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A Bhutanese Dairy Farmer, Ms. Chimmi Dema, an aspiring dairy farmer from Gogona, Wangduephodrang received a prestigious FAO's "Model Agriculturalists" award on 18th October 2019 at the FAO Regional Office for Asia and Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand.

The Assistant Director General of FAO RAP presented the FAO's annual Asia-Pacific award to Ms. Chimmi Dema and four other Asian and Pacific farmers for their outstanding achievements in agriculture and food production.



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Ms. Chimi Dema is a progressive dairy farmer in Gogona under Gangtey gewog in Wangdue Phodrang. She is an active member and also serves as the dairy technician at the Milk Processing Unit (MPU) of Gogona Gonor Yargay Chethuen Detshen. Finding dairy enterprise as a promising enterprise for cash income generation, she and her husband planned to strengthen their dairy business last year (2018). They applied for a Priority Sector Lending (PSL) loan to build and expand their dairy farming business. With the loan from the PSL, they build an improved dairy shed and bought 20 Holstein Friesian dairy cows. With the addition of these dairy cows, the milk supply to the MPU has increased and this has helped the Gogona Gonor Yargay Chethuen Detshen to supply more dairy products to consumers in Wangduephodrang and in Thimphu.

Ms. Chimi Dema is keen to develop and diversify dairy products besides usual production of butter and cottage cheese. She is aware that one day the market will be flooded with cottage cheese and butter, inviting problem in dairy products marketing. With the help of the Dzongkhag Livestock Sector and

some trainers from outside, she learnt to process dairy products, such as varieties of western hard cheese like Gouda, Emmental Cheese, yoghurt (both set yoghurt and stirred yoghurt). At the moment she is producing 3 types of western/Swiss hard cheeses, stir yoghurt beside normal butter and cottage cheese. Due to her commitment, dedication and hard work, the members of the Gogona Gonor Yargay Chethuen Detshen are benefited in terms of cash income and engagement in dairy farming.

The award ceremony was a part of FAO's Asia-Pacific 2019 observance of World Food Day.

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