

50 Things You Need to Know About Agriculture in Afghanistan

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Note: All information in this presentation
has been taken from various online sources.

Irrigation Matters....a lot

- 80% of Afghanistan's agricultural sector is dependant on some form of irrigation system as it has traditionally low rainfall levels. Improved water resource management is vital to sustainability of the agricultural sector, particularly with regards to food security.

Cereal Grains Are The Way to Food Self-Sufficiency

- To become self sufficient in food production, cereal production must improve, especially for wheat, which requires high-cost irrigation systems and technological support.
- Wheat is the most important crop, followed by barley, corn, and rice. Cotton is another important and widely cultivated crop.

There is a shortage of food

- 45 to 55% of children before the age of five suffer from chronic malnutrition.

Agricultural Credit is Scarce

- a credit system to finance the development of the agricultural sector is needed.

Women Do The Work

- Approximately 70% of Afghanistan's agricultural sector is made up of women, particularly in the livestock and horticultural sectors.

Perennial Horticulture is an Afghan Government Priority

- The Afghanistan government suggests that both private and public investment should be allocated to the perennial horticulture industry (i.e. fruits, nuts and vines), to grow its export potential over the next ten years.

Forget About Good Data

- Afghanistan does not have proper technological resources in place to maintain databases on the agricultural sector due to the destruction of government buildings which lost record of all previous data.

Reforestation Can Help

- Afghanistan's forests have been greatly depleted due to illegal logging practices and local fuel demands. Currently, forest cover accounts for only 2% of its land, although when considering conservation and environmental factors, it should account for at least 5%.

7 Out of 10 Are Employed in Agriculture

- **Labour force** is
- 69% agriculture
- 15% industry
- 16% services

Foreign Trade is Mostly with Pakistan

- **Major trading partners**

Pakistan (85%)

and then China, Japan, Germany, India,
Russia, UK, South Korea

Main Exports Are Agricultural

- **Exports** dried fruit and nuts, carpets, wool, karakul skins, fresh fruit, medicinal plants

They Import What They Don't Produce

- **Imports** basic manufactured goods and foodstuffs, machinery and equipment, petroleum products, fabrics, clothing and footwear, medicine, metals, fertilizers

They Raise Wheat

- **Agricultural products** wheat, barley, maize, rice, fruit and vegetables; livestock rearing (sheep, goats, cattle, and camels); world's leading opium producer

Only One Acre in Eight Can be Cultivated

- **Arable land** is 12%
- The cultivable area has been estimated at 8 million ha, which is 12% of the total area.

Population is
nine times as large as
Oklahoma

- **Population** 31,081,000 (2006 est)

They have a Natural Resource Base

- **Resources** natural gas, coal, iron ore, barytes, lapis lazuli, salt, talc, copper, chrome, gold, silver, asbestos, small petroleum reserves

Agriculture Leads Industry In Afghanistan

- **Industries** food products, cotton textiles, cement, coalmining, chemical fertilizers, small vehicle assembly plants, processed hides and skins, carpetmaking, sugar manufacture, leather and plastic goods

Educational Opportunity is Limited

- One Percent of GDP is spent on Education
- Compare to 5 percent in USA and 6 percent in Canada.

6 Main Languages

- **Language**
- Pashto and Dari (both official)
- Uzbek
- Turkmen
- Balochi
- Pashai

Population is 99 Percent MuslimMostly Sunni

- **Religion**

Muslim (84% Sunni, 15% Shiite)

Other 1%

The Flag Contains Wheat

- **Afghanistan Flag**
Black represents the occupation of foreigners, red represents the blood of freedom fighters, and green denotes Islam. In the middle of the flag is a mehrab, an arch in a mosque where the congregation stands, and a mender, a pulpit in a mosque. The mehrab and mender are both in white, and are enclosed by wheat. Effective date: 5 February 2002.



Afghanistan Borders 6 Countries

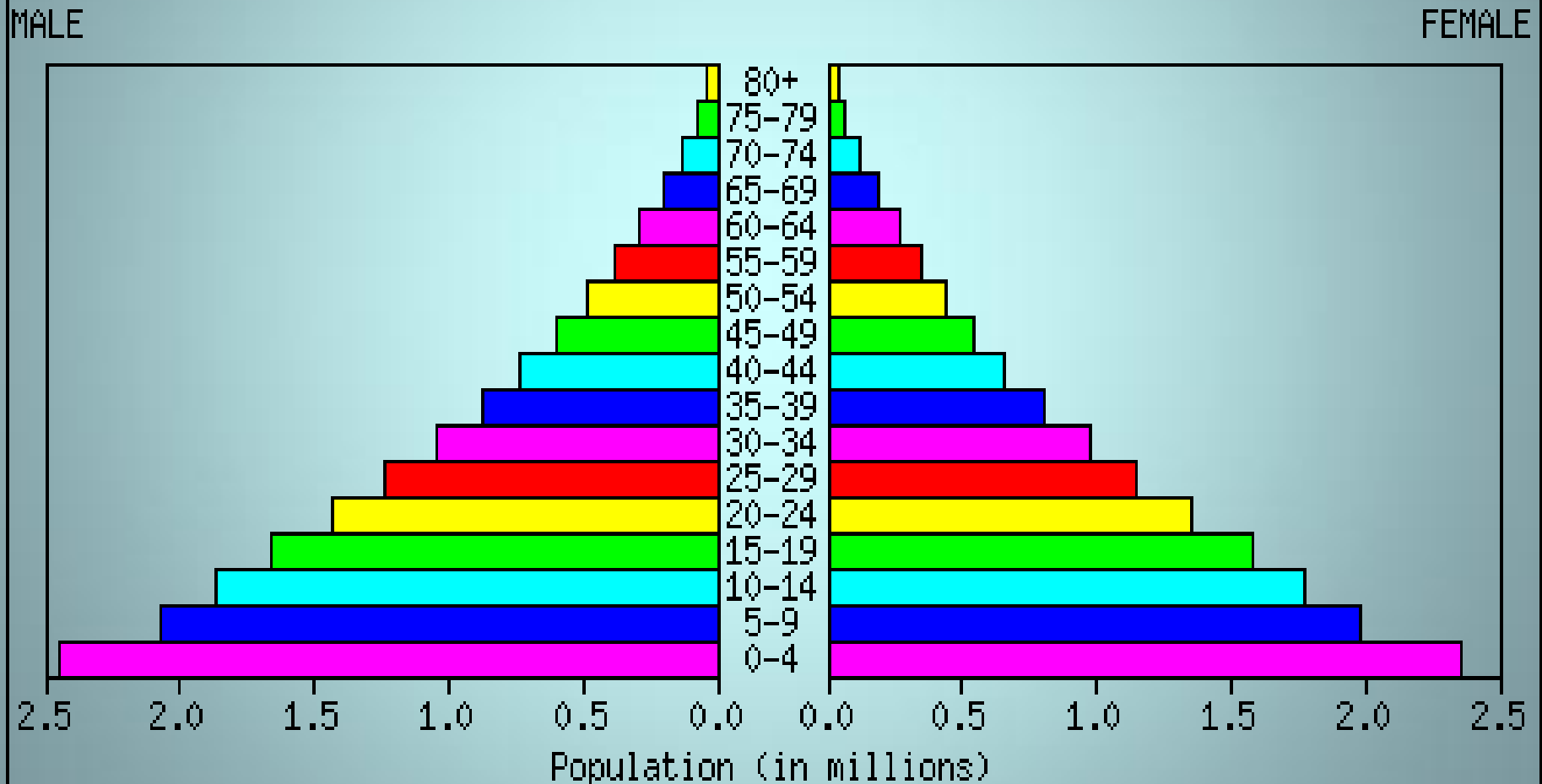
- *border countries:*
- China 76 km
- Iran 936 km
- Pakistan 2,430 km
- Tajikistan 1,206 km
- Turkmenistan 744 km
- Uzbekistan 137 km

There is no Coastline

- Afghanistan is a landlocked country with no official maritime claims.

The Population is Young

Afghanistan: 2005



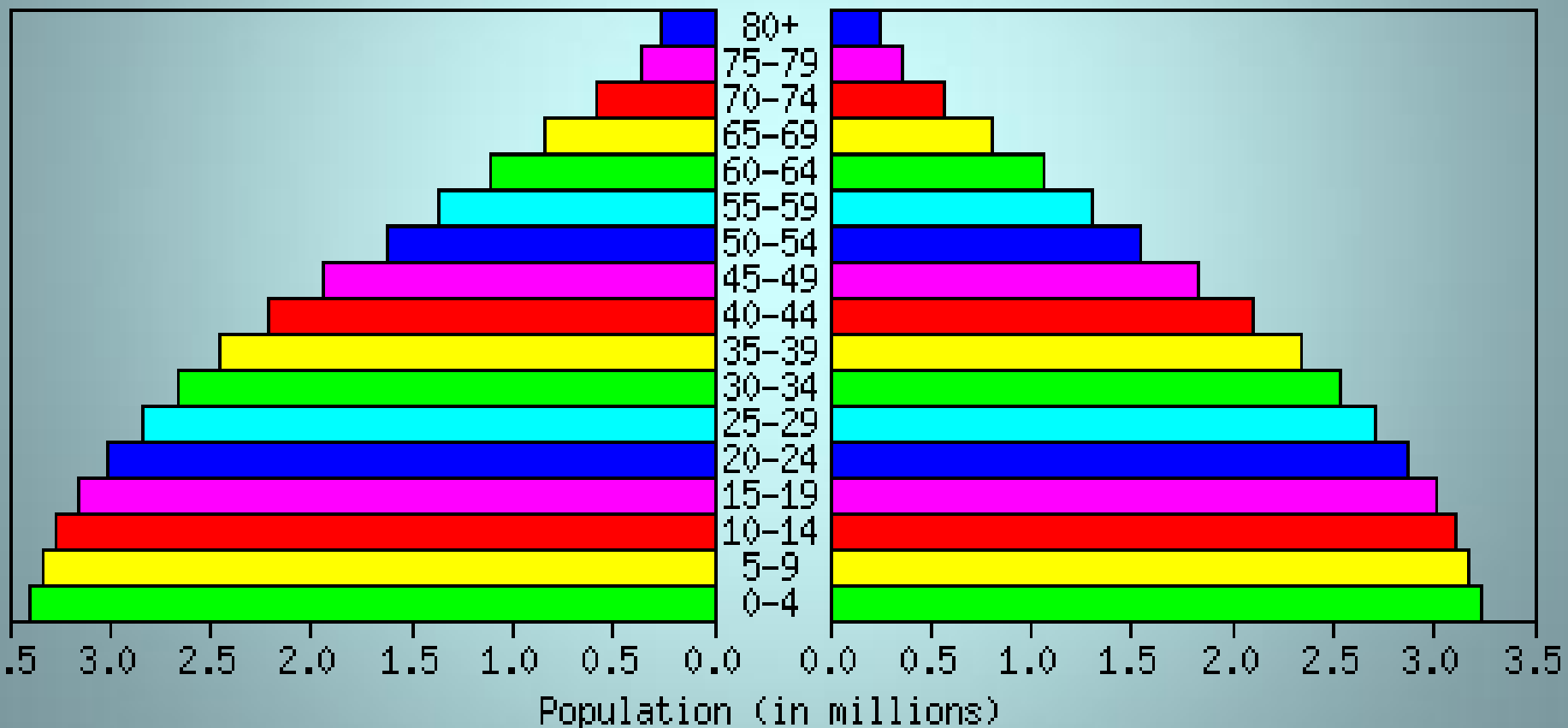
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.

Development May Create Population Problems by 2050

Afghanistan: 2050

MALE

FEMALE



Population (in millions)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams are in Afghanistan

- Since May 2003, 37 experts from USDA have served as Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Agricultural Advisors in Afghanistan. Advisors have come from a variety of USDA agencies including the Foreign Agricultural Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Food Safety Inspection Service, the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, and the Cooperative State Research, Extension and Education Service. These advisors help enable, support, and foster reconstruction of the agricultural sector, and help build the ability of the Afghan central government to support and provide services to the agricultural sector.

History of USDA PRT Agricultural Advisors in Afghanistan

- 2003: Three USDA Agricultural Advisors joined PRTs on six-month deployments
- 2004: 10 USDA Agricultural Advisors joined PRTs on six-month deployments
- 2005: 10 Agricultural Advisors deployed to PRTs (six-month deployments)
Two USDA Technical Advisors are still in country on long-term assignments
- 2006: Eight USDA Agricultural Advisors joined PRTs on nine-month deployments
Two USDA Technical Advisors were deployed in 2005
- 2007: Eight USDA Agricultural Advisors joined PRTs on nine-month deployments
Two USDA Technical Advisors were deployed in 2005
- 2008: 13 USDA Agricultural Advisors will join PRTs on 13-month deployments

Karl Eikenberry is the United States Ambassador to Afghanistan

- His term of appointment began in 2009
- Retired U.S. Army Lieutenant General
- M.A. in East Asian Studies from Harvard
- M. A. in Political Science from Stanford



Hamid Karzai is the President of Afghanistan

- President Hamid Karzai was sworn in as President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on December 7, 2004 and the Afghan Parliament was subsequently convened in late 2005.



U.S. Citizens Need a Visa

- A passport and valid visa are required to enter and exit Afghanistan. Afghan entry visas are not available at Kabul International Airport or any other ports of entry in Afghanistan. American citizens who arrive without a visa are subject to confiscation of their passport and face heavy fines and difficulties in retrieving their passport and obtaining a visa, as well as possible deportation from the country. Americans arriving in the country via military air usually have considerable difficulties if they choose to depart Afghanistan on commercial air, because their passports are not stamped to show that they entered the country legally. Those coming on military air should move quickly after arrival to legalize their status if there is any chance they will depart the country on anything other than military air.

Cash is King

- Because of the poor infrastructure in Afghanistan, access to banking facilities is limited and unreliable. Afghanistan's economy operates on a "cash-only" basis for most transactions. Credit card transactions are not available. International bank transfers are limited. Some ATM machines exist at Standard Charter Bank and Afghan International Bank (AIB) in the Wazir Akbar Khan neighborhood of Kabul, but some travelers have complained of difficulties using them.

Sheep are Important

- Livestock is nearly as important as crops to Afghanistan's economy. Karakul sheep are raised in large numbers in the north. The tight curly fleece of Karakul lambs is used to make Persian lamb coats. Other breeds of sheep, such as the fat-tailed sheep, and goats are also raised.

Karakul Sheep



Fat Tailed Sheep



See the Fat Tail below



Opium is an Important Product

- Afghanistan is a major supplier in the international drug trade. It is the second-largest opium producer after Myanmar (formerly known as Burma), with 950 metric tons produced in 1994. Afghanistan also produces significant quantities of hashish.



This
beautiful
flower is an
opium poppy

Foreign Trade

- Afghanistan's chief exports are natural gas and dried fruit. Other exports include carpets, fresh fruit, wool, and cotton. Most of the foreign trade of Afghanistan is controlled by the government or by government-controlled monopolies.

National Seed Secretariat

- As usual, the FAO Representation in Afghanistan in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture will celebrate the WFD on Thursday, 16th October 2008, at Badam Bagh, Kabul. This ceremony includes inauguration of the National Seed Secretariat Building and the Perennial Horticulture Development Centre at Badam Bagh in Kabul, which will become the umbrella institution for all seed industry functions in the country.
- The new National Seed Secretariat is situated in close proximity to the Central Seed Testing Laboratory in Kabul and accommodates the apex institutions for coordinating seed industry functions in Afghanistan, comprising the National Seed Board and its affiliated bodies namely the Variety Release Committee, the Seed and Plant Health Inspectorate, the Seed Certification Agency, and the Afghanistan National Seed Association. The National Seed Board will be proclaimed upon ratification of the Seed Law, which is currently at parliament level for consideration. The Seed Board will function as the highest body in the seed sector with overall oversight for the management of the national seed programme and having autonomy and freedom to carry out its functions.

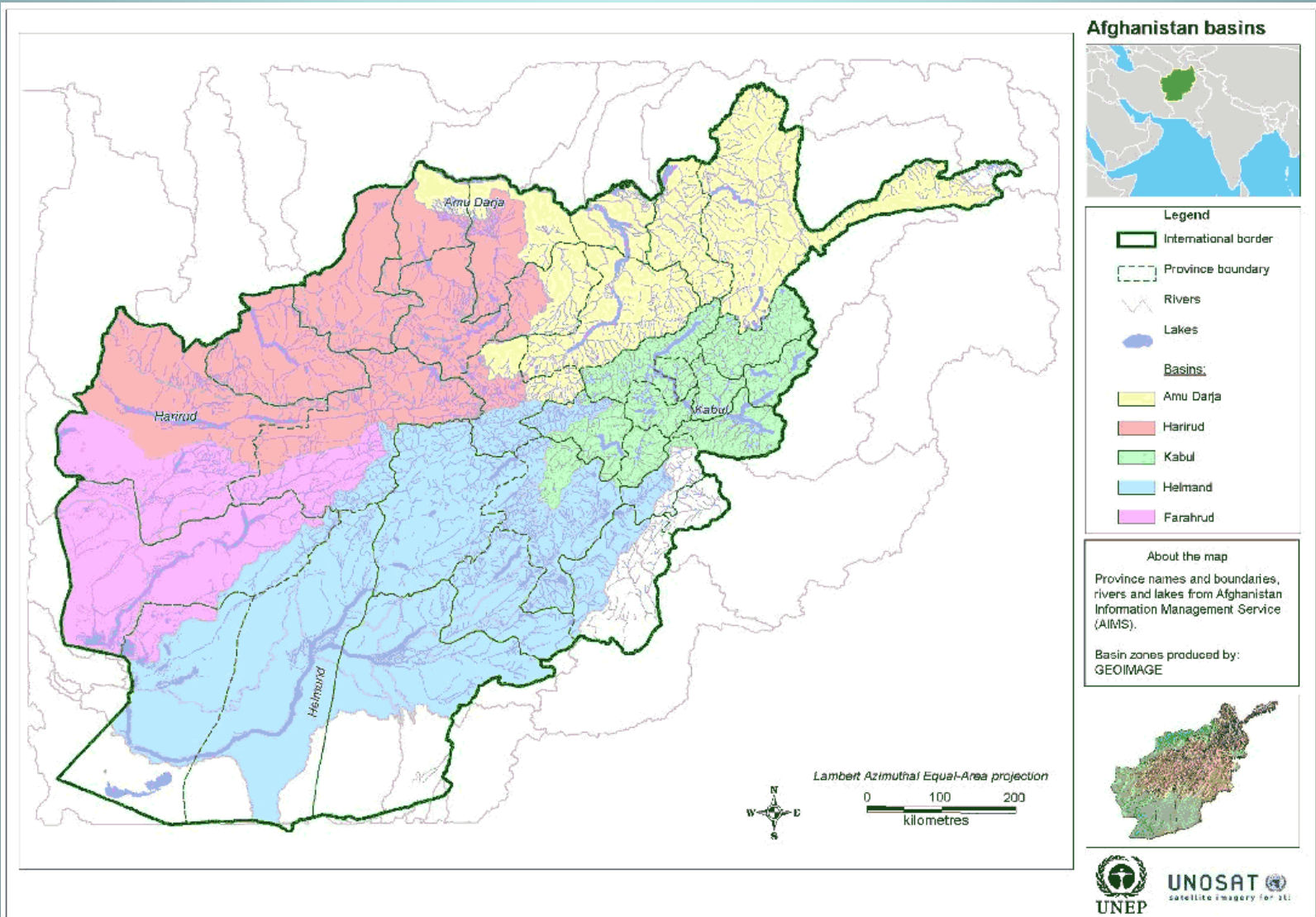
This is a Desert Locust



Desert Locust?

- Afghanistan is on the margins of the distribution of Desert Locust, there are some desert areas close to the borders with Iran and Pakistan (from Herat in the west to Kandahar in the south) that are favourable for Desert Locust breeding, but in fact the Desert Locust rarely bothers Afghanistan. In the 1990's there was the existence of a very large locust on trees in western Afghanistan, but it proved not to be Desert Locust. In fact the last time Afghanistan suffered a major outbreak was in 1953. It occurred in Helmand valley in the south-west of the country close to the Iranian border. In April/May 1959 swarms also landed in Afghanistan, but did little serious damage since they quickly moved on.
- The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) with collaboration of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) hosted the 26th session of the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in Southwest Asia (SWAC) in Kabul on 15-17 December 2008.

There are Five Major River Basins in Afghanistan



2003 FAO Livestock Census for Afghanistan

- 3.7 million cattle in Afghanistan
- 8.8 million sheep
- 7.3 million goats
- 1.6 million donkeys
- 180 000 camels
- 140 000 horses
- 12.2 million poultry.

Herd Growth is a Priority

- "The major challenge now is to maximize the natural regeneration of herds. This can be done by ensuring that the animals are healthy and well fed, and that there are adequate breeding males or artificial insemination available."

“Animals are also being imported from neighbouring countries. Without adequate veterinary control there is a risk of spreading infectious diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease and Peste des petits ruminants, which could adversely affect the recovery of the national herd. FAO strongly recommends increasing the capacity of the public veterinary services to manage these disease risks”.

Agriculture in Afghanistan

- There is a lot of variety
- You are not alone – many people and institutions are working on agriculture in Afghanistan
- Progress that endures will be slow, rapid gains often do not endure. Have a lot of patience.
- In agriculture, it is the long haul that matters.



The End

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