

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **USDA Satellite Features Feed**

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**Contact: USDA-TV (202) 720-6445 or (202) 720-3319**

#### **FEATURE – USDA AG EXPERTS IN AFGHANISTAN, Part 4 - GHAZNI**

INTRO: Rebuilding Afghanistan starts on the farm for U.S. Department of Agriculture experts in country. The USDA's Patrick O'Leary has more in the fourth of a 5-part series. (2:01)

Thakali VO: I'm here so that they can feel more confident in their government and that they can carry on and do the work themselves so that we won't have to be here.

BACK IN ILLINOIS RENEE THAKALI (TUH-KHALEE) IS A U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE SUPERVISOR. BUT HERE IN RURAL GHAZNI(GHAZ-NEE) PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN, SHE'S A CATALYST FOR CHANGE AS A MEMBER OF THE U-S -LED PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM, OR P-R-T.

*Maybe in about a month in Ghazni our experimental farm will look nice and all the little trees will start blooming.*

My job is to give them advice about agriculture and natural resources.

*Where's all your sisters? I meet new people every day. Do you live over there?*

Renee Thakali, USDA Ag Expert: And sometimes you lose a sense of what somebody really intended to say or ask, which can be pretty funny sometimes.

*Thakali: And then the potatoes are alou also?*

*Translator: No. It's not alou, it's katalou.*

*Thakali: Katalou. In Nepali alou is potato. There's zardalou, alou, alouta (laughter).*

Thakali: There's also an A-D-T, an agribusiness development team from Texas, and I work with both teams. Jungal Bagh, if you translate it, "jungal" is forest and "bagh" is garden.

John Ploch, U.S. Army: Jungal Bahg Farms is a demonstration farm. Afghans are a lot like people from Missouri, they're "show me" folks. And you can talk about good ideas all day long but they're not real accepting. So through experimental farms and demonstration farms, we're able to develop projects to enhance their agricultural capability, and an ability to show them. And once they see it they're very accepting.

THE U-S PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAMS HOPE THAT ACCEPTANCE AND SUCCESSES ON THE FARM WILL TRANSLATE INTO SECURITY AND PROGRESS FOR AFGHANISTAN, WHERE MORE THAN 80 PERCENT OF THE PEOPLE WORK IN AGRICULTURE.

Thakali: Yeah, you know, it is a dangerous place, we are in a combat zone. But I feel confident that the PRT security forces, they're here to protect me, so I can do my job.

FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M PAT O'LEARY.

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