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PAMIR'S NATURAL JUICES - USEFUL AND PROFITABLE!

In the middle of August in Buni village of Shugnan district of GBAO international organization Operation Mercy held a master class on fruit juice production for local residents.

Operation Mercy specialists showed the villagers the entire process of apple juice production on equipment imported from China. It was noted that villagers can produce apple juice production equipment from local materials, and one sample of such equipment was demonstrated. The event was also attended by a resident of the village of Siponj, Rushan district, who intends to produce juice in the Bartang valley.

Operation Mercy specialist Zak Veselik has been helping residents of Buni and Nishusp villages of Shugnan district, as well as Khidorjev and Siyob villages of Roshtqala district to improve fruit juice production process for the second year already. He said they had previously installed 8 juice making machines in these villages, which were purchased from China and then sold at a low price to villagers. The organization also conducted training sessions for local residents on packaging, production and pasteurization of juices.

"The locals make 100% natural fruit juice without any additives. Problems only with packaging and sales, but work is also going on in this direction. Villagers should have their own ideas for solutions, and then we can help in their implementation as much as we can. But we have to start with simple steps," Veselik said. He added that Operation Mercy also provides gardening training to local residents and helps them with the purchase of seedlings. "I have learned a lot from the local people myself, and it is a great pleasure to work with them" (Veselik).

Mavlod Avazbekov, a master from the village of Siponj in Bartang Valley, said he learned a lot from the master class and exchange of experience from Operation Mercy specialists and masters of the village of Buni. "Now I will be able to produce juice on my own in my village, and I plan to do it. I also intend to train my fellow villagers in this field. Nobody in Siponje is currently doing this, although we have plenty of apples," he commented.

According to Nekqadam Nekqadamov, a resident of Buni village, who has been producing apple juice for two years already, "if you work effectively, you can count on a good profit." "In the past, we only dried fruit, but now we make juices out of it. We have organized a group of 4 families and we work together to help each other. We also train fellow villagers in this field. Soon the packages will come from China and we will start selling juice in the markets as well as for weddings," mentioned Nekqadamov.

According to Nekqadamov, last year his group produced 500 liters of juice, and this year it is planned to produce 1.5 thousand liters. "There are good prospects for the development of our business, as the environmentally friendly product will always be used in demand. Now is a time when you have to work hard and show initiative to succeed," he added.

Shamsiya Khalilova, a resident of the village of Buni, noted that she likes to produce juice together with her fellow villagers. "We have a lot of apples in the garden and we will be selling juice at the Khorog market. I hope that this activity will benefit our family. Besides, natural juice is also very useful for our children," she said.

Umed Bulbulshoyev, Director of the Public Foundation Tabiat CAMP, noted the importance of the exchange of experience between residents of different villages of GBAO for the development of small business and adaptation to climate change in the region. "Today, a resident of Siponj village learned how to produce fruit juice, and he intends to train his fellow villagers in this field as well. Entrepreneurship development, in turn, will help improve people's living conditions and their adaptation in the climate-vulnerable Bartang Valley," he said.

Master class and exchange of experience in Buni village was held with the support of the CAMP Tabiat Public Foundation within the framework of the project "Ecosystem –based Adaptation to Climate Change in High Mountainous Regions of Central Asia" (EbA). This project, implemented in GBAO by the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) in partnership with CAMP Tabiat, assists residents of two mountainous villages of Siponj and Darjomj in the Bartang Valley to adapt by reducing risk or vulnerability associated with current and projected climate impacts.

The EbA project is being implemented by the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan on behalf of the German Government. In Tajikistan GIZ partner in the project implementation is CAMP Tabiat.

