

USDA Provincial Reconstruction Team Members Contribute To Rebirth of Iraq's Poultry Sector – Foreign Agricultural Service, June 2009

The poultry industry in the Mahmudiyah district of Iraq is operating again thanks to the efforts of two U.S. Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) agriculture advisors and a U.S. agriculture contractor. At one time, poultry production was the largest industry of its kind in Iraq, but war and violence over the past few years destroyed the majority of poultry production facilities.

Over the past year and a half, the U.S. agriculture team helped poultry producers in Mahmudiyah district increase production, decrease production costs, and build capacity through proper use of vaccines and good management techniques. The U.S. team requested and obtained Commanders' Emergency Response Program funds and Quick Response Funds in excess of \$2.5 million. These U.S. funds were used to construct a poultry processing facility, rehabilitate destroyed grower facilities, build a breeder facility to provide chicks to farmers, and provide working capital for purchasing of chicks and feed for poultry association members.

As a result, the Mahmudiyah (MMD) Poultry Association now has 130 active members with more than 150 grower houses. Before the Association was formed, no organization existed to represent poultry producers in this region. With the assistance of the U.S. PRT agriculture advisors, the MMD Poultry Association drew up a profit sharing contract with Al-Kanz Poultry Processing Plant, which will be the first facility of its kind in Iraq to slaughter, process, and produce fresh chicken for human consumption according to Islamic practice. The plant will be completed this summer.

The success of this project drew the attention of local Iraqi media outlets, including Al Sabah, an Iraqi newspaper, and Sumariya television, an Arabic station, which published or aired stories.

What is most important is that MMD Association members are now earning an income and are able to support their families. This project has helped improve the economic outlook for four Qadas (similar to county governments) of Mahmudiyah: Lutifiyah, Yousifiyah, Al-Rashid, and Mahmudiyah, in an area just south of Baghdad.

The U.S. agriculture team is comprised of Michael Clayton and Charles D. Russell, USDA employees voluntarily serving on the Baghdad-4 (now Baghdad-South) embedded PRT in Mahmudiyah, Iraq, and John Van Horn, a U.S. agriculture contractor. These individuals are helping rebuild and revitalize Iraq's agricultural sector through a variety of projects depending on the needs of the country and the province.

The attached PowerPoint presentation provides more detail about this and other projects being initiated by the U.S. agriculture team in Mahmudiyah.