

## **ICBA and Uzbekistan’s Agency for Innovative Development Sign Agreement to Launch Farmers’ Accelerator Program Supporting Crop Value Chains in Karakalpakstan**

*The three-month “Farmers’ and Agro-Entrepreneurs Accelerator” aims to reach 200 beneficiaries from Karakalpakstan, with a focus on women and youth*

**Dubai, United Arab Emirates – 25 May 2026** – The [International Center for Biosaline Agriculture](#) (ICBA) has signed a collaboration agreement with the Agency for Innovative Development under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan to launch the “Farmers’ and Agro-Entrepreneurs Accelerator for Developing and Commercializing Crop Value Chains” in Nukus, Karakalpakstan. The agreement was signed by Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi, Director General of ICBA, and Dr. Asror Norov, Acting Director of the Agency for Innovative Development.

The program will be implemented with the support of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, under the project “Development of Sustainable Agricultural Production Systems in Degraded Areas of Karakalpakstan”. It represents a practical new step in the project’s progress, moving from support for sustainable agricultural production to enabling farmers and agro-entrepreneurs to develop crop value chains, improve commercial readiness, and expand access to markets.

Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi, Director General of ICBA, said: “This agreement reflects an advanced stage of our work in Karakalpakstan, as we move from supporting sustainable agricultural production to enabling farmers and agro-entrepreneurs to build practical pathways for value chain development and market access. Through this program, we aim to equip beneficiaries with the technical and business knowledge and skills needed to turn climate-resilient crops into scalable economic opportunities.”

Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi added: “We value our partnership with the Agency for Innovative Development and the continued support of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development. The program’s focus on women and youth is particularly important as part of an approach that links local capacity-building with practical economic opportunities for farmers and agro-entrepreneurs, while contributing to more resilient agricultural systems in Uzbekistan.”

Dr. Asror Norov, Acting Director of the Agency for Innovative Development, said: “For the Aral Sea region, this cooperation is important because it links innovation with practical agricultural transformation. Through ICBA’s scientific expertise and international experience in biosaline agriculture, the program will support the modernization of crop value chains in Karakalpakstan, from cultivation and production to processing and market delivery. It will also help create a structured training and acceleration platform for farmers, young specialists, and agri-entrepreneurs, supporting the wider application of green innovations in the region.”

Running over three months, the program aims to reach 200 beneficiaries from Karakalpakstan, including farmers and agro-entrepreneurs, with a focus on women and youth participation. It provides an integrated support model covering technical training, post-harvest management, agro-processing, branding, business planning, and market access, helping beneficiaries increase the economic value of climate-resilient crops and turn agricultural production into scalable opportunities.

Through this agreement, the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) continues to strengthen its role as a scientific and technical partner supporting sustainable agriculture, crop value chain development, and rural economic resilience in Uzbekistan and beyond.

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### **About ICBA**

Established by the Government of the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Development Bank, the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) is a unique international not-for-profit applied research-for-development center. The center’s approach integrates strategic alliances, technical expertise, and knowledge empowerment to co-create innovative solutions for sustainable livelihoods and food security in saline and arid environments. The center’s research is at the nexus of soil, water, crops, and climate to prevent, manage and recover from salinity in agricultural lands. Through this holistic and integrated approach, ICBA strives to make a lasting positive impact on the lives and livelihoods of farming communities, ensuring their resilience and contributing to a more sustainable future for all. [www.biosaline.org](http://www.biosaline.org)