



APRIL 2014 UPDATE ON THE MOROCCAN COLLABORATIVE

MISA Strengthening Sustainable Agriculture

STRATEGIES

MISA: To implement a framework for an enhanced collaborative partnership for the U of MN Extension and CFANS with the Institute of Agronomy and Veterinary Medicine, Hassan II (IAV) and the National School of Agriculture (ENA), and the Rural Tourism Network in Morocco to enrich rural communities in Minnesota and Morocco through sustainable agriculture systems.

STATUS OF GOALS

Goal 1: Implement faculty and graduate student collaborations to foster research and education that address critical needs in agriculture.

- Moroccan Medicinal Plant and Aromatics: A first study is being conducted on the chemical characterization of extracts from native medicinal plants and the screening for potential effects of some of their active compounds. The results of this work are expected to have impacts both scientifically and socially on the local population where these plants occur.
- Soybean Production for Livestock: This study concerns the evaluation of the adaptation and performance of several soybean cultivars from the US under Moroccan local conditions.
- Building an enhanced Tourism Network and Collaborative: Working with the University of Ibn Zohr and the UM Tourism Center to strengthen customer service skill base of rural-tourist facilities and the extended workforce. In the process of writing a proposal to fund future work.



Goal 2: Develop an International Leader Engagement program.

In collaboration with faculty from ENA an USAID Farmer-to-Farmer grant was awarded (\$100k) to design a Morocco Rural Leadership Farmer to Farmer project that aims to develop a model for the enhancement of leadership skills and strategic planning capabilities of Moroccan farmer leaders. In the framework of this project, a group of specialists from the UMN and alumni from the

Minnesota Agricultural and Rural Leadership (MARL) program will be working with Moroccan trainers through several workshops, to provide tools and techniques in leadership training to farmers that will be grounded to the Moroccan context. The objective is to strengthen the leadership and strategic planning capabilities of rural-based farmer associations to further the development of decentralized decision-making.

Goal 3: Develop a model of an enhanced and modern Extension system integrating applied research and education that tackles the societal issues facing Minnesotans and Moroccans.

Extension and Rural Advisory Models: Received funding to host five USDA/Foreign Agricultural Services Cochran Fellows this June to conduct training in agricultural extension and program evaluation. MISA will support a fifth fellow from ENA who is a faculty in Extension and Rural Agriculture Systems.

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

The MISA support has contributed to the success in receiving funds for the Cochran Fellows and the Farmer-to-Farmer program. In addition, UM Extension has been given internal funds to explore the potential of establishing a Research and Outreach Hub in Morocco for enhancing the interactions between Moroccans and Minnesotans for the mutual benefit of educational, outreach and research programs.



Memorandum of Understanding

- Ministry of Agriculture: Direction de l'Enseignement de la Formation et de la Recherche
- National School of Agriculture
- University of Ibn Zohr

For more information contact:

Renee Pardello
University of Minnesota Extension
Assistant Dean
612-624-6479
Pard0017@umn.edu

