

Annual Report 2023



Georgian Farmers'
Association

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Chairperson's Statement

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2023, was the year of institutional development and growth for the Georgian Farmers' Association. Similar to previous years, In 2023, the Association continued to successfully undertake programs aimed at developing an agriculture industry and to empower each farmer.

I would like to highlight the development of initiatives across various strategic directions by our association, reflecting the considerable contributions from our esteemed donors. Such as, the project "Girl's Empowering for Socio-Economic Sustainability," which we implemented with the financial support of Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development, providing an opportunity for 10th, 11th, and 12th grade public school girls to increase their awareness regarding their fundamental rights, civil activism, early detection of violence, and career planning.

We have also supported the growth of agri-tech. The Georgian Farmers Association co-organized Hack Days Georgia 2023. The event featured a variety of events, including an ideathon, a hackathon, pre-acceleration, acceleration, and a demo day, and attracted 20 teams.

A separate track has been developed specifically for agri-tech inventions, and we have identified extraordinarily talented young individuals to whom we will provide support throughout the startup development process.

Notable steps that have been taken by the Georgian Farmers' Association toward approximation with the European Union are noteworthy. We launched a new three-year project - "Increased Agricultural Practices and Consumer Awareness", financed by European Neighborhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPRAD) phase four.

This significant project aims to enhance Georgia's socioeconomic development, increase the country's compliance with EU rules, increase the efficiency of the dairy and beekeeping sectors, and improve food safety standards and consumer rights protection systems.

Moreover, the association successfully managed several projects that enhanced the engagement of women, expanded the range of services, and produced a number of services that created greater opportunities for farmers.

The Farmers' Council, the primary consultative platform assigned with protecting the interests of farmers maintains an active operational presence. The council has commenced its duties in accordance with the recently formulated strategy and action plan, in addition to a restructured composition. The council is comprised of over twenty-five associations from the industry.



As a result, the Council convened more than ten meetings in 2023 and submitted to the sectoral ministry a proposal concerning a particular sectoral challenge. Furthermore, efforts were made to collaborate actively with the legislative body so that the concerns of farmers could be effectively voiced in significant decision-making processes.

Notably, the Georgian Farmers' Association was appointed as a chair of the sectoral skills organization "Agro Duo." The coordinating body of agricultural professional education, which commenced operations in 2019, has as its principal objectives the promotion of human capital development, the establishment of mechanisms to facilitate the enhancement of agricultural sector skills, and active engagement in defining and directing policies.

It would be remiss not to mention the Georgian Farmers' Association's important activities beyond Georgia's borders. Following Georgia's candidacy for EU membership, the association's active participation in international affairs and events organized by major international organizations became increasingly important. This involvement is critical in advocating for our country's pressing issues before decision-making bodies and across multiple platforms.

This year was the first time the Association had a representation at COP28, the United Nations Climate Change Conference—the only global decision-making arena on climate change issues—in which almost every nation participates.

We attended the G100 Women's Economic Forum and Copa Cogeca meetings, and we actively engaged in several key events and conferences as part of our projects. Additionally, we visited the Swedish Farmers' Association in order to gain valuable insights from their extensive experience and develop new services for our member farmers.

The Georgian Farmers' Association's Annual Report contains comprehensive details regarding these projects and other equally significant initiatives.

Nino Zambakhidze



About Georgian Farmers' Association

The Georgian Farmers' Association (GFA) is a non-commercial, non-for-profit legal entity, that was founded at the end of 2012. Currently, the Association unites about 5,000 farmers and agribusiness across Georgia. In compliance to the mandate adopted by its members, the Association acts as a facilitator between the government and farmers. GFA's actions and initiatives are implemented in accordance with its mandate and adopted by its members.

The association serves as an intermediary between the government and farmers, effectively collaborating with government agencies and actively participating in the formulation of Agricultural Development Strategy and Policy.

The Association is a privileged partner of COPA-COGECA (the Union of EU Farmers and Agri-cooperatives), an affiliated member of the World Farmers' Organization (WFO), and serves as the chair organization of the sectoral skills organization 'Agro Duo' (which is a member of the European Association of Institutes for Vocational Education - EVBB).

The Association is also a member of various governmental and non-governmental boards, including the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Civic Committee of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Scientific-Advisory Council of the Agrarian Issues Committee of the parliament, among others.

Mission

GFA's mission is to strengthen the agricultural sector in Georgia and improve quality of life of Georgian farmers through bringing the farmers together and promoting their visibility.

2023 Key Milestones

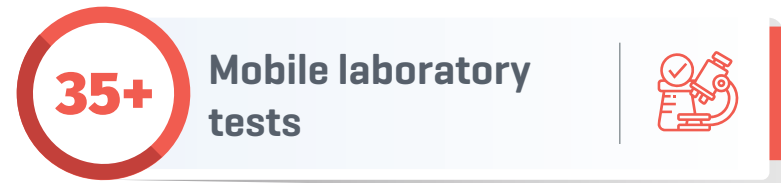
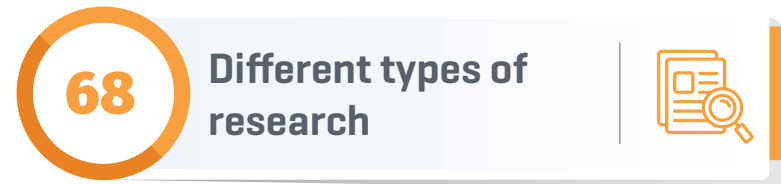
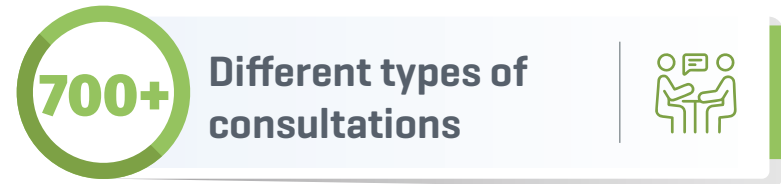
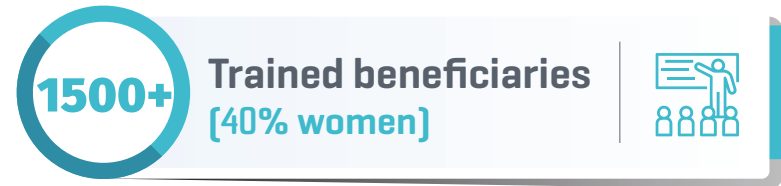
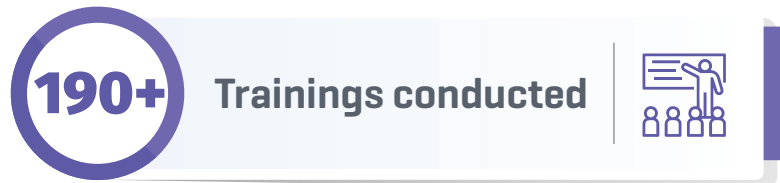
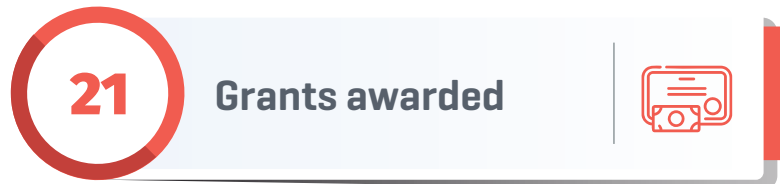
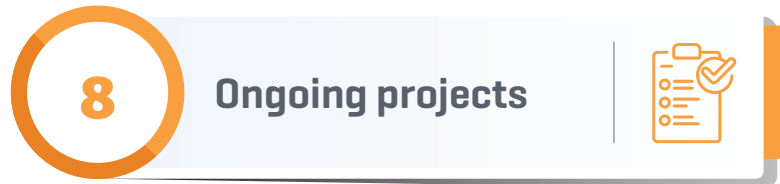
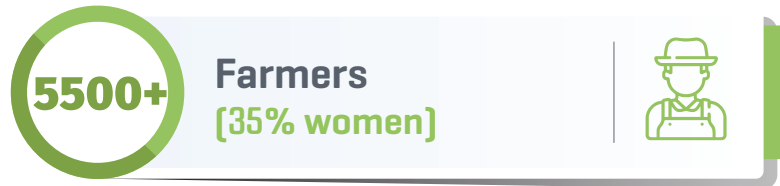
2023 was a year of capacity growth for the Georgian Farmers' Association. The organization actively worked to fulfill its objectives.

Organizational values



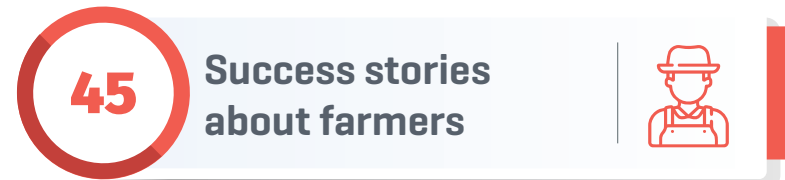
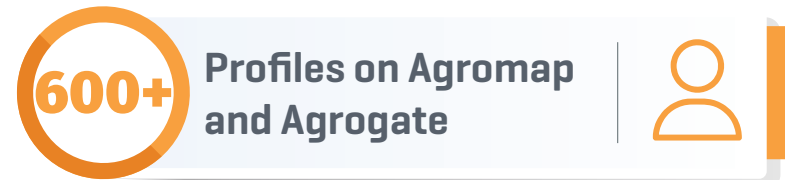
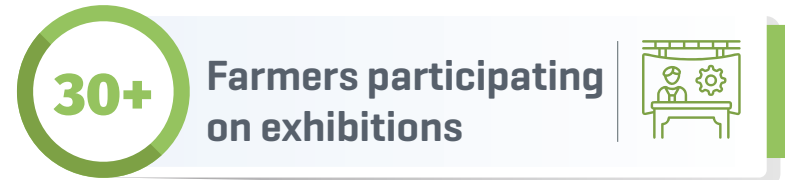
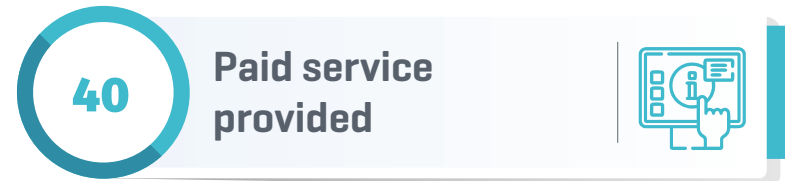
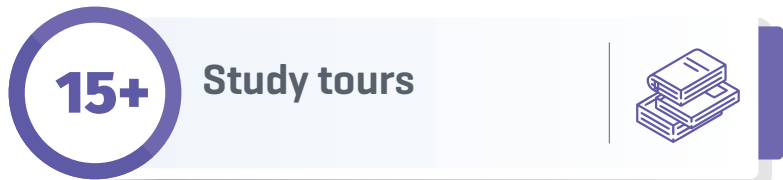
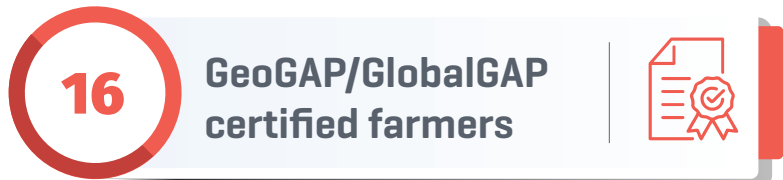
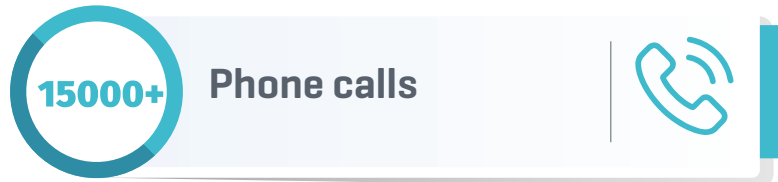
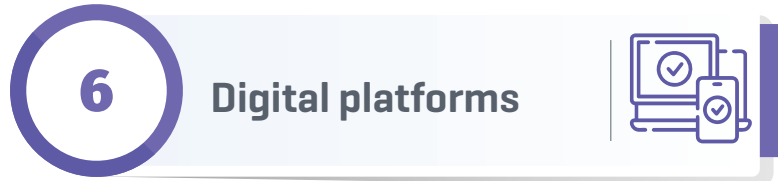
Results

2023



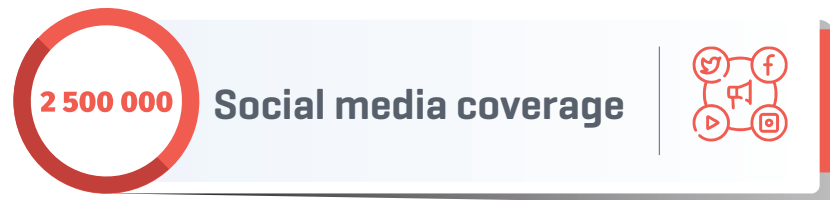
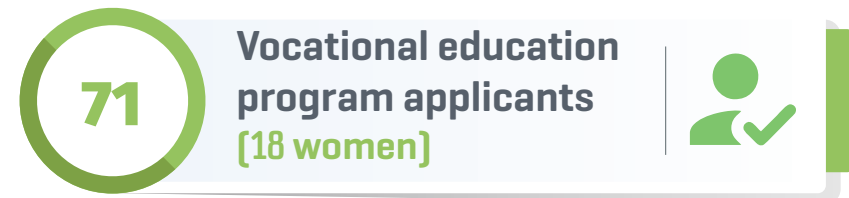
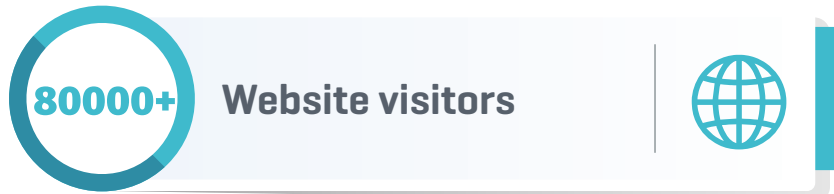
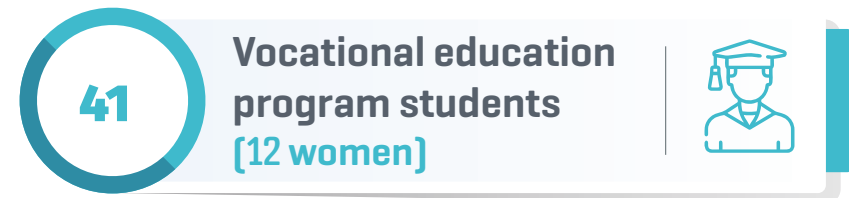
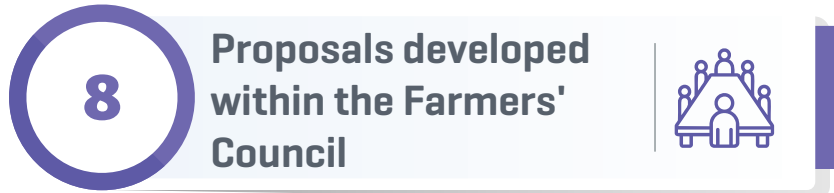
Results

2023



Results

2023



Farmers' Council



The Farmers' Council is the major consultation platform of the Georgian Farmers' Association, which enables greater protection of farmers' interests, their maximum involvement, and advocacy in the legislative processes of the agricultural sector.

The Farmers' Council is the main consultation platform of the Georgian Farmers' Association, which ensures better protection of farmers' interests, their maximum involvement and advocacy in the legislative processes of the agrarian sector. By combining its members' expertise and knowledge, the Council creates an opportunity to collectively identify agricultural problems in an efficient manner and actively deliver solutions to them.

The Council supports its member sectoral associations to regularly be involved in ongoing legal processes and seamlessly collaborate not only with each other but with public agencies, private sector and international organizations as well. Notably, in the statement submitted to Georgia's Parliament, the Farmers' Council's position condemning the "Russian law" was stated explicitly. The Farmers' Council conducted its annual summary meeting, during which implemented projects were discussed and the main plans for 2024 were set.

Significant Events

Hack Days Georgia 2023 was organized in collaboration with the Georgian Farmers Association

A large-scale technology event called Hack Days Georgia 2023 was held in Tbilisi for three days beginning September 29 and organized by the Georgian Farmers' Association, the Niko Kvaratskhelia Foundation, and Gagra Ventures.

The event featured a variety of events, including an ideathon, a hackathon, pre-acceleration, acceleration, and a demo day, and it attracted 20 participant teams.

During three days, participants demonstrated their knowledge, used their skills, and created several interesting technological startups. The top participants were announced as winners, and each received a share of the 30,000 USD prize fund provided by the Niko Kvaratskhelia

Foundation, Gagra Ventures, and Feedc. Participants at the event demonstrated their skills in agritech, artificial intelligence, consumer technologies, Web3, infrastructure, and video games.



“

It is of the utmost importance for the Georgian Farmers Association to foster the introduction and use modern technical solutions in agriculture. This event provided an excellent opportunity to highlight agritech as a separate track and identify the best agritech technology startup developed within the framework of Hack Days Georgia 2023.

Tamta Mamulaidze, Head of Agritech and Innovations Department of Georgian Farmers Association

The Nico Kvaratskhelia Prize was one of the highlights of Hack Days Georgia 2023, which was granted to the winners for the first time this year and will be awarded annually to Georgia's best of the best start-up tech entrepreneurs.

The Nico Kvaratskhelia Prize, founded by the Nico Foundation and Gagra Ventures, seeks to empower the most ambitious and bright young Georgians in the technology field. The Nikos Prize is an opportunity for technical businesses to receive a prize while also potentially attracting additional funding from worldwide venture capital firms.

Farmers' Day 2023

The event was attended by more than 200 guests from the government, legislative body, diplomatic corps, non-governmental, donor organizations, sectoral associations and farmers representing various industries. The Awardees included eleven successful farmers and agricultural businesses.

“ We had nine nominations, of which we had two special awards, and we hope that every year, similar to this year, we will be able to present entirely new faces.

Nino Zambakhidze, Chairwoman of the Georgian Farmers' Association



As for the nominations presented at the event

- 🌟 Revaz Beridze became The Farmer of The Year;
- 🌟 Export-Oriented Farmer of The Year – Irakli Khuturidze;
- 🌟 Agritourism Facility of The Year - Marianna Balasian, the owner of a family hotel in Samtskhe-Javakheti;
- 🌟 Corporate Social Responsibility Prize of Agribusiness was granted to Besarion Jangirashvili, who was nominated in the nomination for the production of dried fruit;
- 🌟 Education-Oriented Farmer of the year - Zurab Sadaterashvili;
- 🌟 Farmer of The Year Near the Occupation Line – Zuka Makharashvili;
- 🌟 Agritech Project of The Year – Zviad Mirianashvili, who was nominated for blueberry production.
- 🌟 Natia Ghurtskaya (Georgian and European Cheese producer and owner of livestock demonstration farm) became the Female Farmer Of The Year;
- 🌟 Giorgi Khitarishvili, (who uses climate-smart approaches in his farm to reduce environmental impact) became the winner of the “Nana Janashia Prize”.

A special award was designated for inmates who engage in agricultural pursuits and another special prize was awarded for the support of “Veli Store” farmers.

Farmers' Day has been celebrated in Georgia since 2015, the purpose of which is to appreciate the work and contribution of farmers in promoting, growth and sustainability of the agricultural sector.

The general supporter of the Farmer's Day was the Bank of Georgia, and the sponsors: Veli Store, Aldagi, Sante, Teliani Veli, Nikora, Soplidan.ge

Nino Zambakhidze was awarded with "Woman of the Decade" award.

Nino Zambakhidze, the Chairwoman of Georgian Farmers' Association, was awarded with the prestigious "Woman of the Decade" award at the G100 Women's Economic Forum held in London.

This award is for women leaders who are pioneers, leaders and empowering role models in their respective entrepreneurial and professional endeavors. With a distinctive voice and vision, their accomplishments energize inspiration and innovation in different walks of life. It is for those whose virtues and experience will motivate the following generation to strive for more effective leadership.

“Receiving the "Woman of the Decade" award is a significant and meaningful accomplishment for me, since it ranks among the most distinguished and prestigious awards I have received to date. Being named one of the world's top 100 most influential women is an inspiration and a responsibility, both personally and for the country.

Nino Zambakhidze, the Chairwoman of Georgian Farmers' Association

G100 is an influential group of 100 women leaders from across the world, including Nobel laureates, former heads of state, ministers, philanthropists, investors, entrepreneurs, corporate and community leaders. It is an empowered group of 100 women best leaders of 100 different sectors from across the world, Each of its members is a worldwide chair who oversees a specific sector wing.



**ნილო ზამბახიძე ქალთა
ეკონომიკური ფორუმზე
„ათწლეულის ქალად“ დასახილდა**

Within the G100 framework, Nino Zambakhidze participated in the Women's Economic Forum held in Rome

Nino Zambakhidze, Chairwoman of the Georgian Farmers' Association and the leader of the G100 Global Women Leaders in Farming, Agritourism, and Agritech, attended the Women's Economic Forum in Rome, Italy.

The Women's Economic Forum, attended by Italian President Sergio Mattarella and women leaders from around the world, addressed issues of equality, environmental protection and ecological sustainability, security, equal access to healthcare, and other topics, as well as agriculture and food security.

In 2021, Nino Zambakhidze became the first woman from Georgia to be elected as the global chair of G100's farming, agritourism, and agritech direction.

INCONTRO CON UNA DELEGAZIONE DI PARTECIPANTI AL "WOMEN ECONOMIC FORUM"



Europe Day 2023

Georgia has achieved remarkable accomplishment by being granted the status of EU membership candidate. For years, the Georgian Farmers' Association has been actively striving for rapprochement to Europe and sharing European expertise. In 2023, the Georgian Farmers' Association took part in the Europe Day celebration as part of a new three-year EU-funded initiative called "Increased Agricultural Practices and Consumer Awareness" (CAPCA). The program is implemented under the leadership of the Association.

See the address delivered by Nino Zambakhidze, the Chairwoman of the Georgian Farmers' Association, at the event dedicated to Europe Day.



The Georgian Farmers' Association attended the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 28)

The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 28) was held in Dubai, UAE, and Tamar Toria, Executive Director of the Georgian Farmers' Association, attended with the World Farmers' Organization team.

A delegation comprising over seventy representatives from the World Farmers' Organization gathered to advocate for the pivotal role that farmers play in tackling the urgent matter of the climate crisis and achieving the objectives outlined in the Paris Agreement.

More than two hundred non-governmental organizations signed the "Call to Action for Food Systems Transformation," in which the parties pledged to implement the priority actions required for the transformation of food systems and established unified, time-bound, and global objectives to be accomplished by COP29.



Additionally, Tamar Toria took part in the inaugural advocacy effort undertaken by the Farmers' Council to support farmers during COP28. As per request of the Farmers' Council, farmers are to be acknowledged in a global context and to be taken into account alongside other stakeholders in decision-making processes and pertinent texts.

Almost every nation on earth participates in the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP), the only forum dedicated to multilateral decision-making regarding climate change.

The Georgian Farmers' Association's attendance at COP28 was facilitated with the support of the Meridian Institute and the World Farmers' Organization.

Georgian Farmers' Association at the European and Central Asian Farmers' Forum

Rati Kochlamazashvili, the Deputy Chairman of the Georgian Farmers' Association, participated in the working sessions of the Farmers' Forum of European and Central Asian Countries, which was organized by the United Nations International Fund for Agriculture (IFAD). During these sessions, representatives from over ten countries and regional associations shared their perspectives on the involvement of farmers' associations in IFAD's activities and explored strategies to enhance engagement.

“

Participation in international forums is critical; at such events, solutions to various challenges are developed, agreed upon, and adopted. In addition to issues related to the coordinated work of associations under the IFAD umbrella, we discussed food security, the impact of the current geopolitical situation on the agricultural sector, increasing access to international programs, and other topics at the farmers' forum.

Rati Kochlamazashvili, Deputy Chairman of the Georgian Farmers' Association

The Georgian Farmers' Association has been working with IFAD for years, and small farmers, including young and female farmers are supported through this collaboration.



Enabling poor rural people to overcome poverty



The Georgian Farmers' Association was hosted by the Swedish Farmers Federation.

During the study visit, the Swedish colleagues shared their knowledge with the Georgian Farmers' Association team about organizational structure, governance, financing, farmer interests, advocacy, sustainable agriculture, education, and environmental issues.

"During the visit, the Swedish Farmers' Federation provided information to Georgian colleagues on the work of the regional office. In addition, industry experts and farmers gathered at the green industry hub #Vreta Kluster to discuss the 2030 Agenda for Agritech and Agri-Innovation.

The practical experience gained during a visit to Axel Lagerfelt and Birgitta Ulväng's farms in the cooperative #Lantmännen was valuable to the association team. At the conclusion of the study visit, an official meeting was held with representatives from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's (Sida) head office.



“
The Georgian Farmers' Association team's visit to Sweden, which was financed by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), proved to be highly productive. On behalf of the Georgian Farmers' Association, I'd like to thank the Swedish Farmers' Federation for hosting and sharing their experiences, as well as SIDA and the Swedish Embassy in Georgia for their assistance, which made this visit possible. We will put our newly acquired knowledge into practice, enriching our work even more.

Tamar Toria, Executive Director of the Georgian Farmers' Association

The farmers of Georgian Farmers' Association presented their produce at Bakuriani 2023

Farmers of the Georgian Farmers' Association from Samtskhe-Javakheti and adjacent regions championship village established in the frames of the 2023 World Championship of Freestyle ski, Snowboard and Freeski offering guests variety of Georgian products.

“
The Akhaltsikhe regional office of the Georgian Farmers' Association was actively involved in creating the most comfortable environment for our farmers and visibly presenting their products at the World Championship, in the special spaces set up in the championship village.

Valeri Gelashvili, Samtskhe-Javakheti Regional Coordinator

Every day, a special stand allowed visitors to sample and purchase delicious and healthy products produced by farmers.



Georgian Farmers' Association

"Digitalization of sectors for competition": a working meeting in Armenia

Tamta Mamulaidze, head of the Georgian Farmers' Association's Agritech and Innovations Department, attended a working meeting of the sectoral consulting group (tourism sector) titled "Digitalization of sectors for competition" on July 13-14 in Yerevan.

Tamta Mamulaidze gave a presentation about the Georgian Farmers' Association's digital direction and discussed the benefits of using modern information and communication (ICT) technologies in the agro-sector and agro-tourism, as well as the positive effects of digital transformation in the sector, at an international profile event attended by professionals from various countries working in the sector.

The event was supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) as part of the ongoing RECONOMY project, which is being carried out by the Swiss organization HELVETAS in collaboration with the Armenian organization "Strategic Development Agency - SDA".



Georgian Farmers' Association participated in the final conference of FinExCoop

At FinExCoop's final conference, Veronika Chkadua, a representative of the Georgian Farmers' Association, gave a presentation on cooperative development prospects. The final conference aimed to bring together key project achievements and successes, as well as discuss Georgian agriculture's future prospects in light of its EU candidate status.



The Georgian Farmers' Association became the winner of the "Stop Plastic Pollution" competition

To reduce plastic waste, the association identified and separated waste in the Tbilisi office, as well as trained employees on the office's green concept. In addition, the association replaced its water dispensers with disposable plastic cups, a stationary water filtration system, and reusable cups/bottles. The Georgian Farmers' Association intends to incorporate the green concept into regional offices as well.

The competition was organized by the Caucasian Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations Network (CENN), which included public, private, and non-governmental organizations.



Georgian Farmers' Association's participation in the United Nations conference

At the joint conference of the United Nations Association of Georgia (UNAG) and the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) titled "The Partnership for Impact Tbilisi Conference: from Blueprints to Breakthroughs," Tamar Toria, executive director of the Georgian Farmers' Association, steered the panel discussing the future of food products and the environment.

The invited panelists engaged in a dialogue format during the meeting to examine the opportunities and challenges in various sectors of Georgian agriculture, as well as the specific roles of the public and private sectors in addressing these challenges.

They also discussed climate-friendly approaches and the impact of climate change on food production, as well as the role of education and modern technologies in agriculture and the importance of youth involvement in the field.

The panel also highlighted the efforts of international donors and programs to support Georgian agriculture development.

Mariam Kodua, a young farmer from the Georgian Farmers' Association, attended the FAO-organized forum in Budapest

The event focused on youth involvement in agriculture. A panel discussion titled "Generational Change in Agriculture" was held at the forum, which was attended by nearly 60 representatives from 20 countries. A member of the Georgian Farmers' Association spoke about the role and needs of young people in agriculture, making the field attractive to young people.

Georgian Farmers' Association is a member of the World Farmers' Organization (WFO), which provides farmers with opportunities to participate in similar forums.



Georgian Farmers' Association at the Georgian-Dutch Business Forum

At the Georgian-Dutch business forum, Tamar Toria, the executive director of the Georgian Farmers' Association, introduced to the Dutch investors the potential for investment in the agricultural sector.

In consideration of potential future collaboration, Tamar Toria addressed the business forum on two topics: the future of seed potato production and agrogate.world, the first agritourism online platform developed by the association. European Union-Georgia Business Council (EUGBC) was the organization of the Georgian-Dutch Business Forum.



Webster University Georgia organized a panel discussion - Untold Stories: Women in Leadership

During the discussion, successful women from many areas discussed the barriers or hurdles they experienced in their jobs merely because they are women.

Nino Zambakhidze, Chairwoman of the Georgian Farmers' Association, recalls that when she initially started in business, there were hardly any women. She also overcame countless failed attempts to get to where she is now, with her efforts constantly rejected and disregarded. However, she overcame all "no"s and achieved her goal.



Georgian Farmers' Association

Presentation “ Georgian Agriculture: transformation and Development Trends of the last decade” held at parliament.

The publication “Georgian Agriculture: Transformation and Development Trends of the Last Decade” was held at the Parliament of Georgia, organized by the Agrarian Issues committee.

Representatives from the government, relevant non-governmental organizations, associations, and scientific circles, as well as diplomats and experts in the field, attended the event. During the conference, a panel discussion was held, where the Chairman of the Georgian Farmers' Association, Nino Zambakhidze, delivered a speech about the development trends in the agricultural sector.



“The first important factor that we should emphasize is the lack of mechanization. While discussing developed agriculture, hectare yields, and the prospects for introducing current technology, the country should have adequate mechanization to allow agricultural areas to be cultivated.

Furthermore, the issue of limited access to modern education and technologies remains problematic. We rarely use advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence. As a result, it is more valuable to discuss the mistakes before we began agricultural development. The potential here is truly remarkable. While acknowledging the achievements of the efforts so far, I believe that further development and refinement are necessary.

Nino Zambakhidze, Chairwoman of Georgian Farmers' Association

Project (BioValue): Visit of Georgian Farmers' Association representatives to Germany

Certification specialist and project coordinator of the Georgian Farmers' Association, Iliia Kunchulia went on a working visit to Germany as part of the "BioValue" project. ((BioValue) supports sustainability through biodiverse agri-food value chains, and a simulation tool based on the farm-to fork concept). The project's implementing parties summarized the results of the previous 9 months and discussed future plans.

The project “BioValue” is financed by European Union in the frames of research and innovations program “Horizon 2020” and is being implemented in 12 countries, by 17 organizations including Georgian Farmers' Association. The project's goal is to introduce underutilized, genetically rich crops into the value chain, hence contributing to increased biodiversity.

Project (BioValue): Visit of Georgian Farmers' Association representatives to Norway

Tamar Toria, Executive Director of the Georgian Farmers' Association, Financial Manager **Kakhi Jashi**, and **Ilia Kunchulia**, Certification Specialist and Project Coordinator, were on a working visit to Oslo, Norway, as part of the "BioValue" initiative. (BioValue) supports sustainability through biodiverse agri-food value chains, and a simulation tool based on the farm-to fork concept).

Within the framework of the working meeting, the project's implementers discussed the results of the previous 18 months and exchanged information about future plans.

The project "BioValue" is financed by European Union in the frames of research and innovations program "Horizon 2020" and is being implemented in 12 countries, by 17 organizations including Georgian Farmers' Association



Member of the Georgian Farmers' Association team member Ilia Kunchulia, received an honorary certificate named after Academician Tengiz (Gizo) Urushadze.

The award ceremony was held at the event celebrating the World Soil Day. The United Nations has marked International Soil Day since 2013, with the goal of raising public awareness about the importance of soil for ecosystem sustainability and food security. On the initiative of Georgia's Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, honorary certificates named after academician Tengiz (Gizo) Urushadze, one of the founders of the Georgian School of Soil Science, will be awarded to successful agricultural professionals beginning in 2022.

Women involvement in the activities of the Association

Georgian Farmers' Association places a great emphasis on maintaining gender equality in all of its operations and increasing women's participation. According to the data from the third quarter of 2023, women's participation in all aspects of the association's operations has substantially increased.

Activity Title	%	Female	Male	Total
GFA Gender Representation				
Female board members	43%	3	4	7
GFA member farmers	35%	1925	3575	5500
Female staff members	49%	28	29	57
Service contracted females	91%	11	1	12
Female heads of the departments	33%	5	10	15
Environmental working group female members	50%	5	5	10
Agritourism enterprises presented on agrogate.world led by women	49%	72	74	146
Number of vocational education program students	29%	12	29	41
Number of registered applicants on vocational education programs	25%	18	53	71
Number of vocational training participant students	40%	24	36	60
Training and seminar participants	40%	24	36	60
Provision of micro grant within "Dairy Modernization and Market Access" Project	18%	2	9	11
Proven cases of artificial insemination within "Dairy Modernization and Market Access" Project	25%	218	644	862

Partnerships with international organizations - sectoral projects

Project - Capacitated Agricultural Practices and Consumer Awareness (CAPCA)



ევროკავშირი საქართველოსთვის



Georgian Farmers' Association organized a series of dairy farming training sessions for farmers from various regions of Georgia

The trainings were held in the municipalities of Kakheti and Imereti regions as part of the "Capacitated Agricultural Practices and Consumer Awareness (CAPCA)" project, and they aimed to raise farmers' awareness in three main areas:

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) - farm management, animal welfare, and nutrition; health, safety, and environmental (HSE) concerns; GeoGap standards, and occupational safety requirements.

Farmers who attended the program received practical assistance along with theoretical knowledge, and they learned about the project's activities and the principles of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with the European Union.

The project is funded through the fourth phase (ENPARD IV) of the European Union's "European Neighborhood Program for Agriculture and Rural Development" (ENPARD - Georgia) and is being implemented by Georgian Farmers' Association (lead organization), the Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia (CSR DG), and Beekeepers Association of Georgian Mountainous Regions (Ambrolauri District).

The Georgian Farmers' Association (GFA) convened the first meeting of the multi-sector communication platform as part of the "Capacitated Agricultural Practices and Consumer Awareness (CAPCA)" project



The goal of the extended discussion was to inform and advocate for various sectors about the food safety concerns that exist in the dairy and beekeeping sectors, which are the project's target sectors.

The field representatives reviewed Georgia-EU trade relations, problems, and potential, as well as the findings of the project-funded research on consumer rights and driving elements of farmer behavior.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA) delivered a presentation on the concept of developing agro-laboratories, followed by a discussion on how to overcome the problems associated with this topic.

The project is funded through the fourth phase (ENPARD IV) of the European Union's "European Neighborhood Program for Agriculture and Rural Development" (ENPARD - Georgia) and is being implemented by Georgian Farmers' Association (lead organization), the Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia (CSR DG), and Beekeepers Association of Georgian Mountainous Regions (Ambrolauri District).





GEORGIA SAFETY AND QUALITY INVESTMENT IN LIVESTOCK (SQIL) | ოცნებისა და ხარისხის უზრუნველყოფის პროგრამა



USDA Food for Progress SQIL

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Food for Progress Safety and Quality Investment in Livestock (USDA Food for Progress SQIL) project implemented by Land O'Lakes Venture37 in partnership with the Georgian Farmers' Association aims at improving productivity and trade in the beef and dairy market systems in Georgia.

The annual event was held for local primary production standard GeoGAP, the Georgian Farmers' Association, as part of the USDA Food for Progress SQIL project.

During the framework of the event, 16 dairy farms received the Geo GAP certification. GeoGap is designed to address both primary production and the needs of local dairy producers and regulations. The possession of the Geo GAP standard by farms signifies a advancement in fulfilling the fundamental production requirements set forth by global standards.

In 2021, GeoGAP's dairy module was launched as part of the USDA Food for Progress SQIL project of the United States Department of Agriculture.

The Georgian Farmers' Association is a co-implementer of the ENPARD IV project, through which the initiative to introduce the GeoGap standard will be expanded to a larger scale beginning the following year.



Cattle Expo 2023

With the financial support of the United States Department of Agriculture, Cattle Expo 2023 was organized by the Swiss Agrarian School Caucasus and the Animal Breeders Association of Georgia within the project of USDA Food for Progress SQIL.

The primary objectives of the Livestock Expo are to foster the growth of farmers' technical expertise and infrastructure, increase trade potential, and promote the local production of cattle milk and meat products. Additionally, to connect and introduce specialists with farmers engaged in the field.

The Minister of Environment and Agriculture of Georgia, Otar Shamugia, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Georgia, Robin Dennigan, the Director of the Georgian Animal Breeders Association of Georgia – Giorgi Khatiashvili, Tamar Toria - the Executive Director of the Georgian Farmers' Association, and Alex Samel, the Director of the USDA SQIL Project, all delivered addresses to the invited guests of Cattle Expo 2023.



Training for Veterinarians and Vet-Technicians

ABS International experts from Great Britain held a series of trainings from November 6 to 10, 2023. This comprised of one seminar and four practical trainings in artificial insemination with sex-differentiated sperm, which were held throughout Georgia.

More than 70 veterinarians and veterinary technicians attended the trainings and seminars, which will prepare trained specialists to successfully perform artificial insemination with sex-differentiated sperm in the future.



Presentation of Research findings on Dairy Cooperatives

The findings and recommendations presented in the research report on dairy cooperatives were evaluated during the event organized by the project. Representatives from the government, international and non-governmental sectors were present.



Project "Cheese Route"

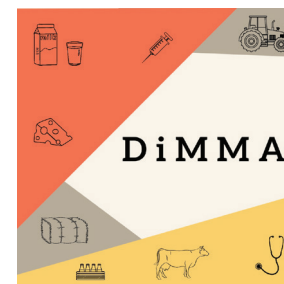
The "Cheese Route" initiative's final event, on November 22, featured the presentation of the "Cheese Route" map and digital platform, which were funded by the project.

Representatives of the business sector, several relevant state agencies, and international donor organizations were present at the event. The event also covered a review of significant project accomplishments, such as the demonstration website and digital application that were developed with the assistance of the USDA SQIL project.



Dairy Modernization and Market Access State Program (DiMMA)

The project, which ran from 2021 to 2023, aimed to improve the capacities of dairy industry representatives in four Georgian regions (Samtskhe-Javakheti, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Racha-Lechkhumi-Kvemo Svaneti, and Imereti). The following are some of the project's significant outcomes:



Demonstration Farms

137 demonstration models were arranged on 70 farms, with the following distribution:

Demonstration Model Number	Name of the Demonstration Model	Number of Demonstration models
1	Milk management and milk hygiene	55
2	Animal health and welfare	37
3	Animal feed production	41
4	Conservation of animal feed	4
Total		137

On -filed Trainings

122 technical on-field trainings on demonstration models were conducted on the premises of demonstration farms established within the project, with the following distribution:

Demonstration Model Number	Name of the Demonstration Model	Number of Demonstration models
1	Milk management and milk hygiene	47
2	Animal health and welfare	36
3	Animal feed production	35
4	Conservation of animal feed	4
Total		122

1684 farmers completed the aforementioned trainings, of which 897 are unique farmers.



Classroom Trainings

Throughout the project, 14 classroom trainings were held, including 8 business and management trainings (142 people trained), 5 gender trainings (57 people trained), and one artificial insemination specialist training (with 9 participants).

Exchange Visits

During the project, 5 exchange/study visits were carried out, with 60 farmers, including 18 women, participating.

Artificial Insemination

The intensive artificial insemination campaign resulted in 3,243 confirmed pregnancies in the project's target areas.

Dairy Platforms Creation

Five dairy platforms were established in four target regions, including two in Samtskhe-Javakheti. Meetings were held for each platform, and the main challenges and opportunities that the dairy industry faces in the area covered by this platform were discussed.

Project "Empowering girls for socio-economic sustainability"

A series of trainings were held in the Kakheti region as part of the "Empowering girls for socio-economic sustainability" project

The goal of the trainings was to raise awareness among girls in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades of secondary schools about their fundamental rights, civil activism, early detection of violence, and career planning. The project included four municipalities in Kakheti: Telavi, Sagarejo, Dedoplistskaro, and Gurjaani.

At the final stage of the project, the Georgian Farmers' Association held an award ceremony for the schoolgirls who participated in the trainings at the Dome of Stamba Hotel, which was attended by representatives from the Georgian and Canadian governments.

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With the support of Canada, the Georgian Farmers' Association is implementing a 6-month project that provides schoolgirls living in Kakheti municipalities with a unique opportunity to receive information from professionals on an array of important issues, which will assist them significantly in the process of planning their lives and future careers.

Tamta Mamulaidze, Project Manager Head of Agritech and Innovations Department of Georgian Farmers' Association.

A series of thematic trainings were held as part of the Georgian Farmers' Association's "Empowering girls for socio-economic sustainability" project, which was funded by the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development.

Promoting sustainable agritourism development in Georgia and Armenia" Project

FACILITATING SUSTAINABLE AGRITOURISM IN GEORGIA AND ARMENIA



Georgian Farmers' Association is implementing the project with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Economic Development, Governance and Entrepreneurship Growth Program (EDGE).

The project envisages identification of 20 small and medium-sized entrepreneurs working in the field of agritourism in Georgia and Armenia and Conducting coaching sessions to enhance their capabilities. Also organizing study tour of representatives of Armenian agritourism facilities in Georgia and helping selected agritourism sites in the process of creating a logo and brand manual. The project also entails Armenian translation of a video manual for using the Agrogate - the first agritourism online platform in South Caucasus.

The Georgian Farmers' Association hosted entrepreneurs involved in the agritourism sector in Armenia as part of the project "Promoting the development of sustainable agritourism in Georgia and Armenia". The educational visit, which took place in the Kakheti region on October 25-27, aimed to visit agritourism facilities and share experiences.

Armenian entrepreneurs had the opportunity to learn about their Georgian colleagues' activities and hospitality services provided, such as: local product production, tasting, adventure tours, and accommodation.



Project „Finance Accessibility for rural SMEs”

The project aims to support beneficiaries in growing their businesses through need-based services, investment financing, and the implementation of revenue-focused business models.

The project supports farmers working in the livestock, dairy products, and honey production in three Georgian regions (Kakheti, Samegrelo, and Samtskhe-Javakheti).

The goals of the project are:

To increase the awareness of representatives of small and medium-sized businesses regarding access to financing; improve their performance by developing sustainable financial and accounting models; and facilitate financial service providers by developing and implementing farmer-specific services.

Georgian Farmers' Association held meetings in the project's target regions, identifying opportunities for cooperation between farmers and financial service providers and issued relevant recommendations.

Georgian Farmer's Association is implementing the project “Finance Accessibility for SMEs” in partnership with Rural SME's Development (RSMED) Project. The project is funded by the Swiss Cooperation Agency, it is implemented by a consortium led by the Swiss Foundation for Technical Cooperation (Swisscontact), Mercy Corps, and the Springfield Centre for business in development.

Project “Cattle farming in Georgia: Towards increased productivity, competitiveness, and sustainability”

The Georgian Farmers' Association organized trainings and educational visits for cattle farmers on various topics across the country as part of the project's framework. The farmers were trained on topics such as cattle breeding as a business, assessment and analysis of existing activities, development of existing activities, business idea generation, and access to finance.

Farmers received individual consultations during the study visits, and books about cattle breeding were delivered. They also joined the Georgian Farmers' Association and will regularly receive updates on the association's activities.

During the study tours, the farmers also visited cattle farms and learned about current practices on the ground. Meetings were also held with farmers and cattle industry representatives from several towns to create new connections, share experiences, and learn about field innovations.

Tusheti Protected Landscape, Aragvi Community Development, and Khulo local development groups collaborated with the Georgian Farmers' Association to organize regional study tours.

The project “Cattle farming in Georgia: Towards increased productivity, competitiveness, and sustainability” is implemented by Caritas of the Czech Republic with the financial support of the Czech Development Agency.



Agri Services For Farmers



In 2023, more than 40 paid services were provided, including the GlobalGap standard for three farmers and one cooperative. In addition, on the joint initiative of the Georgian Farmers' Association and the Bank of Georgia, two regional meetings were held in Zugdidi and Kutaisi in 2023, during which both the association's employees and other agricultural experts discussed with participants the benefits of incorporating modern technological tools in agribusiness and how to make the best use of opportunities in this direction.

The meeting's goal was to increase production volume and business development through agrimanagement, with a focus on modern agriculture and technological solutions based on that concept, as well as various innovative services, such as the Georgian Farmers' Association's satellite monitoring system.

The Georgian Farmers' Association successfully concluded the Potato Producers Network (PPN) operations, which included the production of 12,000 potato seedlings in Marneuli, Maradis, and the planting of potatoes on a 0.5-hectare demonstration plot in Atskuri.

Certification (GlobalGAP)

The Georgian Farmer's Association's Department of Agronomy and Certification conducted consulting services in the regions of Guria and Imereti in 2023 for four blueberry producing companies regarding the implementation and revision of the GlobalGAP and Grasp standard.

Over 200 permanent and seasonal employees of the enterprises received training and instruction, and exemplary agricultural practices were applied to a total area of over 80 hectares.

Over twenty laboratory analyses were conducted on samples of water, soil, and blueberries. A company conducted compliance assessment audits, which led to the awarding of GlobalGAP version 5.2 certifications to three blueberry producing companies in the Imereti region and the renewal of the GlobalGAP version 5.4 and GRASP certificates by one company in Guria.

The Georgian Farmers' Association places significant emphasis on the promotion and diversification of export markets. A key measure towards achieving this objective is the acquisition of the GlobalGAP certification. The auditors performed the assessments under the supervision of the certification firm SGS. Through their technical assistance initiatives, the USAID Agriculture and Rural Development Agency assisted the farmers in their efforts.

The department additionally organized four introductory meetings of Geogap in the regions of Kakheti, Samegrelo, Samtskhe-Javakheti, and Kvemo Kartli with the goal of promoting the local standard.

Climate-Smart Agriculture



Agrometeorological services

The Georgian Farmers' Association is an active participant in initiatives aimed at advancing climate-smart and precision agriculture. Georgia is a member of the Agrometeorological and Climate-smart Agriculture Working Group (GECSA).

In the future, it is planned to provide agrometeorological data interpretation services in the framework of integrated crop protection (IPM), which refers to the transformation of information into specific agricultural operations such as irrigation, fertilizer application, and plant protection products.

Satellite Services

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16 farmers constituted the entire number of satellite service users as of the end of 2023. Satellite coverage extends to an area of 800 hectares of agricultural land. Cooperation was also established with a large association of nut growers. Farmers who utilize the satellite system cover all significant horticultural areas.

Furthermore, the projecting component consistently employs the satellite monitoring service to oversee a multitude of demonstration plots. Furthermore, producers were granted access to five years of weather data and three productivity maps processed via the satellite monitoring platform.

Demonstration Plots

Throughout the year 2023, department representatives actively participated in demonstration activities and instructed farmers on seed potato production technologies and methods to reduce fertilizer losses.

In 2023, the potato cooperative began producing potato seedlings in Marneuli, namely in the village of Maradis. In June, 12,000 ready seedlings were transferred to Atskuri's potato demonstration plot and planted there. The harvest obtained in October was stored and prepared for planting the next year.

Consultations and Trainings

In 2023, 13 trainings on agricultural crop production were held. Throughout the year, weekly consultations were held for both member and non-member farmers. A fertilizer scheme has been devised to cover the major agricultural crops both in the open field and in greenhouses.

Livestock Sector

Within the framework of the USDA SQIL project, the farmers' association actively worked towards the implementation of the GeoGAP standard in dairy farms, and as a result, an agreement was signed with 30 farmers, who received the help of a technical team to implement the requirements of the standard, conducted a water laboratory study, research on cattle brucellosis, and were given a mastitis diagnostic tool, for their future use.

Contracted farmers also received the services of a labor safety professional, who visited each farm and created labor safety documentation on an individual basis.

Environment Protection

The Environmental Protection and Climate Change Working Group of the Association underwent a reorganization and implemented structural modifications in early 2023.

The group members initiated proactive efforts to promote compliance with the green office concept and implement environmentally favorable practices in the organization's offices. Additionally, they made an effort to inform member farmers and project beneficiaries about these initiatives. They participated in several significant climate change and environmental protection processes in the country, including the development of the climate change strategy and action plan, the Georgia national energy and climate plan, and others.

Occupational Safety Manual

Significant importance was placed on labor safety requirements, both those specified by the government and those outlined in the GeoGAP standard. As a result, a labor safety manual was compiled and published in 2023 with the intention of educating farmers about this matter. It will be disseminated to farmers who express interest in the subject.

Vocational Education

One of the association's top priorities is the support and implementation of educational projects and initiatives; therefore, its team continuously works to grow and increase the availability of such programs.

Registration of sectoral skills organization Agro Duo



To register "Agro Duo" as a sectoral organization, a procedure was established to accept applications from agrarian sector organizations following predetermined standards.

Agro Duo is an organization with membership whose objectives are to:

Creation of effective skills ecosystem in Agrarian sector.

Determination and administration of skills policy in the agricultural sector;

Solving the problem of scarcity of qualified human resources in the agrarian sector and promoting the growth of human capital;

Sustainable development of the agricultural sector.

Twelve sectoral associations, one cooperative, and three private corporations have become "Agro Duo" members.

Development of vocational education standards

One crucial role of the sectoral skills organization 'Agro Duo' involves crafting vocational education standards that align with the dynamic requirements of the labor market. The Agro Duo working group has identified specific sub-sectors whose educational standards require periodic review. In line with the collective decision of Agro Duo's members, prioritized attention has been directed towards the development and update of educational standards for aquaculture and beekeeping.

The initiative is carried out by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the United Nations Development Programme, with the involvement of the Vocational Skills Agency.

Agro Duo is a member of the European Association of Institutes for Vocational Education (EVBB).



The Georgian Farmers' Association hosted its Swiss agricultural vocational education partners at their regional headquarters in Kakheti.

During the visit, the visitors received detailed information about the activities of the farmers' association and the state of the agrifood industry. Simultaneously, the college's management delivered a presentation to the Swiss guests about the educational programs at the 'Prestige' college, which serves as the Kakheti regional office of the Georgian Farmers' Association.



The parties also expressed their willingness for future collaboration in the form of exchanging vocational education information and expertise.

Memorandums of cooperation with regional educational institutions

The memorandums concluded with educational institutions in the Kakheti and Samtskhe-Javakheti regions will grant students the opportunity to engage in the association's internship program, practical training, and diverse activities. Such opportunities will significantly contribute to the advancement of their professional development.

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The Georgian Farmers' Association consistently places significant emphasis on fostering collaboration with diverse higher and professional institutions. We firmly believe that such a collaborative framework enriches the educational experience for aspiring individuals in agricultural management, equipping them with a blend of theoretical understanding and practical skills. This, we believe, will ultimately address the pressing shortage of qualified personnel in the field, a challenge we currently face.

Rati Kochlamazashvili, the Deputy Chairman of the Georgian Farmers' Association.

The Georgia Farmers' Association undertook a number of significant studies in 2023 with the objective of evaluating the present state and challenges in the agricultural sector. On the initiative of the association and at the request of donors, the following studies were undertaken:

Action plans were designed for the breeding of high-yielding beef and dairy cattle, as well as the improvement of existing breeds, the use of manure as fertilizer, and land/soil preservation methods in Georgia.

Analytical review of foreign trade in agrifood items;

A farm budgeting initiative was conducted, which resulted in budgeting reports for 50 different crops.

Agritech-related research was done with the objective of studying the extent of usage of contemporary technology in agriculture and assessing the relevant capabilities of agribusiness.

Conducted a value chain analysis of Georgia's non-timber forest products (NTFP) sector.

The research project "The role of research and educational systems in improving the sustainability and productivity of agricultural activities" was carried out.

A blog about blueberry production was created, which covers information about blueberry production in Georgia, state support programs, sales marketplaces, export potential, and readers' recommendations.

A farmer survey was carried out to assess the process of systematic land registration.

A document was developed that assessed access to financing in agriculture.

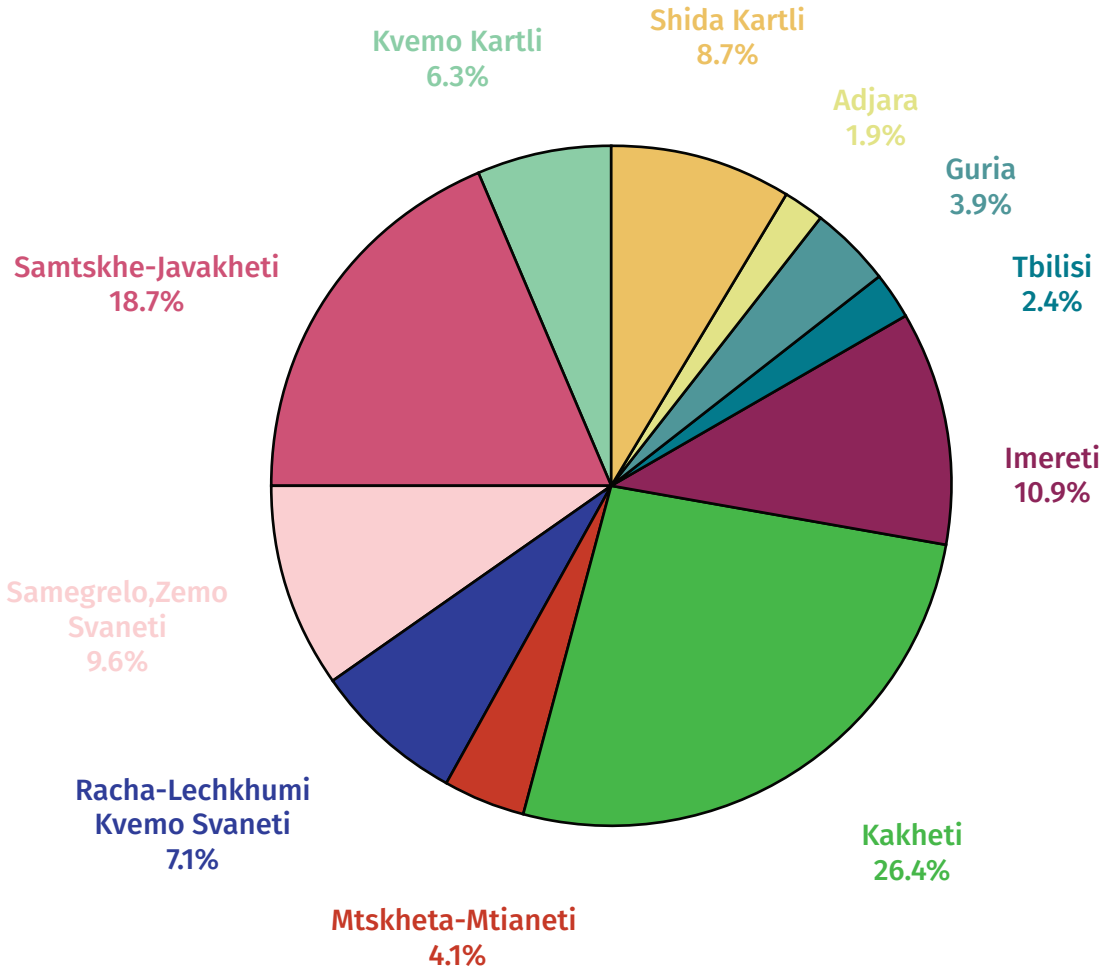
Every month, the analytical and research team publishes a publication that reviews the dynamics of the market prices of products in the livestock industry (prices of 27 names of milk and meat raw materials, products, and services) during the corresponding month, across Tbilisi and the administrative centers of 10 regions of Georgia.

The association team created an analytical paper on the agricultural sector that incorporates results from desk and field research..

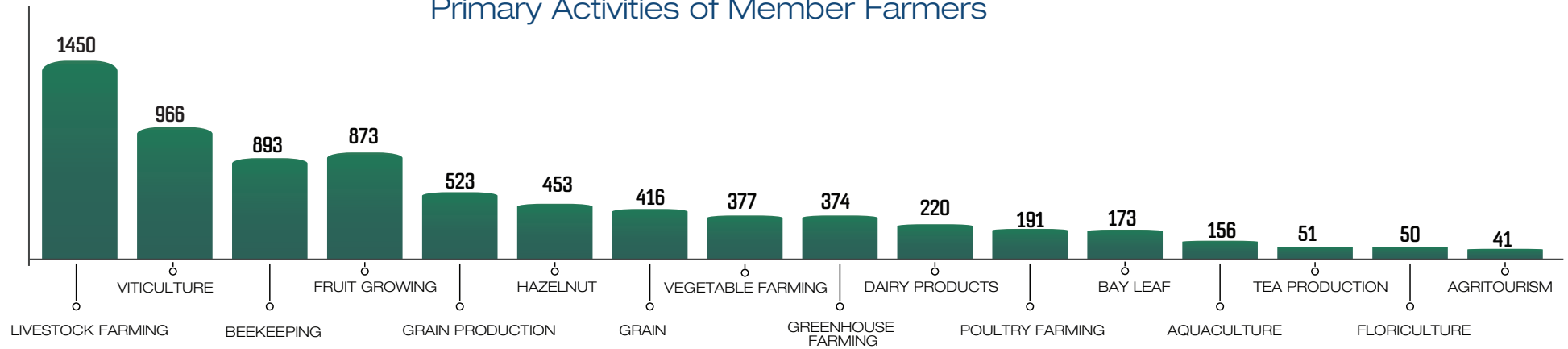
Visual Data

As of 2023, the Georgia Farmers' Association encompasses up to 5,000 members, with about 4,800 of them being independent members. In addition, the organization has 26 industry associations and 121 associate members. Associate members include businesses (mainly limited liability companies) and business support organizations/associations.

The chart illustrates the regional distribution of individual members of Georgian Farmers' Association. Individual members come from the following regions: Kakheti 26.4%, Samtskhe Javakheti 18.7%, and Imereti 10.9%.



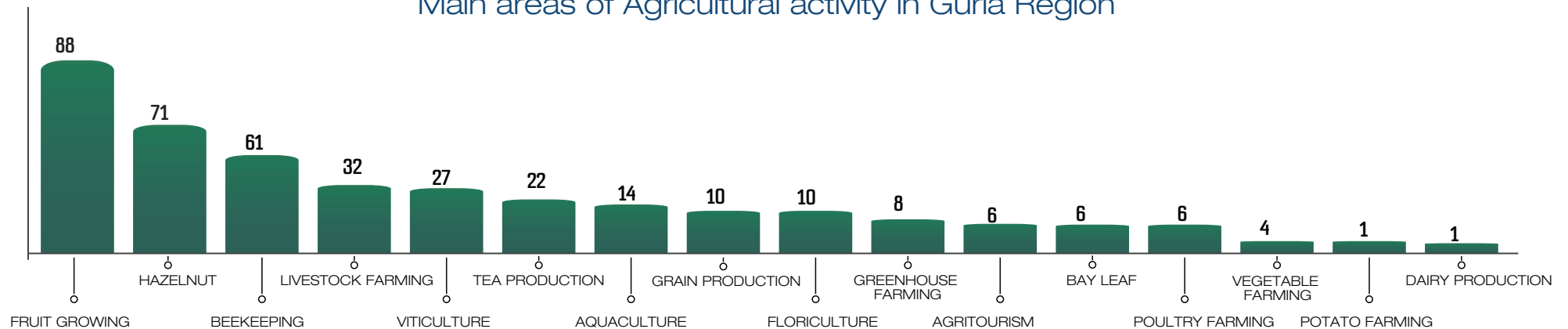
Primary Activities of Member Farmers



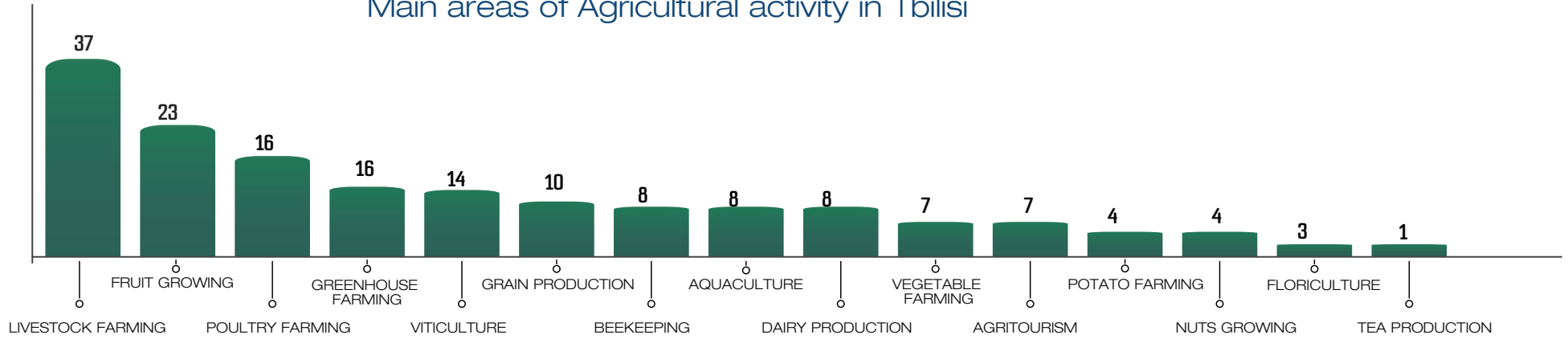
It should be emphasized that farmers frequently engage in diverse farming. For example, a farmer who has livestock also grows potatoes and produces honey. According to the chart, 1,450 (or 30%) of the 4,894 farmers work in livestock management, viticulture comes next, and after that comes beekeeping, fruit growing, and grain production.

The following are the main areas of activity of individual member farmers per region.

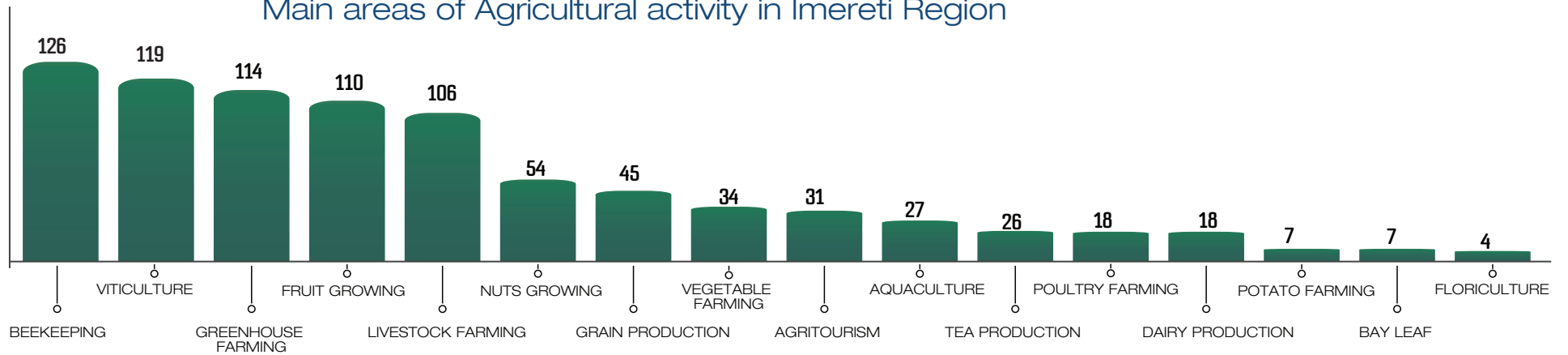
Main areas of Agricultural activity in Guria Region



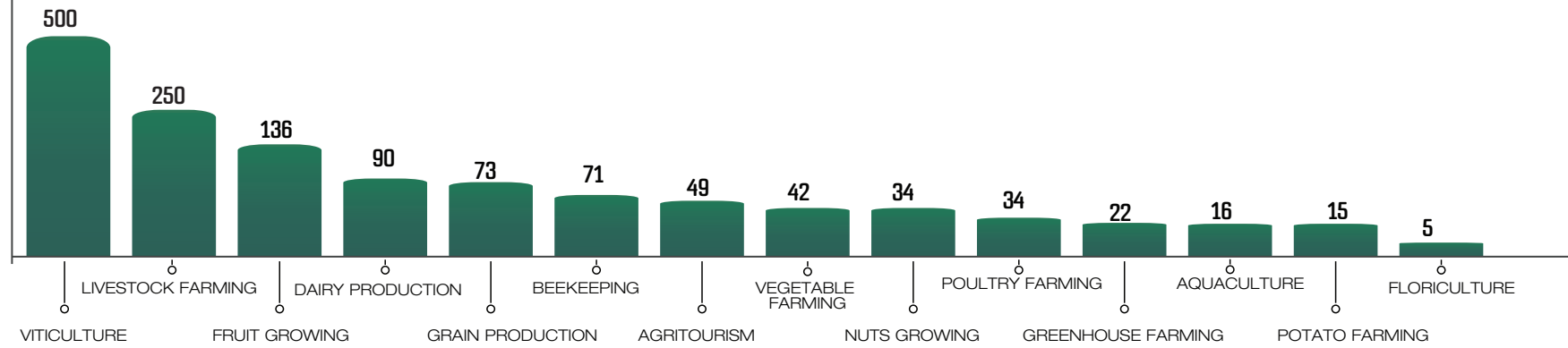
Main areas of Agricultural activity in Tbilisi



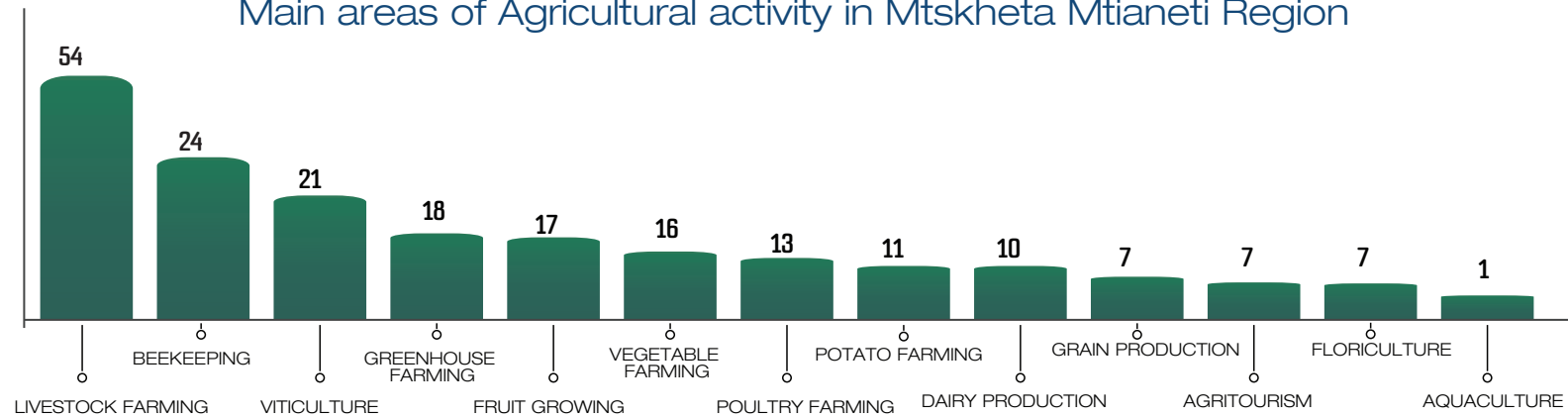
Main areas of Agricultural activity in Imereti Region



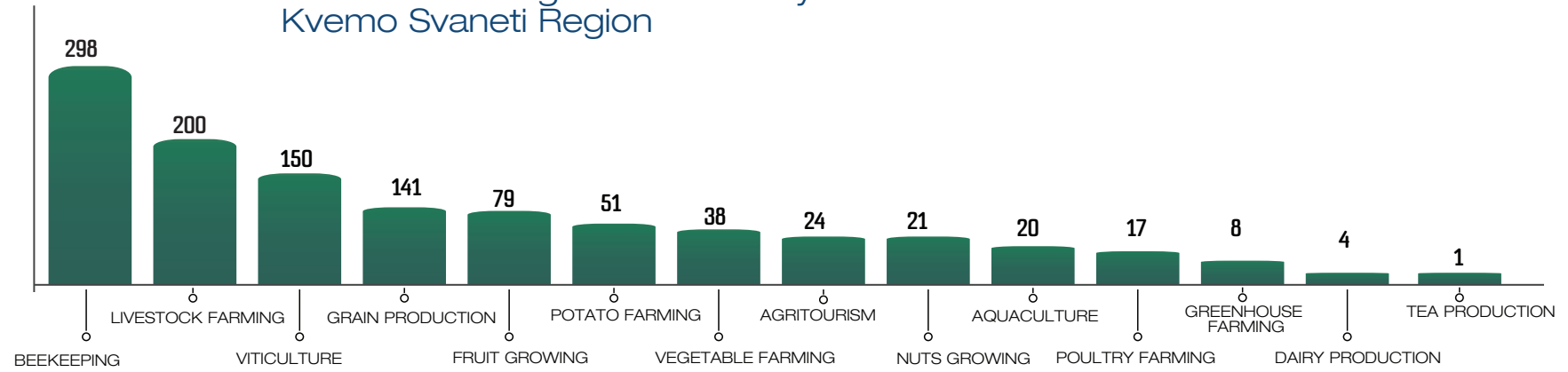
Main areas of Agricultural activity in Kakheti Region



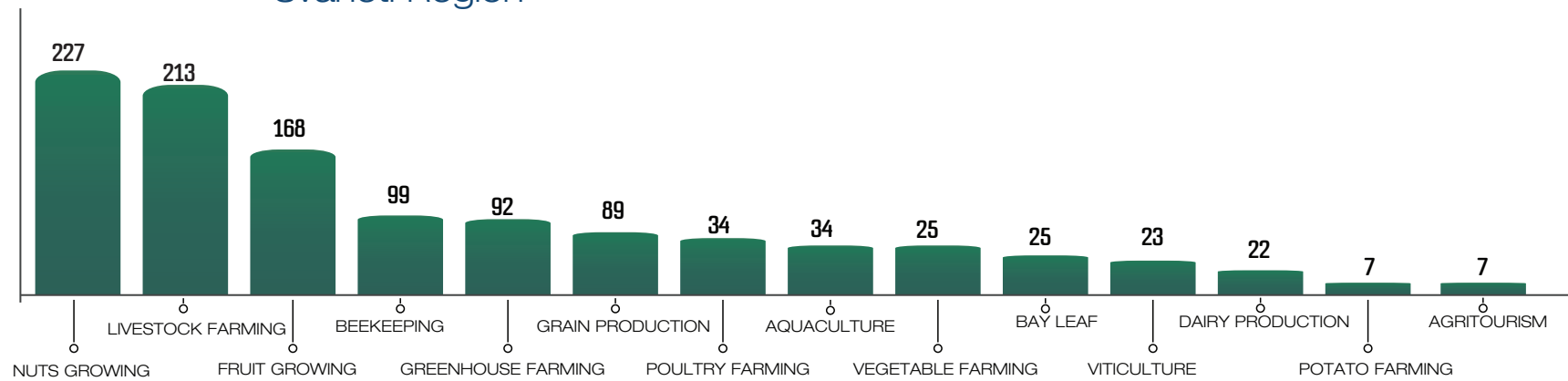
Main areas of Agricultural activity in Mtskheta Mtianeti Region



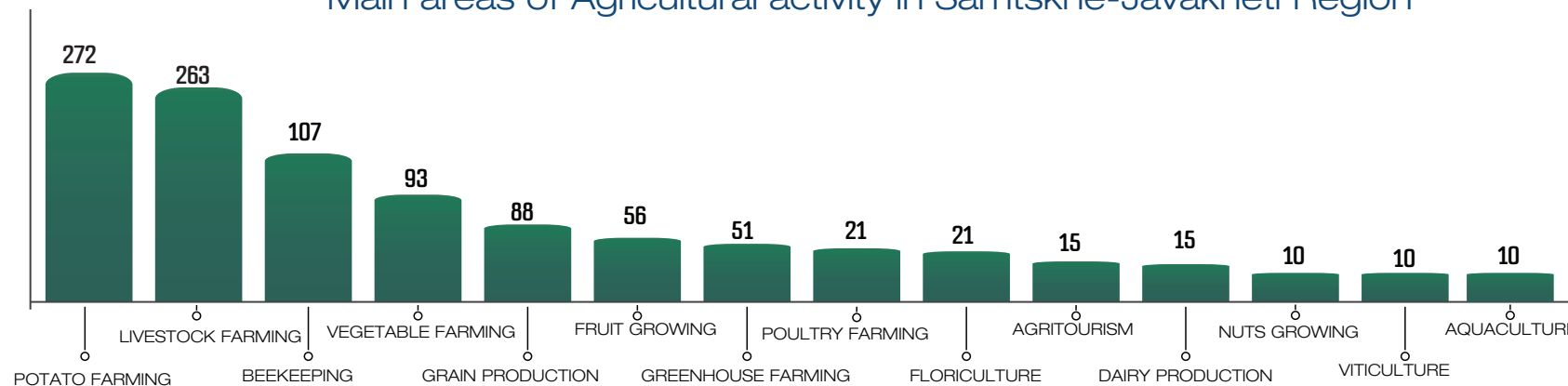
Main areas of Agricultural activity in Racha-Lechkhumi
Kvemo Svaneti Region



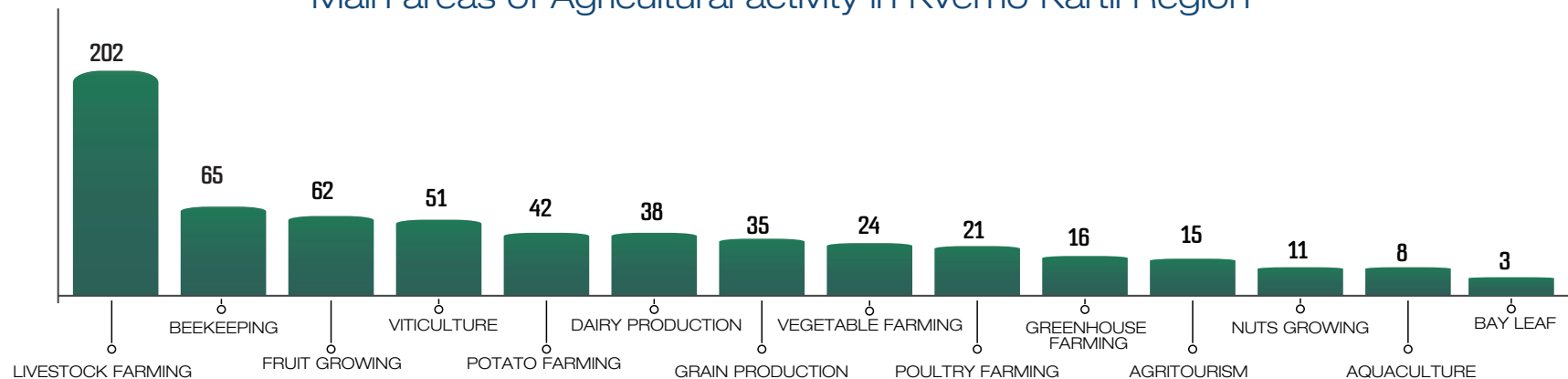
Main areas of Agricultural activity in Samegrelo, Zemo
Svaneti Region



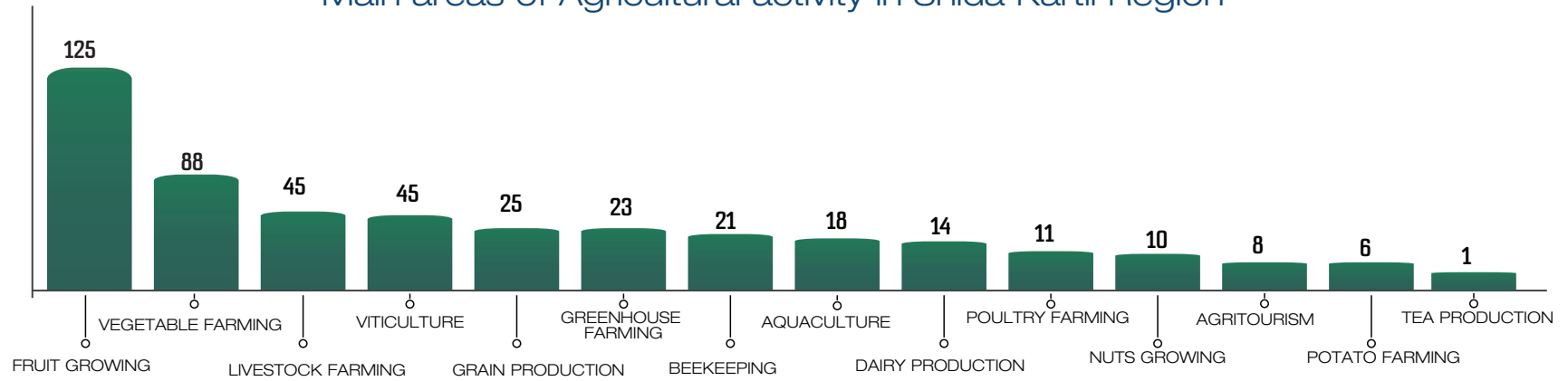
Main areas of Agricultural activity in Samtskhe-Javakheti Region



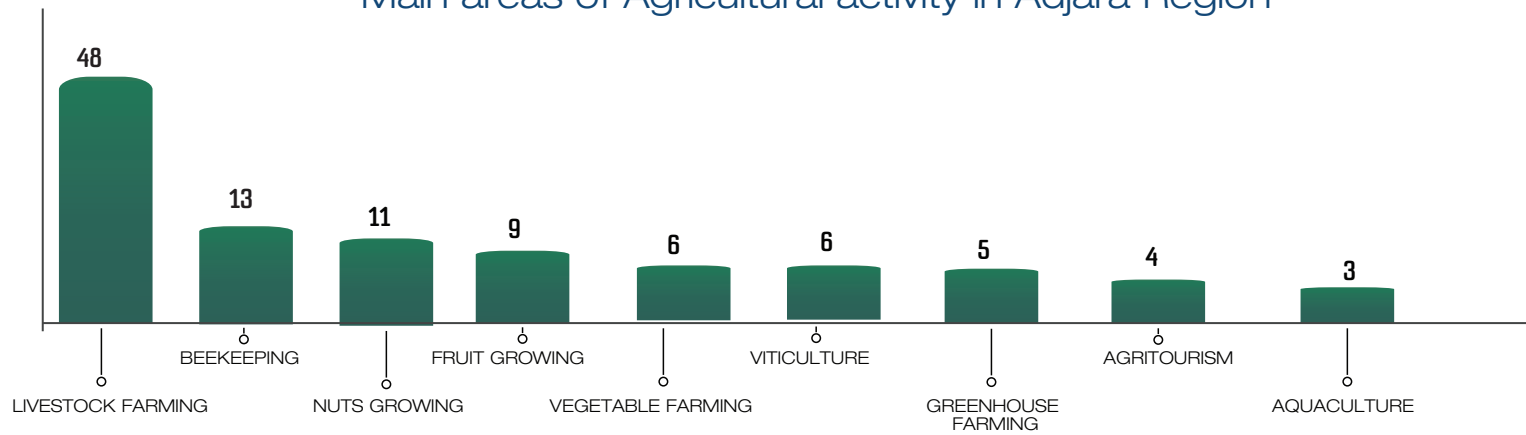
Main areas of Agricultural activity in Kvemo Kartli Region



Main areas of Agricultural activity in Shida Kartli Region



Main areas of Agricultural activity in Adjara Region



Media Activity

Relations with the mass media and, consequently, ensuring high level of awareness is one of the most important priorities for the Georgian Farmers' Association. We believe that the proper awareness of the community, target groups, current and potential members, current and future agripreneurs is a necessary condition for achieving a sustainable result.

Georgian Farmers' Association is continuously working with local and international media, thematic bloggers, podcasters and many others in order to ensure that accurate and impartial stream of information is in place and clearly reflects Association's activities, challenges in the agricultural sector, cooperation/partnership platforms and ongoing projects.





 [GFA.ORG.GE](https://gfa.org.ge)

 [GFADIGITAL.GE](https://gfdigital.ge)