

Army National Guard (ARNG) Agribusiness Development Team (ADT)

What is it? The Agribusiness Development Team (ADT) is a self-contained volunteer unit composed of 58 Army National Guard Soldiers and Air National Guard (ANG) Airmen with backgrounds and expertise in various sectors of the agribusiness field. Soldiers and Airmen team together in a unique and growing effort in Afghanistan. The ADTs provide training and advice to Afghan universities, provincial ministries, and local farmers with the goals of increasing stability and improving opportunities for Afghanistan's reemerging agribusiness realm. ADTs ensure that improvements are sustainable with local assets and within the context of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL) abilities.

What has the Army done? In early FY11, nine ADTs are deployed to Regional Command East, Regional Command Central, and Regional Command South augmenting Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan. The current in-country ADTs hail from Texas, Missouri, Kentucky, Kansas, Indiana, Oklahoma, Nevada, Iowa, and Arkansas. Since the inception of the program in 2007, 19 ADT rotations (with 11 months – boots on the ground) have operated in 14 provinces and contributed to over 282 sustainable agriculture projects generating more than \$21 million in revenues for the people of Afghanistan. ADT Soldiers bring their military capabilities as well as their professional civilian skills and education in various agricultural disciplines to work directly with the farmers of Afghanistan. Specific skills include agronomy (soil and seed science), irrigation, horticulture (plant cultivation), pest control, veterinary/basic animal husbandry techniques, civil engineering, and energy management. These citizen-Soldiers also bring their personal ties and relationships from rural America, leveraging the assets and expertise of land-grant universities and cooperative extension services within their home states. With the help of the ADTs, Afghanistan reports declines in poppy production and increases in harvests of apples, grapes, pomegranates, cherries, almonds, wheat, corn, alfalfa, and saffron.

What continued efforts does the Army have planned for the future? The following states will deploy teams in 2011: Missouri, Texas, Indiana, Illinois, Georgia, Nebraska, Kentucky, Arkansas, and Kansas. The Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF), a coalition of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) countries, is focusing its efforts on areas where progress in security and stability has emerged. The CJTFs provincial priorities include security, governance, rule of law, and business development lines of operation along with ADT plans to develop the full spectrum of agribusiness. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) are both enthusiastic about supporting the ADT initiative.

Why is this important to the Army? The ADT concept provides two major benefits to the Counterinsurgency (COIN) Strategy: (1) impart agricultural expertise to Afghan farmers and (2) assist the Task Force Commanders with daily community engagement. The Department of State (DOS), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) enthusiastically support the ADT initiative.