, November 17:

- 12:00-13:00** **Departure for Kabul by Kam Air**

Prepared by DAADAR and ICARDA