BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION
A large proportion of Kurdistan-Iraq is arable, productive, receives ample rainfall, and capable of supporting food production for the region’s population and generating income from export sales to other areas. Agricultural products are known for their high quality as well. Kurdish rice, for example, is famous for its superior quality throughout Iraq and commands a premium price. Unfortunately, agricultural industries in Kurdistan-Iraq have suffered considerably, due in part to the destruction of over 4,000 rural communities through the 1980’s and early 90’s. This resulted in the near abandonment of rich production areas and the deterioration of local governmental capability to conduct agricultural education, research, extension and outreach activity.

KAHEAD’S GOAL
The long-term goal of the Hawaii-Kurdistan Partnership for Revitalizing Agricultural Higher Education and Development is to energize the economy, protect the environment and strengthen food security of the region through introducing cutting-edge agricultural science and technology in Kurdistan-Iraq.

This goal will be accomplished by:
• Engaging the administrators, faculty, students, staff, and other clients of Ministry of Agriculture, Colleges of Agriculture at University of Sulaimani, Salahaddin University, University of Dohuk, University of Koya, and Foundation of Technical Education in gaining state-of-the-art benefits from regional and international expertise.
• Establishing a comprehensive agricultural extension program.
• Invigorating agricultural research and educational programs.
• Restoring and modernizing research and outreach teaching facilities and infrastructure in partnership with the University of Hawaii and other selected cooperating institutions.

Inaugural Ground Truthing and Planning Meetings
KAHEAD’S Director and Manager undertook a site visit to discuss work plans with Kurdistan partners in January, 2007. The discussions resulted in a common understanding on management issues as well as a prioritized schedule of KAHEAD activities.

They also visited with regional partners in Egypt, Egyptian International Center for Agriculture (EICA) and The Desert Development Center at The American University in Cairo (DDC/AUC), Jordan, Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), Syria, International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), Lebanon, American University of Beirut (AUB), and Morocco, The National School of Forest Engineering (ENFI).
Formal Signing of KAHEAD Cooperative Agreement

Following several months of negotiations and discussions, the University of Hawaii representatives (Program Director and Manager) met with the Kurdistan delegation headed by HE the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHE&SR) with the Minister of Agriculture (MOA) and University representatives at Istanbul, in June, 2006. Agreement on KAHEAD details was reached then and formally took effect after administrative authorization by institutional representatives in August, 2006.