



Kingdom of the Netherlands



*@Photo made by Arni Zeichmeister*

# NEWSLETTER

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The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Azerbaijan

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### *Minister: Azerbaijan to Raise Agriculture without WB Loans*

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The project Azerbaijani Rural Investments-3 will not be stopped, Finance Minister Samir Sharifov said at a meeting of the parliamentary commission for economic policy on June 22.

According to him, it is planned to continue this project at the expense of internal funds.

"Previously, we implemented this project through external borrowing. Now we intend to abandon the World Bank loan and implement it at the expense of domestic funds. Attraction of foreign funds is inexpedient," he said.

Recall that the World Bank planned to allocate a loan for the implementation of the project Azerbaijani Rural Investment-3 in the amount of \$ 90 million.

The mentioned project provides creation of a series of advanced agricultural productions in the regions of Azerbaijan.

In addition, the project involves improving the access of communities to rural infrastructure and expanding economic activity in rural areas. As a result of the project, about 1.5 million rural residents in Azerbaijan will have greater access to infrastructure and social services.

<http://www.turan.az/ext/news/2018/6/subsc/economics%20news/en/73051.htm>

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### *Prime Minister Holds Meeting on Cotton Growing*

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Prime Minister Novruz Mammadov held a meeting on June 22 devoted to "some issues related to the development of cotton growing," the press service of the Cabinet of Ministers said.

During the meeting [cabmin.gov.az/page/post/393](http://cabmin.gov.az/page/post/393) an exchange of views took place to ensure an increase in the yield of cotton. N. Mammadov gave instructions to the heads of relevant structures on the issue under discussion. At the same time, the government press service does not provide information about the participants of this meeting, having distributed only one photo from this event in which Novruz Mammadov is shown. It is not reported about participation of representatives of the media in then meeting.

It is also not known whether the meeting discussed the continuing numerous facts of mass poisoning in the country's cotton plantations.

This year the area under cotton is 130 thousand hectares, 3.5 thousand hectares less than in 2017. Although earlier the head of state set the task of bringing this indicator to 250 thousand hectares in 2018. In 2017, 207 thousand tons of raw cotton was harvested.

<http://www.turan.az/ext/news/2018/6/subsc/economics%20news/en/73110.htm>

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### *USAID Ready to Work with Agribusiness Leaders to Fight Dangerous New Pest*

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The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Azerbaijan Agricultural Training and Development Center (Agro Center) hosted an event to warn government and private-sector agribusiness professionals of a serious emerging threat to Azerbaijan's agriculture. The Brown Marmorated Stinkbug is an invasive insect that feeds on over 200 varieties of fruits and vegetables. Native to East Asia, the stinkbug is a new pest in the South Caucasus region, destroying over \$100 million of Georgia's fruit and hazelnuts in 2017 alone.

Since the stinkbug can travel long distances very easily - flying over 100 kilometers per day or travelling in cars and trucks - it has spread rapidly across Georgia, and has recently been found in Shamkir. If the stinkbug spreads in Azerbaijan at the same rate as in Georgia, it will be necessary for the public and private sector to rapidly work together to contain the threat.

USAID took action to monitor the threat in 2017 and plans to expand monitoring efforts in 2018. In partnership with the Agro Center, USAID has developed a stinkbug monitoring plan to cover all of the areas of Azerbaijan that the pest might attack.

USAID and the Agro Center will continue to raise awareness of this threat, and are prepared to work with the Azerbaijani government to develop an action plan in case the pest begins to attack the fruits and nuts that are so vital to economy and rural livelihoods in Azerbaijan.

<https://www.usaid.gov/azerbaijan/news-information/press-releases/usa-id-ready-work-agribusiness-leaders-fight-dangerous-new>

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### *Azerbaijan's Food Products Procurement and Supply OJSC discloses sales volumes*

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For six months of 2018, Azerbaijan's Food Products' Procurement and Supply OJSC sold products worth 52 million manats to structures financed from the state budget, the company told Trend July 20.

"Contracts for the purchase and sale were signed with 850 companies and organizations financed from the state budget," the company said. "The orders were placed on the tedaruk.az website and proposals were accepted online from 286 manufacturers for 173 types of products. After carrying out certain studies, contracts were signed with 214 producers and sellers. As a result, in the first six months of this year, 28,000 tons of products worth 52 million manats of these manufacturers and sellers were procured and delivered to 1,934 supply points of central and district bodies of the executive power."

About 20,000 tons of vegetables, 3,200 tons of fruits, 1,600 tons of melons and about 4,000 tons of legumes were sold in the Azerbaijani market during this period.

Export of products by the company for the mentioned period amounted to over 4 million manats. At the same time, no exports were made in June.

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev signed an order establishing "Procurement and Supply of Food Products" OJSC in April 2016.

(1.7 manats = 1 USD on July 20)

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2931607.html>

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### *Azerbaijan starts export of fruits and vegetables to Latvia*

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Azerbaijan has started exporting fruit and vegetable products to Latvia, the Chairman of the Fruit and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association Bashir Guliyev told Trend.

He noted that the volume of exports to that country is small at this stage, but the Trade House of Azerbaijan in Latvia, the opening of which will be held today in Riga, can help in this matter.

However, in addition to entering new markets, it is important to maintain the positions in the traditional markets of Azerbaijan, such as Russia and other CIS countries, Bashirov believes.

Trade turnover with Latvia in 1H2018 amounted to \$15.1 million, according to the data provided by the State Customs Committee of Azerbaijan. Some \$1.1 million fell to the share of the export of Azerbaijani products.

The exports of fruit and vegetable products from Azerbaijan amounted to \$276.7 million in January-June 2018, which is 27 percent more than in 2017.

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2933172.html>

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### *Azerbaijan supplies 8,000 pomegranate tree seedlings to Colombia*

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Azerbaijan has exported 8,000 seedlings of pomegranate trees to Colombia this year, the Head of the State Service for Registration of Plant Varieties and Control of Seeds under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan Imran Jumshudov said during a press conference July 25.

"They are planted in Colombia by Azerbaijani technology," Jumshudov said.

He noted that in general, the material and technical base in the field of plant growing is improving in Azerbaijan, and work in this area continues.

"Every farmer can check for free in the regional service laboratories the quality of the seeds that will be used for planting. In addition, the enterprises which will deal, in particular, with the cleaning, packaging and certification of seeds, are being built in five regions of Azerbaijan. We continue the work for obtaining high-quality seeds that will help reduce dependence on imports in this area, and can also be exported," said Jumshudov.

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2933272.html>

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### *USAID providing support to agricultural sector of Uzbekistan*

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US Agency for International Development (USAID) is providing assistance to Uzbek producers of fruits and vegetables in expanding their business in the domestic and international markets, Podrobno.uz reports.

The assistance is provided in establishing links between Uzbek companies and American suppliers of new materials and equipment, as well as the entry of these companies into new international markets so that they can increase exports of their products. Gold Dried Fruit Export LLC (GDF) is one of such companies.

GDF was founded in 2012 for the processing of fresh and production of dried and frozen fruits and vegetables, as well as their packaging and delivery to local and export markets.

GDF has purchased with the assistance of USAID a seedling stock from an American producer from California in order to improve the quality of walnuts. The company has also acquired agricultural machinery from the US in order to improve the efficiency of on-farm operations.

"Companies like the one we are visiting today are important because they create jobs throughout Uzbekistan and improve the quality of fruits and vegetables sold," Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Henry Ensher said during his visit. "USAID has supported for many years the development of the agricultural sector in Uzbekistan. USAID has worked together with the government of Uzbekistan to help manufacturers meet the requirements of international markets."

In order to expand the markets of GDF, USAID put the company in touch with potential buyers in export markets and provided advice on improving the quality of products. GDF signed letters of intent to export products with six Latvian and Lithuanian companies, worth over \$17 million, as a result of a trade mission and a study tour on transport and logistics in the Baltic states, organized by USAID on April 9-14.

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2933005.html>

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### *A new producer of cigarettes may appear in Azerbaijan*

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"Caspian Galaxy" company registered trademarks of "Baki", "Azəri", "Shirvan", "Freedom" and "Astra" as brands of cigarettes in Azerbaijan. This is reported by the Center for Patents and Trademarks. It is not yet known where these tobacco products will be produced. Last year, "Caspian Galaxy" LLC received a credit line in "AFB Bank". The company sells non-food products and has sales points in nine regions of the country. LLC "Caspian Galaxy" was founded in 2011 by Vugar Guseinov. The company is considered a large taxpayer and is registered with the Department of National Revenues under the Ministry of Taxes. At present, the companies "European Tobacco-Baku" and "Cahan Tobakko" are engaged in production of cigarettes in Azerbaijan. Tabaterra CJSC will also start manufacturing cigarettes this year.

<http://www.contact.az/ext/news/2018/7/subsc/economics%20news/en/73830.htm>



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### *The largest producer of broiler products gets profit*

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SABA OJSC, after a three-year period of failure in 2017, turned to profit. According to the financial report, the sales volume (69.2 million manat) in 2017 increased by 43%. Profitability of sales was 1.7%. During the year the company earned net profit of 1.1 million manat. Nevertheless, the general meeting of shareholders decided to direct profits to the development of the company, not distributing it among shareholders.

In 2017, the company increased sales of broiler and other products by approximately 1,600 tons and brought to 18,700 tons. The reduction in the average monthly wage (668 manats) by 13.4% also played a role in making profits. In 2017, the share of the wage in the structure of expenses decreased from 10.8% to 6%, was noted in the audited financial report. Assets of JSC "SABA", in the capital of which the state is involved, continue to decline. In 2017, they decreased by 10% and made up AZN 47.2 million as of the beginning of 2018.

It should be noted that one of the shareholders of OJSC SABA is the state-owned OJSC Azerbaijan Investment Company (25%). AIC entered the capital of the broiler company in 2007, paying 12 million manats for shares. The authorized capital of SABA is 4 million 790 thousand manats.

<http://www.contact.az/ext/news/2018/7/subsc/economics%20news/en/73839.htm>

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### *Azerbaijan eyes to fully provide itself with seeds of main grain crops*

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Azerbaijan intends to fully provide itself with seeds of major grain crops in the coming years, Imran Jumshudov, head of the State Service for Registration of Plant Varieties and Seed Control under the Ministry of Agriculture, said at a press conference in Baku.

"This year up to 100,000 high-quality cereal seeds are planned to be grown in Azerbaijan, whereas this figure was 80,000 in 2017," he said. "In general, in the coming years we intend to fully provide ourselves with seeds of the main agriculture crops."

Speaking about the possibility of using genetically modified seeds in Azerbaijan, Jumshudov said that such cases are being stopped.

"Such seeds can be supplied to the country only for scientific research purposes," he stressed.

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2933308.html>

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### *Azerbaijan faces shortage of personnel able to use agricultural machinery*

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There is a need for personnel who could use agricultural machinery in Azerbaijan, expert Ershad Huseynov said at a conference on innovations and problems in passenger and cargo transportation in Baku.

"Presently, there are about 80,000 units of agricultural machinery in the country," he added.

"Some people use the machinery without a driver's license," he said. "As a result, we hear that a tractor has turned over somewhere, people have died due to the lack of professional personnel and misuse of agricultural machinery."

Huseynov stressed that another problem is that maintenance of agricultural machinery is not always carried out in a timely manner.

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2933472.html>

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### *Azerbaijan may increase wine exports twice in 2018*

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Azerbaijan may increase wine exports twice by the end of 2018, Chairman of the Azerbaijan Wine Producers and Exporters Association Elchin Madatov told Trend July 19.

"The export of Azerbaijani wine products exceeded \$4 million in the first half of 2018, which is 80 percent more than in the same period of 2017," Madatov said. "By the end of 2018, we expect a 100 percent increase in wine exports."

The main export destinations for Azerbaijani wine are Russia (85 percent), China (7 percent), Europe, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan, he noted. "On average, annual wine production is expected in the volume of about 14 million bottles, 5 million of which will be exported and 9 million will be sold in the domestic market," Madatov said.

In accordance with the State Program for the Development of Winemaking in Azerbaijan for 2018-2025, approved by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, the country plans to increase wine exports fivefold by 2025.

Exports of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, as well as wine vinegar, stood at \$7,161,660 in January-June 2018, which is 36.44 percent less than in the same period of 2017, according to Azerbaijan's State Customs Committee. Imports, in turn, amounted to \$35,835,160, which is 17.92 percent more than in the first half of 2017.

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2934054.html>

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### *State beekeeping program developed in Azerbaijan*

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The Azerbaijan Beekeepers Association, together with the country's Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Agriculture, has prepared a new state program on development of beekeeping, Badraddin Hasratov, head of the Association, told Trend July 24.

"The state program is designed for 2018-2022," he said. "It is designed to eliminate existing shortcomings in this area."

"The state program has already been prepared, and if adopted it will be a very positive factor," Hasratov said. "There are complex problems in the country's beekeeping sector that should be eliminated. In



particular, qualified personnel should be trained and bee breeding should be improved." Azerbaijan exported honey, as well as dairy products, eggs and other kinds of food products of animal origin worth \$4.71 million, and imported products worth \$66.45 million in January-June 2018.

Exports increased by 23.6 percent, and imports - by 11.54 percent in January-June 2018, compared to January-June 2017.

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2934059.html>

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#### *Russian big cargo carrier ups fertilizer supply to Azerbaijan*

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Russian company Freight One supplied 109,000 tons of mineral and chemical fertilizers to Azerbaijan in January-June 2018, which is twice more than in the same period of 2017, the Russian media reported July 27.

The company also increased supplies to Kazakhstan by 7 percent up to 44,000 tons. In general, Freight One carried 2.9 million tons of products in January-June 2018. Cargo turnover increased by 14 percent up to 5.1 million ton-kilometers for the year.

The company's share in the total fertilizer transportation via Russian railways increased from 8 to 9 percent. Freight One carried 2.4 million tons of mineral and chemical fertilizers through Russia's territory in January-June 2018, which is 31 percent more than in the same period of 2017.

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2934353.html>

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#### *Tobacco production in Azerbaijan may increase by late 2018*

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Tobacco production in Azerbaijan may increase by 30 percent by late 2018, Chairman of Azerbaijan's Tobacco Producers and Exporters' Association Telman Hasratov told Trend.

"Tobacco picking started relatively recently, but we already expect significant growth in production by the end of 2018," Hasratov said. "Presently, the biggest volumes of tobacco production are concentrated in Balakan, Shaki, Ismayilli, Gabala, Lerik and Masalli districts." "The main directions of export of Azerbaijani tobacco are Belarus and Russia, he said. The bulk of the tobacco produced in Azerbaijan, in turn, goes to the domestic market, he noted.

In parallel with production, it is planned to increase the export of tobacco as well by late 2018, he said. Speaking about the purchase price of tobacco, which is presently unprofitable for producers, Hasratov said that this issue will be resolved at a meeting scheduled for July 27 by Azerbaijan's Agriculture Ministry in Zagatala district." At the same meeting, issues of lending to tobacco producers will be discussed," he added. "In 2017, 600 hectares of land were used for tobacco production in Zagatala district, while in 2018, the area increased to 800 hectares." He noted that tobacco producers also plan to upgrade their equipment.

Azerbaijan exported tobacco and its industrial substitutes worth \$5.52 million in January-June 2018, and imported tobacco and its industrial substitutes worth \$60.1 million, according to Azerbaijan's

State Customs Committee. When compared to the same period of 2017, exports decreased by 9.06 percent and imports by about 17 percent.

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2934883.html>

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#### *Soft loans for business in Azerbaijan become cheaper*

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The annual interest rate on soft loans, allocated to support entrepreneurship, has been reduced from 6 to 5 percent in Azerbaijan, according to the "Procedures for the Use of Funds of the Entrepreneurship Development Fund of Azerbaijan."

President Ilham Aliyev on August 1 signed a decree to improve the mechanism of state support for the development of entrepreneurship, which provides for the creation of the Entrepreneurship Development Fund. At the same time, the National Fund for Entrepreneurship Support, operating since 1997, has been liquidated.

According to the decree, the annual interest rate on the Fund's loans is 1 percent, another 4 percent is the rate of the authorized credit institution. The minimum amount of the soft loan that the Fund can provide is 5,000 manats and the maximum amount is 10 million manats.

The loans from 5,000 to 55,000 manats will be given for a period of up to 3 years, the loans from 50,001 to 1 million manats - for a period of five years, the loans from 1,000,001 to 10 million manats - for up to 10 years.

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2935882.html>

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#### *President Aliyev decrees to create agriculture development centers*

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The state centers for agricultural development are established on the basis of district and city departments of the Ministry of Agriculture in order to ensure unified management and effective organization of coordination of local departments of the Ministry of Agriculture, the arrangement of service-oriented activities in agriculture, intensification of work with farmers, implementation of awareness campaigns in connection with the use of electronic services and innovative technologies, determination of the direction of activities of agricultural producers, the decree says.

The Ministry of Agriculture has been instructed to approve the Regulations of the state centers for agricultural development, to create an appropriate system for monitoring and evaluation of their activities.

<https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/2935933.html>

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### *Azerbaijan plans to increase exports to Russia*

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Azerbaijan plans to increase its exports to Russia by the end of 2018, trade representative of Azerbaijan to Russia Ruslan Aliyev told Trend. "The main share in the increase in exports will fall on fruits and vegetables (persimmon, hazelnuts, tomatoes, potatoes), jet kerosene, cotton, aluminum and others," Aliyev said.

He also noted that it is planned to open new wine houses of Azerbaijan in Russia in the near future. "In particular, wine houses are planned to be opened in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Astrakhan and Yekaterinburg," Aliyev said. The products worth \$349.23 million were exported from Azerbaijan to Russia from January to June 2018, which is 5.76 percent more than in 1H2017. The volume of imports from Russia, in turn, amounted to \$788.21 million, which is 0.29 percent more than in the first six months of 2017. Russia has been included in the list of Azerbaijan's five largest trade partners in January-June 2018 with the volume of trade turnover of \$ 1.14 billion (8.54 percent of the total volume of trade turnover).

In addition to Russia, this list includes Italy with a trade turnover of \$2.07 billion and a specific weight of 15.52 percent, Turkey-\$1.41 billion (10.61 percent), Israel – \$723.01 million (5.43 percent) and Germany – \$665.05 million (4.99 percent).

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2936181.html>

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### *Azerbaijan limits poultry import from some Russian regions*

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Azerbaijan's Food Safety Agency has warned the population about viral diseases of animals and poultry that can spread to Azerbaijan from other countries, said a message from the agency.

"The spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N8) among poultry in Ryazan, Samara, Tula, Rostov, Nizhny Novgorod regions, as well as in Tatarstan and Chuvashia, and nodular dermatitis in cattle in Samara Region of Russia has been revealed. In this regard, import of poultry and poultry products from the Ryazan, Samara, Tula, Rostov, Nizhny Novgorod regions, as well as Tatarstan and Chuvashia has been temporarily limited. Due to the fact that cattle in the Samara region have been diagnosed with nodular dermatitis, legal entities and individuals who have applied for imported cattle from Russia must take into account the relevant requirements of the World Organization for Animal Health, " the report said.

The Food Safety Agency sent an appeal to the State Customs Committee in connection with disinfection of vehicles from the Ryazan, Samara, Tula, Rostov, Nizhny Novgorod regions, as well as from Tatarstan and Chuvashia Republics of the Russian Federation, or vehicles passing through these territories at customs checkpoints.

<https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/business/2936105.html>

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### *New persimmon processing enterprises to be set up in Azerbaijan's Ganja*

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The new persimmon processing enterprises are planned to be set up in Azerbaijan's Ganja city, Chairman of the Azerbaijan Association of Persimmon Producers and Exporters Gadir Yusifov told Trend Aug. 2. "First of all, such enterprises are required for the development and expansion of export of this product abroad, which is in great demand not only in the domestic market, but also outside the country," he said.

"In general, packaging design is required to improve the level and quality of products which are supplied for export," Yusifov said. "In my opinion, this is an essential point, to which special attention must be paid because qualitatively designed products, firstly, arouse the interest of importers and, secondly, increase the prestige of our domestic products in foreign markets."

"The persimmons are mainly grown in such Azerbaijan's districts as Goychay, Balakan, Agjabadi and Ganja, that is why the corresponding enterprises for the production of semi-dried and dried persimmons have been established in these three districts," he added.

"Persimmon freezing facilities are gradually being set up in Azerbaijan, which in my opinion will be of great interest to our foreign importers," Yusifov said, adding that the income obtained from persimmon export by the end of this year may exceed last year's figures. He added that the revenues obtained from the export of these products in 2017 amounted to \$100 million.

Yusifov said that presently, Azerbaijan's persimmons are mainly exported to Russia, Belarus, Moldova, the Baltic countries, Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

<https://en.trend.az/business/economy/2936471.html>

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### *Decision Made to Allocate Subsidies to Agricultural Producers in 29 Districts*

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Baku / 01.08.18 / Turan: At a meeting of the Republican Commission held at the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) on July 31, it was decided to distribute subsidies for cultivating lands, to the producers of wheat, rice and silkworm cocoons.

According to the press service of the Ministry of Agriculture, 144,300 farmers from 29 regions of the country will receive 26 million 399,800 manat from the state budget in the near future. In their use is 379 thousand hectares of land.

This year, 4,186 farms in 36 districts have been engaged in the production of silkworm cocoons. They produced 498.1 tons of raw cocoons. The total volume of subsidies will make 2 million 490.5 thousand manat.

The list of persons who received subsidies from the state budget will be made public on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry has published their list since 2014.

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### *Ministry of Agriculture Establishes Council of Farmers*

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Baku / 03.08.18 / Turan: Today, on August 3, at a meeting in the Ministry of Agriculture with a group of farmers, it was announced that the Farmers' Council, a consultative body for relations with agricultural producers, was established at this department.

According to the press service of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Board of the Farmers' Council consisting of 14 people has been formed.

Minister Inam Kerimov said that on the basis of territorial structures of this department in the near future State Agrarian Development Centers will be created. Coordinating councils for liaising with farmers will operate under these centers. "In order to support farmers, the Ministry of Agriculture established the Center for Agrarian Research and the State Agrarian Trade Company. It also entrusted to improve the work of the state leasing company Agroleasing. The Ministry of Agriculture has created a department for working with farmers, associations and cooperatives, the minister said.

The representatives of farming who spoke at the meeting listed a number of existing problems. Among them, there is the low quality of seeds and fertilizers, the lack of machinery for cleaning land from stones, problems with irrigation of sown areas, etc.

For an integrated solution of these and other problems, Inam Kerimov called for accelerating the work on the creation of agricultural and other cooperatives on a voluntary basis.

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### *Members of the delegation examined the potential directions of Azerbaijan-Netherlands cooperation in the agrarian sector*

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A delegation from the Ministry of Agriculture of Azerbaijan visited the Netherlands in July. The purpose of the visit was to get acquainted with the advanced experience of the Netherlands in agriculture and to identify potential areas for cooperation between the countries in the sector.

The delegation consisted of: Innovation Adviser to the minister of agriculture Shabnam Mammadova, Experimental Pilot Projects Consultant Martis Van Splunter, Director General of Agrarian Science and Information Center Vugar Babayev, Deputy Director of Agrarian Research Center Namig Shalbuzov. They during the visit have discussed prospects for future bilateral cooperation with the Director International Agribusiness at the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality Michel van Erkel and agricultural policy advisor of the ministry Leon Lomans. The delegation also held productive meetings with the various agricultural companies in the Netherlands (Rijk Zwaan, Zon Holding, Rivaldi and others), Wageningen University and several local farmers to obtain more practical knowledge in the agrarian sector. The officials also held talks at the World Startup Factory in the Hague to familiarize themselves with innovations in the application of agricultural technologies and new intelligent solutions.

<http://www.agro.gov.az/1203-knd-tsrrfati-nazrlynn-nmaynd-heynt-nderland-kralliinda-gzar-sfrd-olub.html>