



*Ending Hunger,  
Caring for the Earth*

## HEIFER ROMANIA NEWSLETTER

- **Latest Activities**
- **Visits and Events**
- **Project update**
- **Calendar of Future Activities**

### Latest Activities

- August 2008 – Three of Heifer Romania's staff members– Corina Bucea, Gheorghe Abrudan, Doru Pop- participated at "Animal Well Being Workshop" in Lithuania
- October 2008 – Alin Tekonczia, Director of Operations, attended the "Euro Montana Annual Meeting", in Brig, Switzerland
- October 2008 – Alina Tuhutiu, Training Coordinator, attended "IAF Conference" in Groningen, Netherlands
- October 2008 – New staff member employed as Communication and PR Coordinator
- October 2008 – Project Holder Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> edition held in Ceahlau, Eastern Carpathians
- November 2008 – Ovidiu Spinu, Country Director, participated in "Managerial abilities and modern technologies" training in Cluj, Romania
- November 2008 – Laura Manciu, Communication and PR Coordinator, took part in the "Partnership, larger impact using the same resources" workshop
- November 2008 – Calin Sahleanu, Director of Programs, participated at "Leadership" training
- November 2008 - Alina Tuhutiu, Training Coordinator, co-facilitated the "Ukrainian Strategic Planning Workshop"
- November 2008 – Heifer Romania organized the "Priority Issues Review" workshop, all staff members being involved
- December 2008 – Ovidiu Spinu, Country Director, participated in the events and Gala Banquet related to the end of the year, organized by Rotary Club, Lions Club and the municipality of Cluj-Napoca.
- December 2008 – Significant donations of fresh farm food was made by Gheorghe Abrudan, "Farmers Feed the Children" Project Leader to Christiana Foundation
- December 2008 – Donation of two piglets from Heifer Romania staff, for the Roma people in Petrind village.

## Visits and Events

### *The opening of the European modern sheep fold in Tulghes*



A very important country program event was the opening of the very first European sheep fold in Tulghes. Part of the Carpathian project, phase II, the event was celebrated on September 21<sup>st</sup> 2008.

Thanks to Heifer International and the local administration, the community succeeded to build the sheep fold in less than two months. The sheep fold looks from the outside as a local cottage but the inside is modern and follows all European Union's high standards. It is a complete novelty for the region, and a

strong model representing the way we could bring traditional, delicious and healthy products as Tulghes sheep cheese, from the top of the mountains, directly in the customer's plate.



Being the first building of this type in Romania, its opening was made known through mass media and enjoyed a true success. The event was broadcasted by Channel 1 of the Romanian national television and radio stations and it held the titles on the front pages of the newspapers.

This success proves that modern processing food is suitable for traditional animal breeding activities as Heifer Romania and neighboring countries performed in the Carpathian Mountains.

**Project Holders Meeting**



From 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> October 2008, in Durau, near the Bicz Lake and Ceahlau Mountain, Heifer Romania organized the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the Project Holders Meeting.

The main purpose of this event which consisted on the update of the projects` situation, was accomplished, all attendees made a review on the project and its implementation, also presenting the current stage of their program. The meeting was the perfect chance to discuss the challenges met along the development of the projects and

exchange ideas on how to overcome obstacles, improve communication and cooperation inside groups and communities.

The issues included: new funds and fundraising, subsidies from the government and EU sources, obstacles and solutions regarding technology and production.

On the third day of the event all the participants had the opportunity to visit the modern sheepfold in Tulghes, the latest achievement in the Carpathian Project.

The meeting ended at the sheep exhibition in Brosteni, everyone was pleased with the outcome of the gathering.



**Rotarian visit, additional Matching Grant for Farmers Feed the Children project**

In 27<sup>th</sup> October 2008, John Craft and nine other Rotarians from Rotary Club of Maumelle, Arkansas visited “Farmers Feed the Children” project. They had the opportunity to visit the dairy plant and the milk collecting point in Suceagu village. They met six Roma families which had just received livestock from Heifer. Ovidiu Spinu, Country Director, joined the group for a traditional lunch in Corus village offering valuable information and guiding the guests.

The purpose of their visit in Romania was the Matching Grant application for two computer learning centers for two orphanages, beneficiaries of “Farmers feed the Children” project. This project includes: 25 computers, 2 servers, 2 network printers, 2 scanners, 2 color printers, internet subscription, PC desks, chairs and training courses.

Heifer staff supported the project through technical knowledge and writing the proposal.

**Assist International visit**



On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, a group of 16 Americans from Assist International, a non-governmental organization dedicated to the poor and needy, visited the “Farmers Feed the Children” project, their aim was to bring medical equipment for the Children’s Hospital in Cluj. This medical equipment is used for monitoring patients, a feature needed in emergency hospitals.

During their visit they had the chance to see the activity at the milk collecting point in Suceagu, and provided valuable information on how to make a difference in the world, just like Heifer does.

## Project update



### **“Honey production for two poor communities in Central Transylvania”**

(Funded 100% by Elevages Sans Frontieres France) is one of Heifer Romania’s newest approved projects. It is centered on Rus village in Salaj County a part of Romania that is affected by unemployment, low incomes and poor nutrition. The communities in the area are based on old style agriculture and traditional animal breeding. These villages are neighboring the Somes river valley with wild fields fitted for bee keeping and bee production. This new perspective will shift the farmer’s income and improve nutrition. The first beneficiaries will be families from Rus village and five other surrounding communities. These poor and large families have no

resources for a big input in farming activities, thus bee breeding and honey production is perfectly suited for this challenged community. The project will be supervised by Heifer Romania and AGAPIS, the Project Holder, making sure the objectives are accomplished also providing professional training and aid in bee keeping. Children, youth men or women will all be involved and together they will benefit from their hard work.

Bee keeping provides occupation and generates income. It is affordable for families with low resources, requesting minimal investment and land but dedicated labor. It has great advantages the derivatives can be packed, stored and sold creating more income. Honey replaces sugar in dietary habits, an important aspect for health. This



activity has benefiting effect on the environment through the process of pollination that maintains the region plant diversity and increases seed and fruit. The project’s beneficiaries will have to build the beehives as they will receive the basic materials: wood, nails, paint.

Important community leaders with experience in bee keeping will be involved ensuring a good development of the project and the involvement of more participants.

Apiculture will generate income for the poor communities in Central Transylvania and in the long run assure their self-reliance.

**“Dairy cows and artificial insemination for Maeriste”** is a new cow project developed in the hydrographic basin of the Crasna River. It targets the commune of Maeriste made up of six villages all facing unemployment and lack of opportunities.



The people in the area mainly practice agriculture for subsistence that offers them little chances for a better future. The target groups of this project is the farming community in the area that deal with problems as: low quality livestock and poor hygiene of milk. The main objective is to increase the farmers' income and improve nutrition by encouraging dairy cow breeding. The project also has a semen distribution component which will increase the quality of the livestock. The impact will be larger, indirect beneficiaries will profit from the genetics improvement and the increase in the performance of dairy cows. The area designated provides good conditions for farming and animal breeding and it has become a tradition for a long time.

The farming community receives low price for the milk because it doesn't meet EU standards. The lack of compliance with the regulations doesn't allow farmers to obtain subsidies from the government. Migration to big cities or other countries is also a problem in the region. The results of the projects will improve the genetics of the livestock and will create opportunity to better sell the milk and its derivatives. Also farmers may choose what type of breed they would like to develop and will benefit from a new milk collecting tank.

The supervising of the project will be assured by the Project Holder and the Heifer Romania Team. They will make sure that the outcome of the project will generate income, food security and self sustainability. Other communities in the area will be involved in the project, thanks to the process of POG, thus it will continue on a long term.

**“Sheep, bees and reforestation project in Vranceaia”** implemented in an area known for the frequent earth-quakes, between the Black Sea and Transylvania. The region is known for the warm climate, rocky and salty land.



Once a respected, self-sustaining sheep breeding community, the villages in Vrancea county are confronted with the absence of resources, the low productivity of crossbred livestock and the ever higher standards imposed by EU regulations.

The target groups of the projects, the farming communities in the Vranceaia plateau, will be joined in the development of the project, by other neighboring communities through POG and the reforestation component.

The main aim is to sustain traditional farming activities such as sheep breeding and bee keeping. The project is intended to revitalize the traditional Red Face Tigaia sheep breeding.

The families with small properties which are unable to care for sheep will be involved in bee keeping and honey production.

The last component of the project is reforestation, thousands of acacia trees will be planted on salty slopes in order to avoid soil erosion and also provide food for the bees but most important, the environment will be improved.

The project will ensure food security, constant income generation through agro-forestry and apiculture. The local authorities support and



provide the land in the process of planting the acacia saplings. The beneficiaries are strongly devoted to breed Red Face Tigaia sheep and are very excited to start producing sheep cheese in a hygienic environment.



## Calendar of Future Activities

- February 2009 – the opening of the newly approved projects.
- From 29<sup>th</sup> of March to 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2009, Steve Denne COO Heifer International and Dr. Rafal Laski, Vice President CEE Heifer International, will visit Romania Country Program.
- In June 2009, we expect the visit of Christian DeVries, the writer that Direct Marketing Department asked to visit a few projects in Romania and Moldova. Together with a photographer, they will be collecting successful stories and capture new and impressive testimonials.



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