

Eurasia Livestock and Machinery Mission to Turkey and Ukraine 2017

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Mission Report

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Mission Report

Turkey

This was Alberta's first mission to Turkey since receiving access for live cattle into the market. Turkey imports thousands of heads of cattle every year to fill the gap between their domestic production and consumption need. Even though Turkey has more than 14 million cattle, most of them are dairy cattle not suitable for beef production. As a result, some breeders in Turkey have moved towards dual-purpose breeds such as Simmental and Brown Swiss to increase gains in beef production. However, it is still not enough to meet domestic demand. Beef prices in Turkey are among the highest in the world (around C\$26 per kilo) and they import significant number of feeder calves from South America to fill the gap.

Alberta's program in Turkey was mainly focused on livestock and included two promotional seminars for Canadian livestock genetics in Izmir and Denizli. The Izmir seminar was organized in collaboration with Izmir Cattle Breeders Association, a valuable partner for Alberta in the country. Similar to Izmir, the seminar in Denizli was organized in partnership with Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK) of Turkey. The Denizli seminar was a high profile event held at one of the largest dairies in Turkey, Atasancak. The seminar had participation from key customers from large beef operations around the country who flew into Denizli just for the seminar. The seminar was also attended by Turkey's Ministry of Agriculture and the local Mayor and Governor of Denizli region. Canada's Ambassador to Turkey, Chris Cooter, also attended.



Livestock Seminar in Denizli, Turkey

The seminar provided an excellent forum for the Alberta delegation to promote their products and services to the Turkish market. The breed associations also highlighted the quality of their respective breeds and answered technical questions from the audience. The gathering of some of the biggest clients in Turkey under one roof provided an excellent opportunity for networking with potential buyers and building relationships with key players in Turkish livestock industry.

In addition to the presenting the seminars in Denizli and Izmir, the delegation travelled to Istanbul and Ankara to meet with key government and industry contacts including the Ministry of Agriculture, Cattle Breeders Association, Sheep and Goat Breeders Association, Turkish General Directorate for Agriculture Enterprises, Meat and Milk Union, Independent Industrialist and Businessmen Association, among others. The meetings provided the delegation the opportunity to profile Alberta's ability to meet the livestock needs of the Turkish market as well to gain a better understanding of import regulations and the requirements of the Turkish customers. Ambassador Cooter also joined the delegation for the meetings with Ministry of Agriculture, which profiled Alberta as one of the leaders in Canada for livestock genetics.



Delegation at dairy farm near Denizli, Turkey

The delegation visited several farms in Turkey to familiarize themselves with cattle operations in the country. The farm visits varied from large scale corporate operations to medium scale family-owned farms, providing a comprehensive overview of livestock farming in Turkey. This portion of the mission was extremely valuable to the delegates who were visiting Turkey for the first time as it provided them an opportunity to engage with farmers and farm managers.



Looking at feed mixer in Turkey



Near farm tours - Pamukkale, meaning "cotton castle" in Turkish, is a natural site in Denizli Province in southwestern Turkey

Overall, the Turkey portion of the mission was successful in creating awareness of different Canadian breeds in the market as well as promoting trade in livestock from Canada to Turkey. The delegation also provided insights into the Canadian livestock industry and shared their experiences with Turkish counterparts. As a follow-up to the mission, the industry is planning to attend the biggest agriculture expo in Turkey next year to capitalize on the commercial opportunities identified during this mission.

While live cattle exports are subject to changing prices patterns, one of the biggest opportunities in Turkey is sheep and goat genetics. Turkey is continuously looking to improve the genetics of its large sheep and goat population as well as the adaptation of new technology in the area of animal genetics. Having Boda Genetics as part of delegation allowed Alberta to profile our sheep and goat genetics sector and several discussions with key players in the market have already taken place including potential training programs for artificial insemination and embryo transplant.

Ukraine

The Ukraine portion of the mission was focused on agriculture machinery including equipment for soil-preparation and feed mixers for the livestock industry. Ukraine is a market where Canada has a great reputation and this allows Canadian companies to conduct business with relative ease in the market.

The program in Ukraine was designed to meet some of the largest agriculture holdings and promote the agriculture machinery products directly through farm visits and relationship building. Alberta worked with Canada Ukraine Agri-Business Platform (CUABP) for the arranging visits to two large agriculture holdings near Kiev and Lviv and to profile Alberta's strength in the agriculture machinery sector.



Agriculture equipment in Ukraine

The Canadian Ambassador in Ukraine hosted an agriculture-focused networking dinner with the participation of key government and industry contacts. This was an excellent opportunity for the Canadian delegation to engage with key players in the market in a casual setting and build relationships that will enable them to be successful in the market.

Ukraine also shows great potential for development of its sheep and goat sector. While the sector is relatively small, there is significant push for modernization and improvement in the sector including genetics and training. This was one of the biggest opportunities identified during the visit to Kiev and a strong relationship between the sheep and goat industries of Alberta and Ukraine has been created as a result of this mission.