

The STABILAK mission to Albania

Information on the mission to Albania of Dr. Luis Clergé Fabra, President of FAO Global Lactoperoxidase Programme and Dr. Pastor Ponce Ceballo, Director of the Cuban CENSA/CENLAC Programme, between 14th – 19th March 2005, within IFAD/UNOPS-PASARP/IDEASS Initiative.

Foreword

In June 2004, the Albanian Ministry of Agriculture and a number of Albanian competent Institutions stressed the necessity of improving the quality of dairy industry, including milk and derivatives production and collection. Those Institutions manifested a specific interest in Stabilak innovation. As result of such an interest, contacts with other National Institutions, local authorities and milk producers interested on Stabilak use were promoted during the months of June-July 2004 by UNOPS-PASARP/IDEASS Initiative. These meetings focused on the relevant problems for milk producers all over the Albanian territory, caused by the lack or inconstancy of electricity supply, the bad road condition and the lack of transport to the milk collection points.

In September – October 2004, a questionnaire was submitted to a number of Vlora and Skhodra farmers, selected by the local LEDAs on the basis of their characteristics, to register the interest for Stabilak and the potentiality of exit for the introduction of the product in the country. The result was significant: more of 75% of the interviewed producers declared to be interested in utilizing a product like Stabilak, and in receiving more information about it. A number of producers and local authorities were also interested in the local production of Stabilak, and in introducing it to the Albanian market.



Trough Ideass, and as a result of this interest and activity, the CENSA (National Centre for Agricultural Sanitation) of Cuba, author of the Stabilak Innovation, agreed on carry out a mission to Albania of two Stabilak experts: Dr. Luis Clergé Fabra, President of FAO Global Lactoperoxidase Programme and Dr. Pastor Ponce Ceballo, Director of CENLAC (Center for Control of Milk and Derivates) and President of CONCALAC (Milk National Council) of Cuba. During the mission, held from 14th to 19th March, 2005, a number of activities were organized, in tide coordination with national and local Albanian health and food authorities and in collaboration with the three Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDAs) of the Regions of Vlora, Skhodra and Durres. IDEASS was in charge for the international coordination of the mission, including transport, logistic and operational costs. As agreed for IDEASS promoted initiatives in Albania, Academy of Science of Albania provided logistic and technical support for the national conference, organized on 18th of March. During the mission, National health, food and milk experts, professionals and authorities joined scientific meetings. Two field visit to Vlora was organized, in collaboration with the Local Economic Development Agency, "AULEDA".

Tirana and 1st scientific meeting. Academy of Science

During their mission to Albania (14th to 19th March, 2005), Dr. Clergé Fabra and Dr. Ponce Ceballo met with officials of the Ministry of Agriculture. In particular, on the 1st day of mission, they could introduce the mission program and objectives to the Directors of the following three competent Ministry Institutes, receiving complete support for the mission activities:

- Dr. Arben Molla, Agriculture Project Department Director;
- Dr. Prof Tatjana Dishnica, Science and Extensions Department Director;
- Dr. Sali Metani, International Relations Department Director.



On the same day, a scientific meeting was organized in Tirana at the Academy of Sciences Conference room, where the Stabilak experts met with:

Prof. Vladimir Nika, Scientific advisor of the Academy of Sciences;
Mr. Kapllan Sulaj, chief bacteriologist of the Veterinarian Research Institute;
Ms. Xheni Pinguli, Director of the Food Research Institute;
Ms. Silva Bino, Director of the Public Health Institute of the Ministry of Health;
Ms. Verbena Bujari, Director of ADAMA, Association for milk quality control.

The aim of the meeting was to discuss about possible applications and use of Stabilak in different Albanian regions. After a brief introduction by the UNOPS/IDEASS International Consultant, Dr. Pastor Ponce Ceballo and Dr. Luis A. Clerge Fabra presented Stabilak. They based their discussion on the successful experience they had since 1989.

In the discussion that followed, the Stabilak experts answered different questions made by the participants and could see a complete picture of the Albanian situation in milk producing and collection.

Recommendations of the meeting

The lactoperoxidase system, which Stabilak activates, is highly effective in improving raw milk quality. It could help the small and medium milk producers, that are the majority in Albania, avoiding loss of milk caused by the increasing of acidity.

All the next phases of the introduction to Stabilak in Albania will be monitored by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Public Health Institute of the Ministry of Health.

The institutional support for the project implementation will be guaranteed by these two Institutions. The competent Institutes of the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture, having received the basic documentation on the product, will take all the steps to get to a fast official registration of Stabilak on the Albanian territory.

All the next activity will be discuss in further meetings with representatives of the two ministries, the Ideass/Albania consultant, the LEDA directors and representatives of the milk producers.

1st field Visit. Vlora DBU (Directorate of Agriculture and Food)

On 15th March, Dr. Clergé and Dr. Ponce paid a field visit to the Directorate of Agriculture and Food in Vlora. The aim of the meeting was to inform the milk producers and manufacturers about the premise and technique of Stabilak in the framework of the Lactoperoxidos Programme, as well as to receive a mutual interest for Albanian producers in this regard.

After a previous meeting with Mr. Kastriot Veizi, Director of DBU, that assured complete support for all the present and future Stabilak initiatives in the Region, the meeting begun, chaired by the IDEASS/Albania consultant. At the meeting participated the two CENSA experts, five DBU representatives (including the DBU Director), five representatives of the Organic Agriculture Association of Vlora, nine milk and derivates producers of the Region, nine milk manufactory farmers, two representatives of "Auleda", the LEDA of Vlora, including the Director, Mr. Hasan Hallko, and the Vlora area manager of UNOPS/PASARP for a total of 34 participants.

The meeting allowed to focus on the following items:

- Why Stabilak is necessary (high costs of coldness, difficult transport etc);
- Lactoperoxidase process (natural enzymatic system which inhibits or destroys bacteria);
- Practical use of Stabilak (time, dosage, terms of effect, hygienic conditions, cost, etc.);
- Impact of hygienic condition in Stabilak process;
- The FAO Global Lactoperoxidase Programme;
- Stabilak International awards, etc



The final discussion allowed to answer to the following main questions, made by the milk producers:

- Is Stabilak an organic product?
- How much does Stabilak cost?
- How long after milking Stabilak may be used?
- In what kind of container should milk be preserved ?
- Is there any chemical reaction which could affect milk derivatives, like cheese and yogurt?

Recommendations of the meeting

Stabilak could represent an highly effective solution for the relevant milk production and collection problems in the Vlorë Region and all over the Albanian territory. The main interest of Albanian milk Authorities and professionals consists not only in importing Stabilak from Cuba, but also in receiving transfer of technology from Cuba to Albania, in order to produce Stabilak in the Country.



In order to implement this production, a market plan and a business plan will be elaborated by AULEDA after the end of mission, and presented to local producers and Authorities. The Stabilak production in Albania will be implemented after a period of practical experimentation (3-5 months), in which Stabilak will be imported from Cuba.

During the following day (16th March) a practical demonstration of Stabilak will take place, followed by the analyses made by the laboratory of Directorate of Agriculture and Food of Vlorë which will study the Stabilak effects.

2nd field Visit. Milk farm in Novosele, Vlorë – DBU Laboratory, Vlorë

The practical demonstration on Stabilak use took place on March 16th at the manufacture of Mr. Dhimo Gucaj, milk collector and manufacturer in Novosele, Vlorë. Dr. Ponce of CENSA treated with Stabilak 50 litres of raw milk. A sample of the same milk was kept without treating, in order to consent a comparative analysis. Dr. Ponce explained to the milk producers present at the demonstration as Stabilak must be part of a wide strategy to monitor and improve milk quality. For this reason he presented further field-methods to diagnose cow illness, like mastitis, and to check milk acidity.

After the demonstration, the two milk samples were taken to the DBU Laboratory of Analysis in Vlora. Here, Dr. Ponce illustrated the above mentioned methods to the local personnel, asking their collaboration to monitor milk acidity after 4, 8 and 12 hours. Dr. Ponce and Dr. Clergé also visited the Laboratory departments and shared scientific information with the DBU technical personnel.

During the following hours, the two samples of milk were analysed by the DBU technicians, under Dr. Ponce's supervision. The results demonstrated as the milk not treated with Sabilak increased enormously its acidity, while the treated milk remained stable for many hours, without modifying in relevant way the initial quality.



Further meetings with Albanian professionals

Besides the already mentioned meetings with the competent Albanian institutions, on 17th march, the Stabilak experts visited the Institute of Veterinary Research "Bilal Golemi", in Tirana. They met with Dr. Elvira Beli, vice-Director, and other technical personnel of this public institution. They presented Stabilak and received support in going on with the necessary activities for the product registration in the Country.

On the same day, a meeting was held at UNOPS/Pasarp office in Tirana with the participation of:

Mr. Agron Hetoja, FAO representative in Albania,
Mr. Spartak Bozo, Director of Patent Office of Tirana
Ms. Merita Uruci, Director of Land O' Lakes Albania



The meeting consented to answer to further question on Stabilak registration in Albania, and to receive support in order to get to the product's fast registration.

On the mission last day, 19th March, a delegation from Serbia could meet the Stabilak experts. The delegation was composed by Ms. Jasminka Lukovic, Director of the LEDA of Kragujevac and Ms. Ljiljana Ostojic, Programme Officer of UNOPS/Serbia. The meeting consented to present exhaustively the characteristics of Stabilak, receiving strong interest in Stabilak utilization by the Serbian authorities, in particular the ones of the Region of Sumadija.

The National Conference on Stabilak

On 18th March, a National Conference on Stabilak was organized in co-operation with the Albanian Ministry of Agriculture and the Academy of Science. The event was hosted by the Academy of Sciences, in the framework of the implementation of IDEASS, for the transfer of innovative technologies to Albania. About 90 professionals attended to the event. Numerous Stabilak brochures, written by the experts of CENSA and translated into Albanian, were distributed to all the participants, together with informative material on IDEASS Initiative.

After the greetings and the introduction by the IDEASS/Albania coordinator, the opening speech was held by Ms. Tatjana Dishnica, of the Ministry of Agriculture. She highlighted the great value of the innovation for Albania, hoping a fast implementation in the Country, under the supervision of her Ministry. Mr. Vladimir Nika brought the greetings of the Academy of Science, national partner of the Ideass initiative. Mr. Cristiano Agostini, for UNOPS/PASARP stressed the importance and the effectiveness of the mission of CENSA, that received the



absolute support of the Vlorë authorities and professionals, during the field mission to that Region. Mr Luis Clerge Fabra, addressed the presents about FAO Lactoperoxidase Global Programme and Mr. Pastor Ponce Ceballo hold an exhaustive presentation of Stabilak scientific, technical and productive characteristics, with the help of a power-point presentation, strongly appreciated by the presents. Finally, Mr. Hasan Hallko, Director of Auleda, reported on the results of the mission in Vlorë and illustrated how Stabilak-Ideass Initiative well fits in a general strategy for Local Economic Development, which considers sustainability, rentability and respect of the environment as fundamental criteria.

Followed, the discussion with the locutors and the personality present at the event. At the discussion took part:

- Mr. Arben Molla, Agriculture Project Department Director, Ministry of Agriculture
- Mr. Sali Metani, International Relations Department Director, Ministry of Agriculture
- Ms. Tatjana Dishnica, Science and Extensions Department Director, Ministry of Agriculture
- Mr. Nazri Haxhiu, Food Quality and Inspectorate Department Director, Ministry of Agriculture
- Mr. Agron Hetoja, FAO Albania National Project Manager
- Ms. Xheni Pinguli, Food Research Institute Director, Ministry of Agriculture
- Ms. Silva Bino, Public Health Institute Director, Ministry of Health
- Ms. Merita Uruçi, Land O'Lakes Albania Director
- Ms. Lauresha Bezani, University of Tirana, Natural Sciences Professor
- Ms. Etleva Budina, University of Tirana, Natural Sciences Professor
- Ms. Bisena Bijo, Agriculture University Tirana
- Ms. Verbena Bujari, ADAMA Director,

The National Conference conclusions

At the end of the conference, and considering the whole mission activities, the following conclusions were pointed out:

- A firm that will receive the transfer of technology for the production of Stabilak in Albania will be constituted, by the Local Economic Development Agency, AULEDA, with the participation of milk producers. This firm will be located in the Vlorë Region and the interested producers have been already identified by AULEDA.
- A first evaluation of the product utilization in the Albanian conditions will be realized during the summer 2005. This will consent to study the product possibilities in the national and international (Balkan) market. During this period, Stabilak will be imported from Cuba, in the amount to treat approximately 2 millions litres of milk. CENSA will offer this product at cost-price and will send a technical expert to realize training and field activities, in close collaboration with AULEDA, UNOPS/PASARP and the Ministry of Agriculture.
- The competent institutions of the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture, having received the basic documentation on the product, will take the steps to get to a fast official registration on the Albanian territory, on the basis of the existing National regulation.

- Stabilak will be also registered as Trade Mark at the Patent and Intellectual Property Office in Albania, in order to start with the technology transfer.

Published articles and press conference

On 18th March, just before the National Conference, a press conference for the presentation of Stabilak and of the Ideass Initiative to the media was held at the Academy of Science.

The event was reflected by almost all main Albanian newspapers and TV channels, that also covered the whole mission activity.

Newspaper articles:

- “Stabilak” per qumeshtin e fresket, (“Stabilak” for the fresh milk”) in **Gazeta Shqiptare Newspaper**, March 15, 2005
- Projekti UNOPS-it, “Stabilak”: Si te ruajme qumeshtin e fresket. (UNOPS Project “Stabilak”: How to protect the fresh milk) – in **Korrieri Newspaper**, March 15, 2005
- UNOPS, si mund ta ruajme te fresket qumeshtin (UNOPS, How can we keep the milk fresh) – in **Koha jone Newspaper**, March 15, 2005
- Iniciativa e IDEASS prezantohet ne Akademine e Shkencave, (IDEASS Initiative was presented at the Academy of Science) – in **Korrieri Newspaper**, March 19, 2005
- Mberrin ne Shqiperi Stabilak, ilaci per ruajtjen e qumeshtit (Stabilak arrives to Albania, the medicine to protect the milk) – **Dita Newspaper**, March 19, 2005
- Stabilak, qe qumeshti te mos tharohet. *Mungesa e frigorifereve ne fshat, e energjise elektrike dhe transporti bene te nevojshme perdorimin e preparatit. Perpunesi i qumeshtit, Dhimo Gucaje: Per 6-7 ore niveli i acidit ndryshoi.* (Stabilak, for not having spoiled milk. *The lack of the refrigerators, electricity and transport make the use of the medicament a very necessary one. Dhimo Gucaj, milk producer and manufacture: the level of the acid changed for about 6-7 hours.*) - in **Metropol Newspaper**, March 19, 2005
- Si te ruani qumeshtin e fresket (How to protect the fresh milk) – in **Panorama Newspaper**, March 15, 2005
- Kubanezet sjellin ilacin per qumeshtin / *Projekti IDEASS prezanton metoden e re per ruajtjen e produktit* (The Cubans bring the medicine for the milk. *IDEASS Project presented the new method for the product protection*) – in **Panorama Newspaper**, March 19, 2005
- Stabilak, nje metode e re per ta mbajtur qumeshtin te fresket. (Stabilak, new method to keep the milk fresh). – in **Economia Newspaper** 19 March 2005

TV broadcasts:

18 March 2005 - **TV KOHA** - Newscast, Feature on Stabilak Conference

18 March 2005 - **TOP CHANNEL** - Newscast, Feature on Stabilak Conference

18 March 2005 - **ALSAT** - Newscast, Feature on Stabilak Conference

18 March 2005 - **TVSH** - Newscast, Feature on Stabilak Conference

18 March 2005 - **ATN** - Newscast, Feature on Stabilak Conference

18 March 2005 - **TOP ALBANIA RADIO** - Newscast, Feature on Stabilak Conference

Pastor Ponce Ceballo, CENSA

Luis Clergé, CENSA

Piero D'Onofrio, IDEASS/PASARP

