



**AGRIBUSINESS  
SUPPORT FUND  
(ASF)**

A COMPANY SET UP UNDER  
SECTION 42 OF THE  
COMPANIES ORDINANCE 1984

# ASF Quarterly

Turning Green into Gold

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**INSIDE  
THIS ISSUE:**

ASF Launches a  
Mega Project for  
Fruit Plant Nursery  
Production in Screen  
Houses 1

ASF Develops a Pool  
of Trained Profes-  
sionals for Export  
Certifications 1

More than 90 Farm-  
Level Solar Dryers  
for Fruits & Vegeta-  
bles being Erected 2

Need More Informa-  
tion About ASF  
Grant Products? 2

Frontier Scouts  
Complex Cadet  
College, Warsak  
Organizes a Series of  
Training Programs  
with ASF Support 2

Corporate Affairs 3

ASF Grants Portfolio 3

What the Grant  
Recipients Say 3

ASF Introduction 4

Some Success Sto-  
ries & Milestones 4

## ASF Launches a Mega Project for Fruit Plant Nursery Production under Insect-Free Environment in Screen Houses

**D**iseased nursery plants carry inherent genetic defects and are a source of infection for other plants in the orchards when transplanted. Most of the diseases invade the fruit tree in the early stages of its life and grow inside the plant till its maturity before being revealed after having caused significant damage. This leads to low quality fruits with reduced market value and an early termination of productive life. Major causes are the use of infected rootstock and insects that carry the infection/ pests.

In order to ensure availability of true-to-type and disease-free fruit plants, ASF, during the quarter, rolled out a sup-

port program for the establishment of 20 Insect Free Screen Houses in different horticultural hubs, especially



citrus producing areas of Pakistan. This happens to be the first ever initiative taken by any agency in the history of Pakistan to engage the private sector to establish Screen Houses for production of fruit plant nurseries. The supported enterprises are also

being linked with Federal Seed Certification & Registration Department (FSCRD) for certification of nurseries. Furthermore, the Department of Horticulture Sciences of University of Agriculture, Faisalabad is providing guidance on technical matters under the project. This project, a revolutionary intervention in country's horticulture sector, will not only result in continuous availability of true-to-type disease free fruit plants grown under best practices leading to preservation of high yielding orchards, but it will also have a significant impact on the overall economic condition of the horticulture industry of Pakistan.

## ASF Develops a Pool of Trained Professionals under its Exports Certifications Professionals Development Program

**U**nder its various capacity building initiatives, ASF has developed a wide pool of local professionals in major export certifications including GlobalGAP, British Retailers Consortium (BRC) and ISO-22000. There was always a need to develop such local

expertise in agribusiness sector as the growers, processors and exporters of fruits & vegetables had no other option, in the past, but to hire expensive foreign experts for guidance and certification audits. These trained local experts are now providing

valuable services to the agribusiness sector at reasonably low cost. This initiative of ASF, apart from creating employment & business opportunities, has significantly contributed towards increase in Pakistan's export of fresh & processed fruits & vegetables.

## More than 90 Farm-Level Solar Dryers for Fruits & Vegetables Being Erected on Nationwide Basis with ASF Support



In Pakistan a number of fruits and vegetables are dried for value-addition and preservation purpose. This particularly includes chillies, dates, apricots, grapes, persimmons etc. However, the traditional method used for drying under the sun is not only time consuming, taking 6-8 days to complete drying; but it also affects the quality of produce which is exposed to dust, birds, insects, animals, rain, and other climatic conditions

during open drying.

ASF has launched a mega project wherein more than 90 farm-level solar dryers are being erected in various parts of country, particularly in Khairpur Mirs, Peshawar, Swat, Skardu, Gilgit, and Baluchistan. These dryers will be mainly used to dry dates, apricots, grapes, persimmons, bitter gourd, onions and other fruits & vegetables. These dryers, most of which have already started to operate, are ex-

tremely cost-effective means of drying fruits and vegetables, as these units work on natural sun light, with no need of electricity or solar panels. Furthermore, the drying process, under these units, is not only quick, completed in just 2-3 days, but the produce is also protected from dust, rain, insects, birds and other external conditions. As a result, farmers get better returns on their hygienically dried produce.

*“Register your profile in our pool of consultants by emailing at [info@asf.org.pk](mailto:info@asf.org.pk), if you can provide advisory & consultancy services to the agribusiness sector, e.g.: product design production, marketing, skills development, financial, legal, technical, general business strategy or any other services that would lead to outputs for a new, specifically identified market or that would develop new product(s) or would add value to existing products”*

## Need More Information About ASF Grant Products? Contact Us

ASF provides matching grants to farmers & agribusiness entities including start-ups in the horticulture, livestock & dairy sectors for the purchase of Business Development Services (BDS). A broad range of BDS includes: product design, feasibility study & business plans, marketing, policy making & planning, skills development, finance, business pro-

motion visits & participation in exhibitions, acquisition of quality certifications like HACCP, ISO, GlobalGAP, Organic, BRC etc; legal advice and general business strategy, provided that it can be demonstrated that the purchase of such services will lead to clear improvements in enterprise productivity, market penetration or product diversity that in

turn lead to increased profitability. ASF grant categories also include: support to BDS providers, research & development and private-sector extension services initiatives.

For detailed guidelines on grant eligibility criteria, application process, and funding mechanism, visit our website [www.asf.org.pk](http://www.asf.org.pk) or email us at [info@asf.org.pk](mailto:info@asf.org.pk).

## Frontier Scouts Complex Cadet College, Warsak Organizes a Series of Training Programs for Farmers of FATA with ASF Support



During the quarter, Frontier Scouts Complex Cadet College, Warsak initiated a series of 3 training programs with the support of ASF. These programs include “Livestock Development in FATA”, “Implementation of

Advance Production Technology to increase the Production of Cereals, Fruits and Vegetables” & “Water Resource Management for Agriculture”. The first program was organized during the quarter and was attended by farmers from all

over FATA. These trainings are being conducted with the support of Agricultural University Peshawar, Department of Water Management & Soil Conservation, Directorate General of Livestock Development KPK, and AHITI, Peshawar.

## Corporate Affairs



Participants at the 22nd Meeting of Grants Appraisal Panel held at Lahore.

- During the quarter, the Appraisal Panel Committee approved 111 agribusiness projects valued at Rs. 96.67 m under different grant categories of ASF funding.

- Ministry of Food & Agriculture has nominated Mr. Anwaar Ahmad Khan to represent the Ministry on ASF Board. Mr. Khan has joined the Ministry as Additional Secretary-I, replacing Mr. Tauqir Ahmed Faiq (AS-I and ex-Director ASF) who has been transferred from the Ministry.
- M/s A.F Ferguson & Co. Chartered Accountants initiated external audit of ASF for the year

ended June 30th, 2010. The audited accounts will be presented at the 5th Annual General Meeting of ASF planned to be held during the last week of October.

- With the joint efforts of ASF and Commercial Wing of the Embassy of Pakistan in Netherlands, six exporters from Pakistan qualified for Export Coaching Program (ECP) this year. The ECP will be implemented by the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI), Netherlands.

*“Visit [www.asf.org.pk](http://www.asf.org.pk) and learn more about ASF and its grant products”*

## ASF Grants Portfolio - 4,456 Nationwide Projects Worth Rs. 876.48 m

During the 1st quarter of 2010-11, a total of 111 matching-grant projects (1st quarter of 2009-10, 253 projects) for an amount of Rs. 96.67 m (1st quarter of 2009-10, Rs. 53.168 m), including beneficiaries' share, were approved under the various grant components. This brings the total number of approved projects under all categories to 4,456 for a total value of Rs. 876.48 m to-date.

ASF grants portfolio to-date includes support to 464 Existing Agribusiness Enterprises, 111 Start-up Agribusiness Enterprises, 706 Business Development Service (BDS) providers & consultants, 11 Research & Development projects, 29 Private Sector Agriculture Extension Services projects, Formation of 2,000 Farmer Enterprise Groups (FEGs) and BDS support to 1,135 FEGs on nationwide basis.

Geographic distribution of projects is as follows:

- Punjab 1,226 projects
- Sindh 710 projects
- Baluchistan 745 projects
- Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa 1,122 projects
- Gilgit Baltistan 538 projects
- FATA 30 projects
- AJK 85 projects

## What the Grant Recipients Say...

ASF is serving at its best not only by introducing new techniques to the farmers but by also providing private sector with all the support to carry out agribusiness development projects in an efficient manner. The vision, leadership and commitment shown by ASF team throughout the project of DuPont's Tyvek® bags distribution to the dates growers in of the country is really appreciated. All the best to ASF team for their ongoing and upcoming projects.

**Kashif Karim**  
Business Development Manager  
DuPont Protection Technologies

Agribusiness Support Fund Lahore has emerged as a leading partner of Institute of Horticultural Sciences, University of Agriculture Faisalabad in capacity building & human resource development programs for the benefit of farmers & other stake holders. Both the partners have successfully organized a number of training courses related to horticultural crops during the last couple of years. I appreciate the contribution of ASF in developing Horticultural industry of Pakistan on strong footings.

**Prof. Dr. M.A. Pervez**  
Institute of Horticulture Sciences  
University of Agriculture, Faisalabad

We used to cultivate the traditional crops which in the end would become livestock fodder. Under ASF FEGs project, we heard about benefits of cultivating gladiolus and substantial returns we could get by marketing it in big cities. Though we had some fear, but we carried out cultivation of gladiolus with the support of ASF. The yield and return we got was extremely high and now we all members of FEG plan to increase gladiolus cultivation in our individual farms. Thank you ASF.

**Muhammad Asghar Khan**  
Farmer / Member  
FEG Dhan Koyan, Rawal Kot



A group photograph of successful participants along with trainer of training program on Third Party Auditor - BRC Global Standard for Food Safety conducted by M/s Bureau Veritas in Lahore



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Agribusiness Support Fund (ASF) is a “Not-for-Profit” company registered with Securities & Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) under Section 42 of Companies Ordinance 1984. The company was established by Ministry of Food, Agriculture & Livestock (MINFAL) with the support of Asian Development Bank (ADB). It provides financial support to farmers, farmer groups and entrepreneurs for hiring demand-driven technical and managerial services on a matching grant basis to improve their productivity, competitiveness and credit-worthiness to access financing for their enterprises. The company is governed by a private-sector led independent Board of Directors.

## Some Success Stories & Milestones

- Project for Fruit Plant Nursery production in Screen Houses under insect-free environment on nationwide basis. (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- Provision of Solar Dryers for drying of fruits & vegetables on nationwide basis. (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- Extension services project for farmer communities of D.I.Khan & Zhob for value-addition and marketing of Pine Nuts (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- Support for establishment of on-farm mango washing, drying, grading and packing facilities in mango growing districts in Punjab & Sindh (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- Support for establishment of Plant Tissue Culture Laboratory for Bananas in Tando Allahyar Sindh (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- GlobalGAP Certification projects for Citrus & Mango in Bhalwal, Sargodha, Multan & Tando Allayar (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- GlobalGAP Train-the-Trainer workshop in Pakistan conducted by M/s FoodPlus, Germany (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- Training program on “British Retail Consortium 3rd Party Auditors” in collaboration with Pakistan Standards & Quality Control Authority (PSQCA), Karachi (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- Training programs on Off-Season Farming in collaboration with University of Agriculture Faisalabad & Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- British Retail Consortium (BRC) UK trained professionals (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- Technical expertise for establishment of fresh fruit & vegetable processing unit in Karachi (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- Launch of Private-sector Agriculture Extension Services Projects (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- Gladiolus production & marketing in Baluchistan (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- Sustainable Apricot drying, processing and marketing in FANA (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- Training program on “Value Chain Development” in collaboration with ACIDI / VOCA, USA (FIRST IN PAKISTAN)
- Extension services project for date sector in Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa.
- Training program on “Controlled Atmosphere Storage of Fruits & Vegetables” in collaboration with University of Agriculture Faisalabad
- Training program for Dairy Farm Managers / Owners in collaboration with COMSATS Institute, Lahore
- Training programs on Dairy Farm Management in collaboration with Nestle Pakistan Ltd
- Support for Business Plan Competition (Agribusinesses) at Lahore University of Management Sciences, Lahore
- Support for technical expertise for Rs. 100 million Controlled Atmosphere Multipurpose unit in Karachi
- Support to fruit & vegetable processors in obtaining HACCP certification (Nationwide)
- Establishment of off-season floriculture farm in Loralai, Baluchistan
- Capacity building support to All Pakistan Fruit & Vegetable (Importers/Exporters) Association
- Support to more than 150 farmers in setting up apricot dehydration units in Gilgit, Balistan.
- Establishment of certified fruit nurseries at KPK, FANA and AJK
- Support in preparation of feasibility reports & business plans for various projects (Nationwide).
- Support to farmers of Baluchistan for participation in Floricultural Training Program in India
- Support in establishment of Floral Nursery by a woman-owned business (Lahore)
- Support for introduction of a new Tomato variety (KPK, FATA, & Sindh)
- Off-season vegetables production (Nationwide)
- Improvement in packing of grapes & apples and access to new markets (Baluchistan)
- Support in Strawberry Cultivation, Packing & Market access (Punjab & KP)
- Support in pickles preparation, packing and marketing (KPK)
- Support in production, packing and marketing of cut-flowers (Nationwide)
- Support in setting up a Cattle Breeding & Extension Services Center (Gilgit Baltistan)
- Mushroom production & marketing projects (KPK & FANA)
- Onion seed production & Seed potato production projects (Sindh & KP)
- Milk collection, chilling and value-addition projects (Nationwide)
- Establishment of common facility centre for apple growers (KP)
- Solar Dryer Units for Chillies at District Umerkot (Sindh)