
UZBEKISTAN TO INVEST \$50 MILLION IN GROWING WALNUT PLANTATIONS

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Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has recently signed a Decree "On creation and organization of activities of the Association of producers and exporters of walnuts", the Jahon information agency reported.

The document aims at encouraging efficient use of rainfed land, increasing the production of walnuts, creation of modern plantations and active implementation of strong practices and intensive technologies for growing walnuts, based on the broad attraction of foreign investments.

The Decree has established the Association of producers and exporters of walnuts.

A working group established for the implementation of the project was given three months to develop and submit for approval a draft Program of measures to further increase the production of walnuts for the period 2017-2020.

The document also ordered to select land plots with a total area of 10 thousand hectares favorable for planting walnut trees in the country.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of Uzbekistan jointly with the Agency for restructuring agricultural enterprises and National Bank for foreign economic activity in a two-month period should identify the sources of phased financing, including by attracting concessional loans from international financial institutions, and to ensure the allocation of credit funds in the amount of \$50 million for financing projects on establishing walnut plantations.

It is planned to develop the industry through a four-stage approach. Walnut seedlings will be imported at the first round in 2017-2019, and stock for inoculation will be delivered at the second stage (2018-2019). The laboratory-based production of high-yielding seedlings will begin in 2020 at the third stage, and the fourth phase in 2018-2020 envisages the production and sales of walnut in the domestic and foreign markets.

Entrepreneurs who are ready to work in this direction will be provided with customs privileges. They will be relieved from customs fees for imported equipment for drip irrigation, specialized agricultural machinery, seedlings, seedling stock, and mother walnut material until January 1, 2020.