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“An innovative model of SMART Farm adjacent to VET institution for students work-based learning towards better employability of graduates”
(CB4WBL) project

Fact finding report

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YEREVAN-STEPANAVAN 2024

1. Overview of agriculture in Armenia

1.1. Agriculture and the Rural Population

Agriculture is one of the key branches of Armenia's economy. It is the main source of economic activity in rural areas and is a significant contributor to the gross domestic product. Agriculture produces 13.7 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) (as of 2018) and employs about 24.8 percent of the working population, of whom nearly 52.1 percent are female farmers¹.

The rural population in Armenia was 1075.6 thousand—people, which is 36% of the total population as of 2023².

A little over a third of the rural population in Armenia resides in the Ararat and Armavir Regions, which encompass the majority of the fertile Ararat Valley.

The rural population of Lori Region is 39% because this region has favorable climatic factors for agriculture.

Since no census was conducted after 2011, we present the data of the 2011 census. In 2011, according to census data, about 37% (390,248 people) of the employed population in Armenia (1,057,735 people) indicated agriculture, forestry and fishing as occupations.

In these industries, there are 194,081 men and 196,167 women employed. Thus, 33% of employed men and almost 42% of employed women worked in agriculture. Almost everyone involved in agriculture is self-employed or is a “contributing family member”³.

89% of those employed in agriculture live in rural areas, and 11% live in cities. More than 70% of the working population in rural areas is involved in agriculture. This indicator is about 8% in cities⁴.

In five regions of Armenia (Gegharkunik, Aragatsotn, Armavir, Ararat, and Vayots Dzor), over 50% of the working population is engaged in agriculture.

¹ <https://www.armstat.am/en/?nid=12&id=11003&submit=Search%20/>

² <https://mineconomy.am/page/1467>

³ <https://www.armstat.am/am/?nid=209>

⁴ <https://evnreport.com/arm/magazine-issues/agriculture-in-armenia-an-overview-2/>

In three northern regions (Tavush, Lori, and Shirak), 45-50% of the population is involved in agriculture. In Syunik, only one-third of the population is engaged in agriculture, and in Kotayk, it's 28%.

More than 70% of the rural population is engaged in agriculture in most regions, with over 60% in Syunik and Tavush, and only 44% in Kotayk⁵.

The vision for the agricultural sector of the RA from 2020 to 2030 focuses on developing innovative, high-value-added paths that prioritize natural resource conservation and environmental harmony. The goal is to create ecologically clean products while ensuring the well-being of rural residents⁶.

Agricultural lands of the region

The agricultural lands of the Lori Region in 2023 as of July 1, they are 250,904.3 ha, which is 66% of the total area of the region. Among them, pastures have a large weight (145,618.3 ha or 58%), and 16.8% of agricultural land (42,001.7 ha) is arable land. The lands of settlements are 16,503.2 ha, the lands of specially protected areas are 2,404.3 ha, water lands are 2,606.6 ha, and forest lands are 100,603.0 ha. The irrigated land areas in the Lori Region amount to 9,612.1 ha (22.8%), which are mainly located in Spitak, Stepanavan, and Tumanyan regions.

The index of land in need of improvement deserves special attention. According to the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, as of 2023, the volume of lands in need of improvement in Lori Marz is 7,674.5 ha, which is 2% of the total area of Armenia. ~~By the way,~~ This indicator increased sharply in 2019, from 980 ha to 7,808.2 ha. The territory of the region is dominated by forest, mountain steppe, and sub-alpine meadows. The state forest fund is 101,279.6 hectares, of which 85,799.6 hectares are covered with forests⁷.

The agricultural output of the three northern regions (Shirak, Lori, and Tavush) accounted for 23% of the total, while the two central regions (Aragatsotn and Kotayk) contributed 18%. Gegharkunik,

⁵ https://www.armstat.am/am/?nid=209_99549298.xls

⁶ <https://mineconomy.am/page/1467>

⁷ <http://lori.mtad.am/files/docs/64556.pdf>

which encompasses the area around Lake Sevan, produced 13% of the agricultural output, and Yerevan accounted for 1% of the country's total agricultural production.

According to World Bank data, Armenia's agricultural lands cover 2,042,080 hectares, 59% of the country's total land area.

Moreover, the arable land is about 442,73,0 ha, which is about 15.4% of the land area of Armenia. The share of livestock breeding and horticulture in the agricultural production of Armenia is 52% and 48%, respectively.

Lori region of RA is specialized in dairy cattle breeding. According to the average data of recent years, the number of cattle and pigs was 12.3% and 8.13% of the Republic, respectively, and meat sales and milk production were 11.7% and 12.7%. An increase in both the number of farm animals and the production of livestock products is observed in the region⁸.

1.2. The role of agriculture in the economy

Agriculture is the basis of the society's existence, the food security of the population, the standard of living, and the development opportunities of rural areas. Thus, the health and safety of people depend on the quality and level of development of agriculture.

Agriculture provides 10.4% of GDP according to 2022 data.

About 317,000 farms contribute 94.2% of the total agricultural output, each of which has an average of 1.48 hectares of land.

About 317,000 farms contribute 94.2% of the total agricultural output, with an average land size of 1.48 hectares per farm.

Here is the dynamics of gross agricultural output according to individual branches:

Branches	2021	2022
Livestock breeding	463.5 billion drams	502,5 billion drams
Horticulture	469,4 billion drams	518,7 billion drams

⁸ <https://evnreport.com/arm/magazine-issues/agriculture-in-armenia-an-overview-2/>

The share of agriculture, forestry, and fishing in the GDP structure of Armenia has been consistently decreasing from 18.4% of the country's gross domestic product to 10.4% in 2022⁹. The share of agricultural output in the economy has also decreased over the last decade. Agriculture, forestry, and fishing generated \$1.6 billion in 2022.

Agricultural activities are widespread throughout Armenia, although the Ararat Valley is of special importance. In 2024 36% of Armenia's agricultural production was obtained from Ararat and Armavir marzes.

In the 2024 Agricultural Census, it was found that 54% of Armenia's 317,000 family farms are engaged in both farming and animal husbandry, 42% only cultivate land, and 4% are solely involved in animal husbandry.

There is a significant difference in these figures in different regions. For instance, 53% of farms are involved in land cultivation in Kotayk, while in Vayots Dzor, - only 24%¹⁰.

Farming

Armenia's agricultural land (513,000 hectares) is divided among 345,875 family farms. The difference between the first number mentioned above and the second one (317,000 and 345,875) is that some lands are being used at present, and the other ones aren't. About 60% of all family farms have less than 1 hectare of land. In the case of 35%, the area is 1-5 hectares, and only 5% of the area exceeds 5 hectares.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, around 116,170 hectares of these lands are under irrigation. The 2023 agricultural census reveals that almost half (49%) of cultivated land is irrigated through the main network.

About 21% of people use drinking water for irrigation, 15% use water from rivers and lakes, and 12% exploit well water for the same purpose. In Ararat, 31% exploit the water of deep wells.

Land for organic agriculture is around 1,430 ha, of which 730 is certified organic.

As of 2019, fields of cereal crops cover 121,179 hectares, fruit and berry orchards cover 43,411 hectares, vegetable (except potato) fields cover 20,616 hectares, while potato fields alone cover 20,477 hectares. Vineyards cover 16,497 hectares, while melon fields cover 4,257 hectares.

⁹ <https://mineconomy.am/page/1326>

¹⁰ <https://evnreport.com/arm/magazine-issues/agriculture-in-armenia-an-overview-2/>

Ararat and Armavir (covering most of the Ararat valley) contain around 43% of Armenia's fruit orchards, over 63% of Armenia's vegetable (except potato) fields, around 73% of the country's vineyards and almost 95% of its melon fields.

Over 70% of Armenia's cereal fields are in Shirak (27.7%), Gegharkunik (18.8%), Aragatsotn (13.7%) and Syunik (11%). Over 70% of Armenia's potato fields are concentrated in just three regions: Gegharkunik (39.5%), Lori (16.8%) and Shirak (15.8%).

Aragatsotn, Tavush and Vayots Dzor contain 24% of Armenia's vineyards. Other regions have negligible amounts of land allocated to vineyards. Shirak and Gegharkunik have none¹¹.

Animal husbandry and animal products

This branch of agriculture in Armenia primarily focuses on cattle, sheep, poultry, and bee breeding.

As of 2020, Armenia has around 580,000 cattle, with the top cattle-breeding regions being Gegharkunik (97,000), Shirak (87,000), Lori (73,000) and Aragatsotn (68,000). 82% of family farms own less than 9 cattle. 17% own between 10 and 49 cattle, and 1% own more than 50.

In recent years, the number of pigs in Armenia has fluctuated around 223,300. Pigs are relatively equally distributed among Armenia's regions, with the top region, Armavir, having 29,400 pigs, and Lori 15,300.

Armenia's sheep and goat population (combined) has fluctuated between a low of 511,000 to a high of 778,000 in the past decade. The top sheep-breeding regions are Armavir (114,000), Syunik (108,300), Aragatsotn (91,400), Gegharkunik (91,000) and Ararat (87,900).

In 2022, milk production totaled 623.1 thousand tons, while meat production reached 103.2 thousand tons. The marzes producing the most milk are Gegharkunik (18%), Shirak (15%), Lori (12%) and Aragatsotn (12%)¹².

¹¹ <https://evnreport.com/arm/magazine-issues/agriculture-in-armenia-an-overview-2/>

¹² <https://evnreport.com/arm/magazine-issues/agriculture-in-armenia-an-overview-2/>

1.3. Problems

The following issues are identified in the 2020-2030 strategic plan for the development of the sector “low efficiency, insufficient monitoring of food safety standards, high market concentration, poor institutional capacity, and the restricted use of innovations.” To address these problems, the government identified several development principles: “aggregation, commercialization, youth inclusion, diversification and risk management, climate adaptation and technological modernization.”

To overcome the problems, the state policy in the medium-term period in the field of agriculture is aimed at

- increasing the level of agricultural intensification, and implementing advanced, innovative technologies
- purposeful and efficient usage of agricultural land, putting unused land into circulation and enlarging land
- Increasing the efficiency of irrigation and water usage
- Introduction of comprehensive crop insurance
- Provision of financial resources for farmers in agriculture.
- updating the agricultural machinery
- promoting the production of high-value crops and developing intensive horticulture
- expanding the use of greenhouses
- promotion of local seed production
- introduction of advanced technologies in the field of animal husbandry, development of pedigree animal breeding
- Strengthening the production capacity of agro-processors and efficiently organizing procurement.
- Improving the sales structures of agricultural products, creating wholesale markets, and logistics centers
- improvement of food safety legislation
- introducing and operating an effective system for preventing animal and plant diseases

The potential of the agriculture sector is presented in table 1.

Table 1. Potential of Armenian agriculture sector

Self-sufficiency		
Low level /It doesn't satisfy/	Middle level /satisfies in part/	High level /satisfies /
Wheat, corn, poultry pork	beef milk	Potatoes,vegetables Berries, grapes, sheep, eggs fish.

Self-sufficiency is an indicator assessing the level of food security of the country.

Dynamically developing sub-sectors include animal husbandry for milk and meat, greenhouses, horticulture, fish farming, organic agriculture, viticulture, and winemaking.

2. Basis for organization of the studies within agricultural specialties at VET level

Within the National Qualification Framework, VET occupies levels 3-5 in Armenia (appendix 1). The initial vocational education and training programs are mostly school-based and have two levels: preliminary vocational (craftsmanship) education and middle vocational education. Both preliminary and middle VET can be accessed through the basic general (9-year) and secondary (12-year mandatory) general education, as well as through preliminary vocational (craftsmanship) education in case of admission to middle VET institutions (appendix 2).

The VET content is defined by the State Educational Standards which are approved by Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport (MoESCS) for every qualification and by the modular curricula. According with the Law on Education, the State Educational Standard is a ‘norm which defines the mandatory minimum content of educational programs, the maximum academic workload of learners and the qualitative requirements towards graduates’.

For drafting the standards and the curricula (the latter are composed of an exemplary training plan and a set of programs related to each module of the standard), the MoESCS establishes Working

Groups (WG) involving (on a contractual base) representatives of public VET institutions and the employers. The Regulation on formation of those WGs is approved by MoESCS and defines the number of members of the WG (5 to 7), the procedure for their nomination, the duties of the WG Leader, and related administrative issues.

The Concept of Developing and Introducing Competence-Based State Educational Standards of Professions and Qualifications of Vocational Education in Armenia suggests that the objective of the standard is to set requirements towards the education outcome, i.e. to the formation of the graduates' competences, which would meet the personal educational demands and the requirements of both national and international labor markets, considering their current needs and the future developments.

The following principles of the SES development and introduction are defined by the Concept:

- ✓ Targeted to the formation of a modern person and citizen, reproduction and development of labor force, its competitiveness in the labor market;
- ✓ Compliance of the standard's content with the requirements of the economy and the labor market;
- ✓ Continuity of the educational (learning) processes;
- ✓ Integration into the international education system;
- ✓ Cooperation with the social partners;
- ✓ Systematic review of the standards in line with developments in the labor market and in the education system;
- ✓ Integrity of the standards development and revision processes;
- ✓ Possibility to objectively assess the compliance of the graduates' achievements with the requirements of the standards and the defined criteria;
- ✓ Flexibility of the structure and the content of the standards.

In Armenia there is no category or a concept of occupational or professional standards which would specify the requirements towards the competent performance in a specific workplace, and would serve also as a base for designing the state educational standards. Therefore, for development of the latter, an intermediate exercise – designing of qualification description/profile – is normally carried out. The qualification profiles are developed by the same WG members who are assigned for working out the SES, and for this a methodology similar to the one used for occupational

analysis, is applied. It is also to mention that the structure of this document is not adopted by any legal act, moreover, the qualification profiles (QP) are not a subject to approval and do not constitute a formal part of the SES. Thus, the QPs are used merely as a methodological (working) tool for developing the SES. Nevertheless, they are published at the official web-site of the National Centre for Vocational Education and Training Development (NCVETD, responsible for organization of SES development) along with the SES and the modular curricula.

The State Educational Standards (in appendix 3 is given for “Veterinary” profession) are developed and approved according to the Regulation adopted by the Government and are designed in line with the components of those standards defined by MoESCS The latter foresees the following structure for Standards:

- ✓ General Characteristics of the Qualification;
- ✓ Characteristics of the professional activities of the graduates;
- ✓ General Requirements towards the main educational program of the profession;
- ✓ Requirements towards the mandatory minimum of content of the main educational program of the qualification: competence-based learning outcomes (with a set of performance indicators for each) grouped by modules;
- ✓ Requirements towards the conditions for the education process implementation;
- ✓ Exemplary curriculum (training plan) of the qualification and explanatory notes.

Before being submitted to the MoESCS approval, all draft standards are subject to expertise (technical review) of, and validation by, the corresponding Sectorial Committees

Before introducing any new qualification (profession) in the Classifier of VET professions, the corresponding state educational standard should be developed and approved.

The exemplary modular curricula (in appendix 4 is given for “Veterinary” profession) related to each standard are also developed by NCVETD and provided to the VET institution. The later, however, are completely free in using or adapting those curricula which are considered as recommended support document only. The institutions are also free in selecting the ways and methods of delivering the instruction but their obligation is to ensure that the learning outcomes defined by the standards, are fully achieved.

"Law on Vocational Education" of the Republic of Armenia adopted in 2024 defines a framework of sectoral qualifications instead of state/educational standards. For each level of educational program and qualification, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport develop and approves the description of the educational program.

In particular, professional educational programs are developed in accordance with the requirements of the national framework of qualifications, the framework of sectoral qualifications and the description of the educational program¹³.

The Sectoral qualifications framework for vocational education framework of sectoral qualifications is defined as "integral part of the overall sectoral qualifications framework, which defines the set (list) of qualifications at the vocational education level and outlines the requirements needed to ensure the achievement of the overall final learning outcomes associated with these qualifications¹⁴.

For each level of educational program and qualification, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport defines descriptor for each educational program, which includes the following general requirements for the program¹⁵:

- 1) The qualification orientation, description of the occupation and the expected learning outcomes;
- 2) Entry and withdrawal requirements for qualifications, including forms and frequency of state final testing);
- 3) Total academic load of a student expressed in credits and the minimum duration of the study;
- 4) Programme content – the list of courses or modules providing the qualification and the credit allocated to each course or module;
- 5) Minimum requirements for the inventory and equipment of relevant laboratory and training and practical premises (workshops) based on qualification specifics;
- 6) The awarded qualification and the possible scope of further professional activity.

¹³ "Law on Vocational Education" of the Republic of Armenia, article 7.

¹⁴ "Law on Vocational Education" of the Republic of Armenia, article 3.

¹⁵ "Law on Vocational Education" of the Republic of Armenia, article 7, point 8.

3. Teaching and learning at SSAC

3. 1. General characteristics of Stepanavan state agricultural college

Official name: Stepanavan State Agricultural College Named After Professor a. Kalantar State Non-profit Organization (SNPO)

Address(es): Yeritasardakan 47, Lori, Stepanavan, RA

Phone number: +374 256 2 22 80

Fax: +374 256 2 22 80

Email address: college-step@rambler.ru

Website: www.stepcollege.am

Director: Ara Chobanyan

Stepanavan State Agricultural College was established in 1929 as the Animal Husbandry-Veterinary Technical College. In 1995, it was reorganized and renamed Agricultural College. During its activity until 1991, thousands of students graduated from college in various fields and successfully worked in multiple sectors of the agro-industrial complex of the former USSR. In the period between 1929 and 1991, many specialists of the college contributed to the process of obtaining the Caucasian gray breed. Since the first day of the independence of the Republic of Armenia, the college has continued its fruitful activity and, based on the directions of the strategic development of the state, as well as the requirements of the market economy, the college trains personnel for enterprises in the agrarian sector.

In the post-Soviet period, two agricultural production enterprises operated adjacent to the college. The first was the pedigree farm, where pedigree bulls were kept, and high-value semen was produced. The second was the “Qarakhach” farm, where they practiced veterinary medicine. Both farms served as a training base for college students and ensured the efficient organization of student internships. Later, these farms were also privatized, but experience has shown that having a farm attached to the college contributes to the effective organization of Dual education.

Vision - Stepanavan State Agricultural College strives to become an educational center contributing to the development of the agricultural sector in the country and in the region, where students will get the opportunity to receive an education that meets modern and industry requirements having sufficient skills and abilities.

The mission - the college aims to concentrate the educational, personnel, and material potential, providing quality education, and to train middle specialists who meet the modern demands of the agricultural labor market and take into account their dynamic changes.

Values - democracy and transparency, consensus, mutual trust and support, responsibility, decency and tolerance, consistency and loyalty to adopted ideas, creativity and innovation, excellence and perfection, continuous quality improvement, participation and cooperation, efficiency of activities, gender equality

Currently, given the demand of the labor market, the following major specialties are offered at the college, available in both full-time and part-time formats:

1. *“Veterinary Medicine” - Qualification: “Junior Veterinarian”*
2. *“Milk and Dairy Products Technology” - Qualification: “Technologist of Milk and Dairy Products Production”*
3. *“Operation and repair of agricultural machinery and equipment”, qualification: “Technician: operation and repair of agricultural machinery and equipment”*
4. *“Management”, qualification: “Manager”*
5. *“Accounting”, qualification: “Accountant”*
6. *“Organization and management of motor transportation”, qualification: “Technician-administrator of transportation and management in motor transport”*
7. *“Organizing agricultural/farm economy”, qualification: Farm Organizer*
8. *“Tourism”, qualification: tourism services specialist*

The college cooperates with several international structures, particularly CARD, SDA and GIZ. The college is currently undergoing the institutional accreditation process and has completed several stages successfully. Taking into consideration the needs and interests of employers, the

college also collaborates with numerous employers who contribute to the development of curricula and subject programs and oversee educational and industrial internships. The college also successfully cooperates with several non-governmental organizations, particularly “Business and Education” and “Haykakan Caritas” NGOs, and with the latter's grant, a greenhouse with an area of 170 m² is being built in the college.

Since 2022, the college has been included in the MAVETA program, thanks to which work-based training is being implemented in the college from the beginning of 2023-2024, but as a result of the Erasmus+ program, we will transition to a fully Dual education with three majors: “Veterinary Medicine”, “Milk and Dairy Technology”, “Management”. Considering the building conditions of the college, the college was included in the list of agricultural colleges for which it is planned to build new educational buildings.

The design budget documents are ready and have passed the appropriate expertise. Construction works will likely start next year. According to its strategic plan, the college aims to become not only an educational but also a scientific center in the region. In this regard, it is planned to expand the scope of cooperation not only with local organizations but also with international and donor organizations.

3. 2. The organization of study on selected specialties of the “Erasmus+” program

Currently, the total number of students is 323. The cohort of students for the last 3 years is presented in Appendix 5. All specialties are modern and in demand, as evidenced by the admission results of the last three years: there are no vacancies.

In 2023, 45 students applied and were admitted to the college with the chosen specialties: 11 are “Veterinary Medicine”, 17 are “Milk and Dairy Technology” and 17 are “Management”. In the future, the college will continue developing new agricultural specialties based on the demands of the labor market.

In particular, due to the mandatory nature of slaughterhouses, there are plans to introduce specialties in “Meat and Meat Products Technology” and “Organization of Slaughterhouse,” which are already in demand in the labor market. The current training of students in the professions of “Veterinary Medicine” and “Milk and Dairy Technology” is being conducted under unsatisfactory

educational and laboratory conditions. The goal is to acquire specific property and equipment within the program to improve the quality of education.

College graduates work in regional veterinary centers, farms, and various enterprises and organizations of the agro-industrial complex. Especially veterinarians are in high demand, as vets with higher education generally do not return to the regions.

College lecturers undergo regular training, and a farmer advisory service is implemented in the college contributing to the increase in the work efficiency among the community's farmers.

Farmers in the region apply to the college if necessary and receive free advice from relevant professionals.

3. 3. Teaching staff

The college employs mainly specialists with high education and specialists having a certain production work experience, and both young and experienced personnel.

College professors receive regular training in various areas and through different programs. The involvement of employers-experts from various fields in the educational process of the college is also emphasized, for example, employers are involved in the theoretical learning process, and college professors participate in production processes. Due to the low salary level, there is still a need for “Veterinary Medicine” specialty teachers. The information about the college teaching staff is reflected in Appendix 6.

3. 4. Current forms of WBL

Since 2019-2020, work-based learning in the “Veterinary Medicine” and “Milk and Dairy Technology” specialties have been implemented in the college on an experimental basis. The experience of the past four years has demonstrated that work-based learning (WBL) is highly effective, with graduates showing greater knowledge and performance compared to previous training methods. But at the same time, the experience shows that the employers of the region, the farmers, also have the problem of being trained as well as the need for modern materials and technical base.

Taking into account the above-mentioned the college was included in the MAVETA program from 2022, and from 2023-2024 the above-mentioned two specialties were transferred to the WBL educational program, and within their framework, the training of college students will be organized through college-employer cooperation.

Considering the employers' problem of renewing the material and technical base, it is important to build a SMART farm next to the college. It will make it possible to organize the training of those modules in the economy attached to the college, the training of which cannot be organized at the employers.

Within the framework of the project, it is planned to transition to the DUAL Education System in the specialty of "Management" as a result of which we will have a production and sales chain.

3. 5. Potential for a farm adjacent to SSAC

The college is situated in an area with favorable climatic conditions, allowing it to engage in various economic activities due to the abundant labor and other contributing factors. Namely, the total area of the college is 46,720 square meters, which will enable not only to deployment of the infrastructure of the farm for the intended 25 cattle, but also ensure certain fodder production, and the rest of the fodder base will be filled at the expense of leased land.

During 2023-2024, when the college plans to construct new buildings, one of the current educational buildings will be repurposed into a small milk processing plant. The plan also includes purchasing modern machinery and equipment for the plant. As a result, a basic base for DUAL education will be created for almost all the majors of the college, for example, milk production, feed production, milk processing, transportation, and sales.

Details of the land area and building conditions of the college are presented in Appendix 7.

4. Legal framework for organization of WBL and entrepreneurial activities by VET institution in Armenia

In Armenia the initial vocational education and training programmes have two levels: preliminary vocational (craftsmanship) education and middle vocational education. Preliminary vocational

(Craftsmanship) education is mostly implemented in craftsmanship schools, while middle vocational education can be implemented at middle vocational educational institutions, colleges. All public VET institutions have a status of State Non-Commercial Organisations (SNCO) acting in accordance with the Law on State Non-Commercial Organizations.

Armenian VET institution may implement commercial (entrepreneurial) activities such as service provision or production, according the decision of the founder (Government) for identified type of entrepreneurial activities or by the establishment of a separate company.

Law of the Republic of Armenia on State Non-Commercial Organisations allows VET institutions to deliver continuing VET programmes as entrepreneurial activities defined by its founder¹⁶. According to the Government decision, the state college are allowed to carry out the following types of entrepreneurial activities¹⁷:

- secondary vocational, primary professional (Craftsmanship) education, general education, additional education.
- organization of other professional training courses;
- staff training, capacity building and qualification development;
- realization of creative, research, experimental and expert activities;
- in-job-training and production activities, implementation of service delivery;
- development of teaching-methodological materials, manuals.
- organization and (or) delivery of educational, cultural, social, sports and other events
- publishing activities;
- organization of public catering for college students and employees;
- organization of dormitory services for college students and staff;
- organization of vacation services for college students and staff.
- implementation of cultural activities.

¹⁶ Law of the RA on State Non-Commercial Organisations. RA National Assembly, ՀՕ-248, article 6.

¹⁷ Decision No. 1009-N of the Government of the Republic of Armenia of June 20, 2002 "On the Reorganization of the Secondary Vocational State Educational Institutions of the Republic of Armenia and the Approval of the Model Charter of the Secondary Vocational State Educational Institution of the Republic of Armenia", article 6.

These types of activities are reflected in the charter form of State VET institution¹⁸, the profit from the implementation of which is used for the realization of the objectives set up by the charter of institution. The modalities of the usage of profit are determined by the founder, the Government, while taxes, duties and mandatory payments are billed in the amount foreseen for non-profit organizations¹⁹.

The new Law on Vocational Education adopted recently by National Assembly foresees provision allowing VET institutions to sell the products and services as results of their entrepreneurial activities.

In addition to the types of entrepreneurial activities defined by the decision of the Government, the VET institution has the right to establish economic companies or become a participant in them by the decision of the founder²⁰. Amendments to Law on Non-Profit Organizations in the framework of new Law on Vocational Education reinforces the possibility of VET institution to establish a commercial entity or participate to existing one in case of organization of production of goods and services delivery within the fields of taught specialties.

According to the legislation of the Republic of Armenia legal entities as commercial companies can be established through economic associations (full-fledged or trust-based companies), companies (limited or additional liability company and joint stock company) or cooperatives (commercial and non-commercial cooperatives).

¹⁸ Decision No. 1009-N of the Government of the Republic of Armenia of June 20, 2002 "On the Reorganization of the Secondary Vocational State Educational Institutions of the Republic of Armenia and the Approval of the Model Charter of the Secondary Vocational State Educational Institution of the Republic of Armenia", article 11.

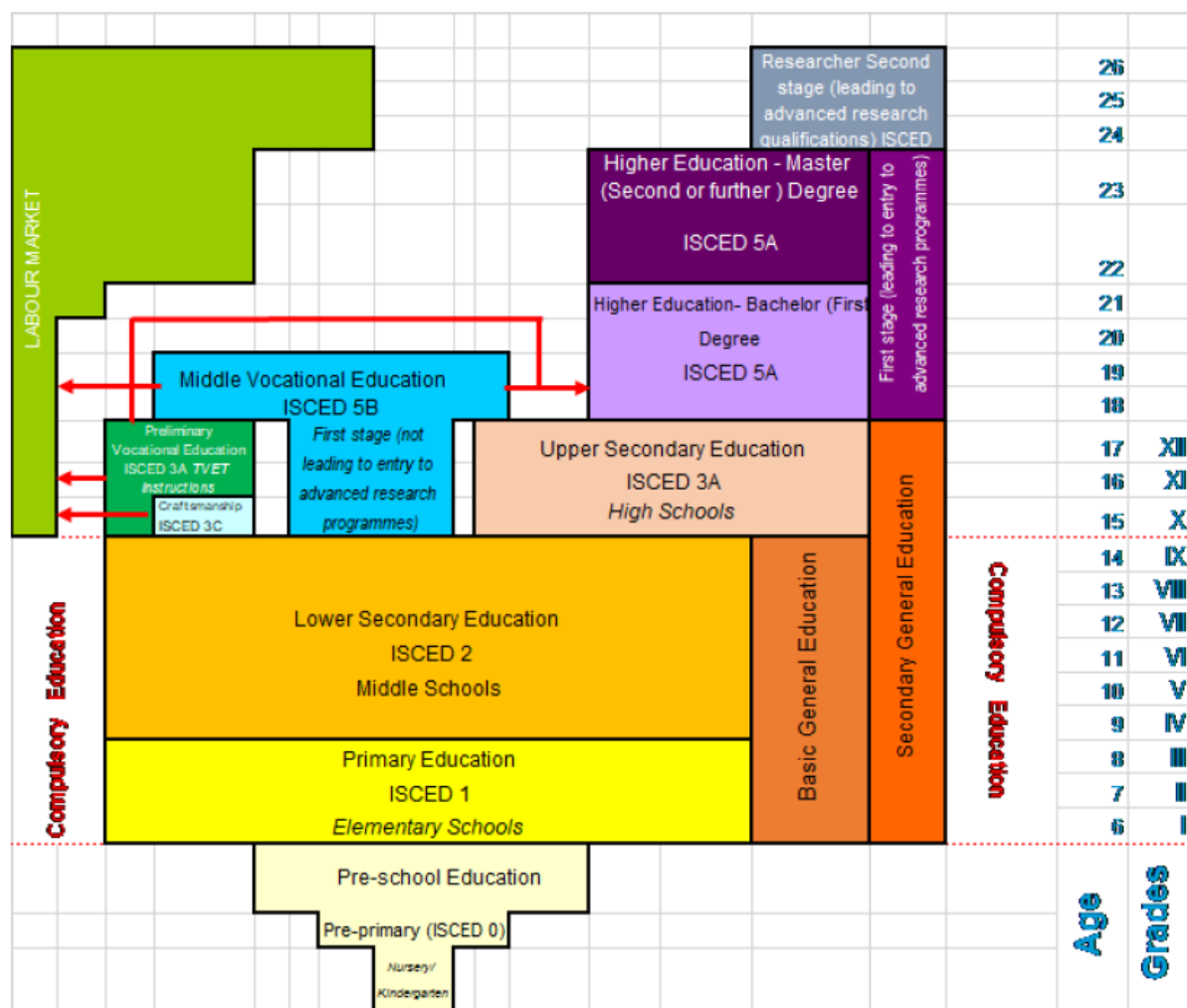
¹⁹ Decision No. 1009-N of the Government of the Republic of Armenia of June 20, 2002 "On the Reorganization of the Secondary Vocational State Educational Institutions of the Republic of Armenia and the Approval of the Model Charter of the Secondary Vocational State Educational Institution of the Republic of Armenia", article 75.

²⁰ Civil Code of the Republic of Armenia. RA National Assembly, HO-239, article 52.

Appendix 1. National Qualification Framework in Armenia

Level	Qualification	Education degree (level), the programme	Duration
1st	CERTIFICATE OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION	1st level of Secondary Education	4 years
2nd	CERTIFICATE OF BASIC EDUCATION	2nd level of Secondary Education	5 years
3rd	CRAFTSMAN (with basic education) (Certificate of Master training qualification)	Preliminary Vocational (Craftsmanship) Educational Programme	6 months to 1 year
4th	1. CERTIFICATE (“Attestat”) OF SECONDARY EDUCATION	3rd level of Secondary Education – senior school	3 years
	2. CRAFTSMAN (with secondary education) (Diploma of Craftsmanship Education)	Preliminary Vocational (Craftsmanship) Educational Programme	1-3 years
5th	SPECIALIST (Diploma of Middle Vocational Education)	Middle Vocational Educational Programme	2-5 years
6th	BACHELOR (Bachelor Diploma)	Bachelor’s Educational Programme	Minimum 3 years
7th	MASTER (Master Diploma)	Master’s Educational Programme	Minimum 1 year
	SPECIALIST WITH DIPLOMA (Diploma of Specialist with Diploma)	Bachelor’s Educational Programme of Specialist with Diploma	Minimum 5 years
8th	(Certificate of PhD)	Post-graduate Professional Educational Programme	Minimum 3 years

Appendix 2. Education system in Armenia



Appendix 3. Brief structure of state educational standard for vet in Armenia

The state educational standard for VET is a normative document which defines the mandatory minimum content of educational programs, the maximum volume of the educational load of students and the qualitative requirements for graduates.

Here is given the VET “Veterinary” Profession State Educational Standard

CHAPTER 1 - GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The present standard defines the requirements of the VET “Veterinary” qualification within the RA education national qualification framework level 5, general educational program mandatory minimum, minimum and maximum educational workload of students.
2. The main educational program of the “Veterinary” profession can be implemented in the following ways:
 - 1) full-time studies
 - 2) part-time studies
 - 3) external (distance-learning) studies
3. The following normative duration of studies is defined for the VET 3104 profession of “Veterinary”.
 - 1) Full-time studies
 - a/ based on the secondary education – duration is 3 years
 - b/ based on the primary education – duration is 4 years
 - 2) Part-time studies
 - a/ based on secondary education – duration is 4 years
 - 3) External (distance-learning) studies duration is determined by the educational institution according to the RA Government September 6, 2007 N 1028 decree about “Preliminary (artisan) and vocational education and training distance-learning (external) educational norms”.

4. The minimum workload of a student with secondary education base involved in VET for “Veterinary” profession is 4032 hours. Maximum workload is 6642 hours.
In case of primary education base duration of study is 52 weeks more.

CHAPTER 2 - VET classificatory “Veterinary” Profession

Professional Activity Specifications

5. The specifications of the professional activity of “Veterinary” specialist are defined according to the type of occupation and professional duties.
6. VET “Veterinary” profession specialist can be involved in the following occupational fields:
 - 1) Injection works veterinary specialist
 - 2) Veterinarian assistant
 - 3) Technician-veterinarian
 - 4) Artificial insemination intern-veterinarian
 - 5) Vaccination specialist
 - 6) Vaccination technician
 - 7) Artificial insemination technician
 - 8) Injection technician
7. The professional duties of the VET “Veterinary” profession specialist are:
 - 1) To provide advisory services to the population related to diseases of animals and their treatment,
 - 2) To conduct medical examination of animals and to diagnose the disease, in case of need to refer to the services of veterinarian-doctor,
 - 3) To prepare and keep in order all the instruments needed for treatment of animals,
 - 4) To provide artificial insemination services, to prepare animals for the examination and treatment, if needed to provide the immobility of animals,
 - 5) To control the condition of buildings, animal feed and equipment,
 - 6) To manage other workers,
 - 7) To conduct disinfection works,
 - 8) To prepare animals for treatment or examination, as well as ensure that the medicines and the reagents are kept in a corresponding regime,

- 9) To make a preliminary clinical examination of animals, their primary treatment as well as to diagnose pregnancy and to provide obstetrics services,
- 10) To provide necessary measures for prevention of infectious, invasions and not infectious diseases and in case of occurring of this type of diseases to prevent their spreading,
- 11) To make disinfection of animal sheds and any adjacent territories, surgery rooms and medical instruments,
- 12) To make clinical examination and numbering of animals, and to fill the veterinary documents and veterinary register,
- 13) To conduct zoo-hygienic works necessary for treatment of sick animals,
- 14) To collect pathological samples, to conserve them and to send them for examination to corresponding laboratories with the explanatory notes attached.

CHAPTER 3 - VET classificatory “Veterinary” profession

General Requirements for Main Educational Program

8. VET “Veterinary” profession general educational requirements are defined according to the general requirements for the graduate.
9. VET “Veterinary” profession graduate should have:
 - 1) practical and theoretical knowledge necessary in the field of professional occupation,
 - 2) communication skills, ability to present professional issues to partners or managers and to solve them,
 - 3) professional and alternative problem solving skills in changing situations,
 - 4) civic awareness competence as well as ability to compare facts and information needed for solution of problems in professional field,
 - 5) skills for implementing professional activity according to the corresponding norms,
 - 6) have the ability and skills to assess his and his co-workers (in case of availability) professional needs and to present suggestions for improvement,
 - 7) motivation for ongoing professional and self-development,
 - 8) skills for searching of necessary professional information and its use on purpose,

- 9) skills for coordinating the activities of co-workers (in case of their availability) or partnership relations (if authorized),
- 10) skills for applying strategic approaches for the solution of current professional problems.

CHAPTER 4 - VET classificatory “Veterinary” Profession

Main Educational Program Mandatory Minimum Requirements

10. VET “Veterinary” profession main educational program mandatory minimum requirements towards a graduate are the following: to have skills and knowledge in general humanitarian, socio-economic and natural sciences, possession of general and professional key competences.
11. Graduates of the VET “Veterinary” profession should have the following competences in the field of humanitarian, socio-economic and natural sciences:
 - 1) knowledge of main provisions of normative acts as defined by the RA Constitution in relation with the present occupational field and legislation coordinating relationships between public and citizens,
 - 2) knowledge of Armenian language,
 - 3) ability to communicate at least in 2 foreign languages,
 - 4) to follow the rules of general hygiene and conducting healthy lifestyle,
 - 5) knowledge in national and world history and culture,
 - 6) general information about personal and public development patterns, social public structure, movements, political subjects, political relations and processes,
 - 7) knowledge about applied economic provisions, specifics of economic relations in the professional field, laws of macro and micro economics, specifics of transitional period economy,
 - 8) knowledge about the main ecological notions, global and regional environmental problems,
 - 9) be aware about emergency situations and possess main approaches and principles of acting in emergency situations, be familiar with type and structure of rescuing works, and to use self-defense methods.

12. VET “Veterinary” profession graduate should possess all the key competences defined by the educational modules which are described in Table 1 and approved by the current decree.
13. VET “Veterinary” profession graduate should possess general professional and special competences defined by the educational modules of the profession which are described in Table 2 and approved by the current decree.

CHAPTER 5 - VET classificatory “Veterinary” Profession

Requirements for the Implementation of the Main Educational Program

14. The following requirements are set towards the educational institutions providing VET “Veterinary” profession for the provision of human resources and their compliance:
 - 1) A teacher running educational courses should have a secondary or high professional education qualification in the corresponding field, or a work experience in certain occupational field in case there is no secondary or high educational program in relation with a certain profession in Republic of Armenia. Professional work experience is preferable for the teachers running special professional courses.
 - 2) A master running educational practice should have professional work experience and educational qualification in the related professional field.
 - 3) Industrial and undergraduate practices are conducted by the teacher running professional course.
15. The following requirements are set towards the educational institutions providing general educational program for the VET “Veterinary” profession in relation with educational methodology:
16. The educational institutions providing VET in “Veterinary” profession should correspond to the following logistical needs: training rooms, laboratories, workshops, sport hall. Their saturation is determined in accordance with the requirements of the curriculum.
 - 1) necessary training rooms list:
 - a. humanities
 - b. computer room
 - c. anatomy

- d. pharmacology
 - e. obstetrics
 - f. surgery
 - g. epidemiology and parasitology
- 2) necessary training laboratories list:
- a. physiological
 - b. bacteriological
 - c. surgical
 - d. obstetrics and artificial insemination
- 3) sport complex
- a. sport hall
 - b. sport playground

In case of need the educational institution can form additional training cabinets, laboratories.

17. For the organization of educational process of VET in “Veterinary” profession the following requirements are set:

- 1) The academic year for full-time studies starts on 1st September, and for the part-time and distance-learning studies the start of the academic year is determined according to the educational plan.
- 2) The duration of each academic year is defined according to the educational plan.
- 3) The maximum weekly workload of a student shouldn't exceed 54 hours including all types of classroom and extracurricular work.
- 4) The minimum and mandatory weekly workload of a student shouldn't exceed 36 hours. It doesn't include additional extracurricular studies, consultations and preferred subjects.
- 5) For the part-time studies the mandatory annual workload is at least 160 hours.
- 6) The annual consultations for the study group make up to 100 hours.
- 7) The list of preferred subjects, their number (with a separate schedule) and the duration of studies for each year is determined based on the choice of students.
- 8) The list of preferred subjects, their number (with a separate schedule) and the duration of studies for each year is determined based on the choice of students.

18. The following requirements are set towards the organization of practice for the VET in the profession of “Veterinary”:
 - 1) The main vocational educational program includes: educational (theoretical and non-theoretical studies), production and undergraduate practice.
 - 2) The duration of each practical course defined by this standard corresponds to the duration of practice as defined in the educational plan.
 - 3) The educational program of the practical course is formed and approved by the educational institution.
 - 4) The practical courses are conducted in educational workshops equipped with necessary furniture and technical devices, educational sectors, as well as in relevant companies and establishments.
 - 5) Industrial and undergraduate practical courses are conducted, as a rule, in relevant organizations having all the technical conditions corresponding to the requirements of practical course curricula.
19. The certification of students of the VET “Veterinary” profession is done according to the following requirements:
 - 1) During their studies the students are being certified from time to time for the purpose of assessing development of their competences as defined by the current standard.
 - 2) In the beginning of educational semester a student is informed about the character of the intermediary certification during the semester, about its’ type, date and included educational material.
 - 3) State final certification is conducted in a way of examination of different subjects or modules or by writing and defending thesis.
 - 4) State final certification method should give the opportunity to check the professional competences and skills of the graduate as per requirements defined by the current educational standard for the qualification of “Veterinarian” of the “Veterinary” profession.

CHAPTER 6- VET *classificatory* “Veterinary” profession modular curricula, educational plan and relevant clarifications

20. In order to implement the main educational program of the VET in “Veterinary” profession, the educational institution develops and approves the curricula for key competences, main and special modules, special courses, the educational plan corresponding to the format approved by the state authorized body managing the education considering the example of the educational plan provided in the Table 3 of the current decree.
21. While making the educational plan and modular curricula based on this standard for VET in the “Veterinary” profession, the educational institution:
- 1) can change and adapt the course and module hours by keeping to the main requirements set towards competences and skills of a graduate,
 - 2) should take into consideration any suggestions made by the employers, executive bodies, state authorized bodies managing the professional field and other stakeholders while developing educational programs according to the criteria set by modules and for the implementation of their results,
 - 3) should decide the number and hours of the theoretical, practical and laboratory courses in the framework of modular curricula,
 - 4) should decide the time given for the certification in each semester within the total weeks’ time set for the intermediary certification,
 - 5) according to the specifications of the profession should develop and approve curricula for special courses considering the importance and special features of the current qualification,
 - 6) should develop the clarifications of applying the educational plan based on the clarifications described in the approved format,
 - 7) should decide the duration of the educational, production and undergraduate practice,
 - 8) should choose final certification method based on the certification methods defined by the current standard.

Appendix 4. Exemplary modular curricula for “Veterinary”

N	Names of the modules and subjects	Certification by semesters			Student study load (hours)			Distribution by courses and semesters								
		Exam.	Test	course work.	Mandatory audience load			1 st course		2 nd course		3 rd course		4 rd course		
					Total	Including		1 st sem. week	2 nd sem. week	3 rd sem. week	4 rd sem. week	5 rd sem. week	6 rd sem. week	7 rd sem. week	8 rd sem. week	
Theoretical training	Laboratory and practical work	Seminar														
1.	GENERAL HUMANITARIAN, SOCIAL-ECONOMIC AND GENERAL NATURAL															
1.	Basics of Armenian language and speech culture		4d		72	54	18				52	20				
2.	Basics of economics		4d		54	30	24				26	28				
3.	Basics of political science and sociology		4d		54	38	16				32	22				
4.	Law basics		5d		36	20	16						36			
5.	History		4d		54	34	20				26	28				
6.	Russian language		6d		72	12	60						36	36		
7.	Foreign language		6d		72	16	56						36	36		

8.	Physical education		3,4, 5,6, 7,8d		148	12	136				26	26	26	26	26	18
9.	Basics of Landscape Science and Ecology		6d		36	20	16							36		
10.	Civil defense and emergency issues		5d		28	26	2						28			
	ԸՆԴԱՍԵՆԸ				626	262	364				162	124	162	134	26	18
2.	CORE SKILLS															
1.	Communication skills		6d		36	10	26							36		
2.	First aid and safety skills		6d		36	12	24							36		
3.	Computer skills		6d		36	4	32							36		
	Total				108	26	80							108		
3.	GENERAL PROFESSIONAL															
1.	Structure and physiology of animal skin and its derivatives		3d		54	16	38				54					
2.	Anatomy and physiology of the musculoskeletal system of animals		3d		72	20	52				72					
3.	Structure and physiology of digestive, respiratory and genitourinary organs of animals		3d		72	24	48				72					
4.	Anatomy and physiology of the circulatory and lymphatic systems of animals		3d		36	10	26				36					
5.	Anatomy and physiology of the nervous system and endocrine glands of animals		3d		36	12	24				36					
6.	Latin language		3d		36	12	24				36					

7.	Mechanisms of action of common groups of drugs and their interactions	4	4d		72	40	32					72				
	Total				378	140	238					306	72			
4.	SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL															
1.	Causes of infectious diseases, ways of spreading, diagnostic methods	4			54	18	36					54				
2.	General epidemiology		4d		54	18	36					54				
3.	Causes, development and ways of spreading parasitic diseases		4d		36	12	24					36				
4.	Diagnosis, treatment and prevention of parasitic diseases		4d		54	16	38					54				
5.	Causes of non-infectious diseases, methods of prevention and treatment		4d		72	24	48					72				
6.	Implementation of preventive measures against infectious diseases and zoonoses, the most dangerous diseases	5			72	24	48						72			
7.	Disinfection and disinfection		5d		54	12	42						54			
8.	Catching and knocking down animals		8d		36	8	28									36
9.	General requirements for zoohygienic conditions		5d		72	20	52						72			
10.	Providing feeding and care conditions during the treatment of sick animals		5d		36	12	24						36			
11.	Preliminary animal clinical examination and dispensation	5			72	24	48						72			

12.	Ways and methods of introduction of medicines	6			36	10	26							36		
13.	Collection of appropriate samples for laboratory diagnosis		6d		36	12	24							36		
14.	Procedure for completing veterinary registers and documents		6d		36	8	28							36		
15.	Knowledge and storage of medicines, disinfectants, biological preparations		6d		54	18	36							54		
16.	Early pregnancy decision and maternity care	7			72	36	36								72	
17.	Mastitis. treatment and prevention		7d		36	12	24								36	
18.	Artificial insemination		6d		54	14	40							54		
19.	Treatment of burns, mechanical injuries and fractures of various types of animals		7d		54	12	42								54	
20.	Surgical interventions		7d		54	18	36								54	
21.	Veterinary sanitary examination		7d		36	12	24								36	
22.	Conditions of behavior and care of young animals of different species		7d		36	12	24								36	
23.	Treatment and prevention of the most common diseases of young animals of various species	7			72	24	48								72	
24.	Treatment and prevention of bird diseases		7d		36	10	26								36	
25.	Treatment and prevention of diseases of fish, ornamental and fur animals		7d		36	8	28								36	
26.	Treatment and prevention of bee diseases		8d		36	12	24									36

27.	Entrepreneurship		8d		72	22	50								72	
	TOTAL				1368	428	940					270	306	216	432	144
5.	OPTIONAL				84											84
	RESERVE HOURS				100							2		10	10	78
	TOTAL										468	468	468	468	468	324
	CONSULTATIONS				300											
	Number of hours per week									36	36	36	36	36	36	36
IV. PREFERENCE SUBJECTS								N	VII. LIST OF NECESSARY CABINETS, LABORATORIES AND WORKSHOPS							
1.	Psychology							1.	humanitarian subjects							
2.	Forms and methods of providing consulting services							2.	foreign languages							
								3.	socio-economic subjects							
								4.	computer							
	V. PRACTICE	Semester	Week					5.	of anatomy							
1.	Educational practice without theoretical training	3,4,5,6,7, 8	4,8,4,8,4,6					6.	of surgery							
2.	Professional industrial practices	8	4													
	TOTAL															
VI. SUMMARY CERTIFICATION OF STUDY									LABORATORIES							
Two complex state exams:								1.	physiology							
1. from general professional modules								2.	obstetrics and artificial insemination							
2. from special professional modules									SPORTS COMPLEX							

(between June 15 and June 28)

1. Gym

2. Sports ground

Appendix 5: The student movement of the institution over the last 3 years

Profession / Qualification	Number of Students			
		2022	2023	2024
	<i>women</i>			
Organization and Management of Motor Transportation. Qualification: Technician in regulated transport	Total	65	63	59
	<i>women</i>	5	5	6
Veterinary Medicine Qualification: Junior Vet	Total	35	28	20
	<i>women</i>	8	8	4
Accounting Qualification: Accountant	Total	59	64	46
	women	39	46	24
Management Qualification : Manager	Total	45	46	65
	women	25	25	30
Milk and Dairy Product Technology Qualification: Technologist for production of milk and dairy products	Total	68	65	49
	women	34	33	27
Exploitation and repairing of agricultural machinery and equipment Qualification: Technician	Total	49	47	53
	women	-	-	-
Organization of rural/farming/ economy qualification: Livestock farm organizer	Total	11	9	8
	women	-	-	-
Tourism Qualification: Specialist in tourism services	Total	12	12	23
	women	8	8	17
Total Number	Total	344	334	313
	women	119	125	108

The number of students was recorded as of May 1, 2024.

Appendix 6. The staff of the institution

	Total	Including Those					
		who teach	Who have scientific degree	Distribution by age			
				up to 30 years old	30-45	46-60	Over 60 years old
Administrative staff	19	15	-	2	8	5	4
<i>women</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>13</i>	-	2	6	3	2
Teachers	28	28	-	8	10	3	7
<i>women</i>	20	20	-	8	7	1	4
Auxiliary (technical) staff	11	-	-	2	1	5	3
<i>women</i>	4	-	-	-	-	3	1
Total	58	43	-	12	19	13	14
<i>The number of women</i>	37	33		10	13	7	7

Appendix 7. Information about Land and Building Conditions

Total land area:	<u>46720</u> sq.m.
<i>Speorts ground</i>	<u>600</u> sq.m.
<i>Asphalt square</i>	<u>1600</u> sq.m.
<i>Asphalt road</i>	<u>920</u> sq.m.

Private buildings :

1. Former educational building

Total area: 993.4 sq.m.	Useful area: 903 sq.m.
Number of floors: 4	Volume: 9934 square meters
Year of construction: 1975	
<u>Semi-destroyed : as a result of the earthquake, became emergency</u>	
Condition: subject to demolition	

2. Sports hall / emergency semi-demolition

Total area: 921.3 sq.m.	Useful area: 2012 m.
Number of floors: 1	Volume: 6449 square meters.
Year of construction: 1975	
Usage: Not in use Condition subject to demolition.	

3. Educational building

Total area: 579 sq.m.	Useful area: 549 sq.m.
Number of floors: 1	Year of construction: 1975
Usage: Free to use.	

4. Boiler house /semi-destroyed/

Total area: 302.6 sq.m.	Useful area: 1296.1 sq.m.
Number of floors: 1	Size: 1210 sq.m.
Year of construction: 1975	
Usage: Not used	

Condition: subject to demolition.

5. Boiler house

Total area: 14,9 sq.m.

Օգտակար մակերեսը՝ 149 ք.մ.

Number of floors: 1

Size: 31 sq.m.

Year of construction: 2006

Usage: Free to use

Condition: working, subject to repair.

6. Administrative building

Total area: 385 sq.m.

Useful area: 358 sq.m.

Number of floors: 2.

Volume: 2310 square meters.

Year of construction: 2004.

Usage: Free to use

Condition: subject to being overhauled.

7. Guard house

Total area: 10.84 sq.m.

Useful area: 10.84 sq.m.

Number of floors: 1

Volume: 14.9 sq.m.

Year of construction: 2008

Use: free use

Condition: Normal.

8. Wooden club

Total area: 289 sq.m.

Useful area: 289 sq.m.

Number of floors: 1

Volume: 867 sq.m.

Year of construction: 1988

Usage: Free to use

Condition: emergency, subject to demolition.

9. Wooden educational building

The total area is 772.4 square meters

Useful area: 766.4 sq.m.

Number of floors: 2

Volume: 2317 sq.m.

Year of construction: 1989.

Usage: Free to use

Condition: Partially used and subject to demolition.

10. Garages

Total area: 238.7 sq.m.

Useful area: 328.7 sq.m.

Number of floors:

Volume: 954 sq.m.

Year of construction: 1975.

Usage: Free to use

Condition: emergency, subject to demolition.