



Press release

First EU and AFD supported International Conference on Potato Value Chain was held in Georgia

October 20-21, 2021 Tbilisi - Two-day International Agribusiness online conference “Situation and prospects of the potato value-chain in Georgia” was held in Tbilisi, to discuss the prospects, opportunities, as well as challenges in the country’s potato sector. The event was supported by the European Union NIF program, in partnership with the French Development Agency, and was organized in close collaboration with MEPA and RDA.

The Forum provided a unique opportunity for the stakeholders from the public and private sector to exchange information about the hot topics in the potato value chain and extend recommendations for the sector’s development. The meeting focused on the ways for the potato sector modernization, development of value-chain at farmer’s level, promoting better access to inputs and equipment, as well as better accessibility on finances and market opportunities.

In his opening speech Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia underlined that “the conference theme was correctly chosen as the potato sector development is very important for Georgia, and it has always been a challenge till today”.

As Georges Dehoux, Programme Manager for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety of the EU Delegation in Georgia noted in this opening address: “For the EU the full development of specific value chains like potato from farm to fork is a core for the EU support to agriculture in Georgia”.

Following the keynote addresses, FinExCoop presented a video film and the testimonies of the 8 FinExCoop’s pilot farmers in the potato value chain, where farmers explain the main challenges, they face in the market.

Raphaël Jozan, Director of the AFD Tbilisi regional office underlined the importance of supporting the agriculture of Georgia and the role of AFD in the process of contributing to the sector’s development: “AFD intends to support value chain development in connection with the support to the Government of Georgia for the implementation of their agriculture strategy. This Conference brought together the European and Georgian expertise, which is valuable for designing the strategy and further actions. Development of pilot operations with the support of FinExCoop demonstrated the potential of agriculture development in Georgia, as well as the need for consolidated approach, reforms, investment and technical assistance that AFD is proposing in the frames of the Project and in line with the EU’s Country development cooperation strategy for Georgia”.

The EU supported NIF programme is a facility stemming from the financing options offered by the European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI) Regulation. It is intended to provide EU grant support for lending operations led by European multilateral development-finance institutions and also bilateral development finance institutions of the Member States. The NIF proves grants



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for investment co-financing, loan guarantee cost financing, interest rate subsidies, risk capital operations and technical assistance package. The objective is associate European Union grants with loans from consortia of European Finance Institutions in order to finance large investment projects in the ENI region.

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