

“Organic production changed our life, improved the living standards with higher income and we aware that it is good not only for our health but for the environment as well. What’s new in the organic agricultural production is a crop rotation which we did not follow for many years. But now we know that by using rotation alternative crops we are doing our land more strong and thus increase its productivity.”

Nasipkan Eshieva, farmer of organic cotton from Nooken rayon, Jalalabad oblast



FUTURE PLANS AND PROSPECTS

During Phase II the Project will focus on supporting the 2 newly established local organizations. The Bio Service Public Foundation as a professional service provider takes over one of the major supporting functions of implementing the Internal Control System (ICS) and Organic certification from the BioCotton project to guarantee the quality to third parties. Thus Bio Service would be able to expand its inspection/certification and organic consultancy/training services throughout Central Asia. The Bio Farmers' ACSC together with representing farmers' interests takes over responsibilities for production, processing, advising/training farmers, recruiting new farmers, exporting, trade, marketing and Fair-trade certification. Thereby promoting organic production in Kyrgyzstan and exploring the internal and abroad markets for the Kyrgyz bio products to establish additional value chains for rotation crops such as sunflower seeds and petals, wheat, medicinal and aromatic plants, vegetables and beans.

THE PROJECT IN BRIEF

Location: Kyrgyzstan: Bazarkorgon, Nooken and Suzak rayons of Jalalabad oblast

Project start 2003 (I phase: January 2003 – December 2006)

Current phase II phase (January 2007 – December 2010)

Budget for current phase 330,000 USD per year

Main partners Bio Service Public Foundation
Bio Farmer ACSC (Agricultural Commodity and Service Cooperative)

Donors Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)
Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO), Holland
Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries (Hivos), Holland
Swiss Association for International Cooperation Helvetas Kyrgyzstan

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Organic Cotton Production and Trade Promotion Project



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Confédération suisse
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Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Cooperation Office in the Kyrgyz Republic
Швейцарское бюро по сотрудничеству в Кыргызской Республике



SITUATION IN BRIEF

Only a decade ago cotton production was one of the most significant sources of revenue for Osh and Jalalabat oblasts in the south of Kyrgyzstan. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992 the area used for cotton production fell by over 70% due mainly to economic reasons. Living standards and the level of employment have dropped accordingly.

As certified organic cotton products are usually marketed through special channels and fetch higher prices, production of organic cotton is seen as one of the ways of improving living standards in the south.



ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Biocotton Project aims to promote organic farming in Central Asia, and trade of organic cotton and other organic products on the international and domestic markets, allowing interested farmers to make their living.

APPROACH

The BioCotton Project focuses mainly on developing a permanent value chain of organic products in the Fergana Valley in the south of the country.

The BioCotton Project promotes and uses the main principles of organic agriculture:

- Sustainable use of natural resources
- Closed nutrient cycles whenever possible
- Wide variety of habitats and biodiversity
- Preserving and improving soil fertility
- Preventive plant protection measures
- Appropriate animal husbandry
- Healthy and strong animals
- High quality products
- High level of acceptance by consumers
- Respect for life

Organic agriculture renounces:

- One-sided specialization of farms
- Intensive use of inputs
- Mineral fertilizers
- Chemical pesticides
- Herbicides
- Genetically modified organisms
- Maximum crop and animal output

PROJECT

MILESTONES:

2003 – The Project started its activities with awareness raising, capacity building and agronomic & market research,

2004 – 38 pioneer farmers produce according to organic guidelines

2006 – 95 tons of organic cotton in conversion are produced; the first 6 tons of certified organic cotton fibre were exported to the European Market

2007 – 700 farmers produced 130 tons of conversion cotton and exported 30 tons of certified organic cotton to Europe

2008 – 2 local organizations, the Bioservice Public Foundation and Bio Farmer ACSC (Agricultural Commodity and Service Cooperative) for the promotion of organic production in Kyrgyzstan, were registered and a logo and brand for organic produce were developed, fair trade certification achieved.