



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Agriculture Newsletter

July – December 2020

2nd Edition

Algeria and Tunisia

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Dear reader,

Welcome to this year's second edition of our newsletter! We would like to help keep you updated on the developments and events related to agrofood in Algeria and Tunisia from July to December 2020. We are always looking forward to hear from you, for any additional information please contact us on:

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ALGERIA - Impact of COVID-19 on agriculture and food security

After a relative relaxation in anti-COVID measures in September, the government imposed stricter measures on November 9, notably a curfew at 8pm and later also closing of all restaurants at 3pm and service limited to take away during the opening hours. The Algerian borders are closed since March and it is not clear when they will open again.

The government put some measures in place to guarantee food security, such as an export ban on several products. However, the most important issue is the dependency on food imports for at least 55% of the national food consumption. The hard currency needed to get food and agricultural products, like milk powder, cereals and seed potatoes, to Algeria are becoming more scarce due to the diminishing revenues on hydrocarbon exports. For the short term, food security can be guaranteed. However, on the longer term, the diminishing currency reserves combined with the effects of climate change puts the country at risk. The potential for sustainable agricultural development can contribute significantly to lower this risk.

EVENTS

ALGERIA – Introduction in Algeria of Dutch innovation Growboxx



In October a memorandum of understanding (MoU) has been signed by the World Food Program (WFP) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Directorate-Generale Forests (DGF). The aim is to implement a pilot of using the Growboxx water saving planting system in reforestation. Growboxx is a Dutch innovation that also allows planting in areas with water scarcity.

1,600 Growboxxes will be used in four pilot sites in the wilayas of Skikda, Adrar, Tindouf and Illizi for the planting of species such as the argan tree, the acacia and the Laperinne olive tree.

This initiative is part of the implementation of the country's forestry strategy 2030, which aims at the sustainable management of the forest heritage, the fight against deforestation, the mitigation of the effects of climate change and the preservation of soils and water resources.

ALGERIA - Studying possibilities for phytosanitary e-Cert system



In October, an online meeting was held within the framework of Dutch-Algerian phytosanitary cooperation, between NVWA and high-level representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Directorate-General of Customs from the Ministry of Finance.

The aim of this meeting was to present the "e-CertNL", a digitized phytosanitary certification system that could replace the paper certification process. The meeting also aimed at gaining insight on the current certification process in Algeria to better adapt the system to the needs of Algerian structures.

An interesting discussion took place around the presentations of NVWA on the e-CertNL system and the Dutch approach in pilot projects of cooperation. Stakeholders have shown an interest in collaborating on the E-Cert component, considering that the Algerian customs intend to switch soon to a "paperless" system.

NEWS

ALGERIA – Government focus on food processing



Following the historic collapse of crude oil prices, Algeria is considering exploring other horizons like agriculture in general, and the Saharan in particular, in order to move towards food self-sufficiency. Algeria aims to revive its agrarian sector, in partnership with foreign investors, to strengthen national agricultural and agro-industrial capacities. The government has already started working to implement crops, like that of sugar beet, generating raw materials used in the production of oil and sugar. The cultivation of cereals is also concerned.

Bank loans for agro-food projects can reach 90% of the overall value of the project. Thus, food industry and the transformation chain are on top priorities of the government agenda.

In fact, the main mission is the development of agro-industry. This means an intensification of production to develop agrifood processing. This also means that water resources will be heavily exploited. Therefore, the rational use of water for irrigation is also part of the government strategy.

Changed regulation for import of refurbished food processing lines



According to Executive Decree No. 20-312 of November 15, 2020, it is now possible to import refurbished production lines and equipment in Algeria, but conditions remain rigid. Customs clearance of this equipment is subject to prior authorization issued by the Ministry of Industry in the form of a decision. This authorization is intended to:

- Economic operators duly registered in the trade register, as part of the creation or extension of production capacity for goods and services,
- The applicant activity must be directly linked to that for which the production line or equipment is intended.
- In addition, the applicant must have and justify an appropriate infrastructure for the operation of the imported chain.

However, the benefit of the provisions of this decree excludes the import of equipment for transporting people and goods.

For the food processing industry, the major limitation is that production lines and equipment must not exceed ten (10) years of use in total and must be refurbished (renovated) in the last five (5) years before export. The refurbished production lines and equipment must undergo a certified renovation by a duly approved body.

Subsidies

Algerian government supports agricultural investments

Aiming to boost local production of agricultural products, the Algerian government offers several schemes for financial support that can be attractive for Algerian investors. This support is available in several sectors throughout the whole value chain, amongst others in the dairy and potato sector.

The form of this support varies from direct financial support in investments to guarantees in order for the investors to pay lower interest rates for bank loans. For example, investing in cold storage capacity is subsidized by 50%. In addition, the government gives premiums for the production of certain fresh produce, such as fresh milk per liter, or the storage of certain products, such seed potatoes per volume stored. The objective of rewarding storage of fresh produce is to being able to manage market prices.

For specific information on subsidies from the Algerian government for agricultural projects, you can contact the agricultural section of the Netherlands Embassy.



TUNISIA: Calls for training proposals and applications for scholarships

In the framework of the Orange Knowledge Programme, NUFFIC announced two calls that are also open for Tunisia:

Dutch institutions for secondary or higher vocational or academic education or other types of organisations that provide training courses, together with requesting organisations, such as education and training institutions, GOs, NGOs and SMEs can apply for funding for Tailor Made Trainings.

One of the themes for Tunisia is the creation of employment in agriculture. The maximum budget per proposal is 75.000 euro and the deadline for proposals is 21 January 11am (CET). More information on this call can be found [here](#).

Tunisian mid-career professionals can apply for Short Courses Scholarships (2-12 months) in the Netherlands, for more information, click [here](#). Deadline for applications is 5 January.

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