



Working under Political Uncertainty

Agricultural Development Assistance in Ukraine

Thank You Dr. Farkas

- For the thoughts related to political uncertainty, institutional obliteration, major corruption, ineffective government policy and, a lack of proper leadership
- And; for what it can mean to rational agricultural policy in a country
- After 8 years working full time in Ukraine & subsequent visits I can confirm this kind of uncertainty during the period 1996 to 2007;and, that it still exists today.

Working in an Unstable Political Environment as a Consultant

- Confined to Ukraine even though I have worked in 79 different countries
- Worked on two different projects in Ukraine:
 - Land Privatization Program (Oct. 1995 to May 1997 & Feb. 1999 to April 2000)
 - Returning state owned Collective Farm agricultural land & Property to farm members
 - Land ownership is sensitive anywhere but, more so in a communist environment
 - Agricultural Marketing Project (April 2003 to April 2007)
 - Help small farmers decide what to produce on their small land tracts
 - Help farmers learn how to produce and select high quality product for markets
 - Help farmers learn proper marketing of products to wholesalers and/or retailers

“MUST HAVE’s” to Work as a Consultant in an Unstable Former Adversarial Political Environment

- have full support of the host government
- be a good listener & develop a full understanding of the situation being dealt with
- have supportive local professionals to work with
- work with farm managers that support the objectives
- establish “TRUST” with the people being assisted

Nature of work for Market Strengthening

- Nature of farmers:
 - Small 5 to 10 acre farms
 - Inexperienced at producing the crops being grown
 - Little or no experience in operating a farm as a business
- Assistance included such things as:
 - Training in producing and selecting quality products
 - Training in how to market to wholesalers and retailers
 - Helped farmers make direct contacts with wholesalers and retailers
 - Developed packing systems and taught farmers how to use them
 - Provided retailers help in properly displaying fruits & vegetables in stores

Nature of work for Market Strengthening - Continued

- Assistance included such things as:
 - Developed a market information system for distribution via hard copy or the internet
 - Carried out an annual Fruit & Vegetable conference for industry participants
 - Basically we implemented an extension activity that helped farmers improve how they serve the end customer with Fruits and Vegetables.

Examples of Obstacles Encountered

- Choices made by World Bank and USAID
 - Break up farms and deliver equal acreage to each member
 - Issue land titles to each member
- Reluctance of Farm Managers to work with our team because:
 - Farm was owned by the state and the state would provide support
 - Farm Managers were worried the government would come down hard on them
 - If the shoe were on the other foot what would you do

Examples of Obstacles Encountered

- Questions posed by farm workers:
 - Why are you Americans here to help us?
 - Do you Americans want to take over our land?
- Success of the work when properly implemented
 - Participated actively in the development of the “Farm Business Plan”
 - Made use of land leasing program established
 - Adopted the use of proper technologies in planting, growing and harvesting

Expression of Success Encountered

- Appreciation for help provided:

A farmer shared at the end of the
Agricultural Marketing Project:

“You and the people working with you have done much more for us than our own government does for us, please do not leave us.”

Selected Slides



Selected Slides



Selected Slides



Selected Slides



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