

## Global Perspectives – 2025

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Republic of Türkiye.

Arrived to Istanbul, August 3 at 5:30 am. My host Zekeriya Kiyma, PhD met us at the airport. We spent two days in Istanbul leaving late, August 4 for Eskisehir. Dr. Kiyma is an Associate Professor of Animal Science at Eskisehir Osmangazi University. We spent two days at the University—met faculty and toured their facilities. The afternoon of August 6 we departed Eskisehir for Kayseri to visit the University of Erciyes. August 7 - 9 we visited faculty and toured their facilities and the town of Kayseri. Leaving Kayseri on August 10 we traveled to the Capapadocia area of Turkey. From there to Ankara, leaving from Türkiye the morning of August 12.



The trip was incredible. I met many faculty and were introduced to their research interests. We met with the staff of a sheep improvement center in Eskisehir. I received insight into producer-relationships and struggles the center has in connecting with producers. On the way to Kayseri, we stopped at a large government broiler production facility—seemingly

similar to a USDA center. Due to Bird Flu and biosecurity, we met with scientific staff but did not tour the barns. Large poultry production is out of my scope of experience and this was very interesting. It was fun to learn that students of Zekeriya were working there as scientists and interns. At the University of Erciyes, we were introduced to bee/honey production and also saw my first fat-tailed sheep. Due to recent foot and



mouth disease outbreak, we did not tour any beef or sheep production facilities. I did see a few beef, dairy and sheep operations along the way.

The street bazaars in Eskisehir were amazing. In Eskisehir a large street bazaar –imagine a farmers market on steroids—was held every day but moved across the city each day. The produce was amazing. The smell was so overwhelming and pleasing. All the markets were interesting and exceptional. You could get anything –tomatoes or socks. The meat market in Ankara was insightful. Clearly nothing is wasted—tongue, brain (no one is worried about BSE or Scrapie), intestines, heart of any animal (other than swine), testes (not calf fries), and roasts or chops. We saw and went to only one typical grocery store. Most commerce it seemed was done in a street fair, or small shop bizarre.



The wool market in Kayseri was fascinating. It mostly had scored wool, but of all fiber diameters. There was also carded wool or even blankets available. At one street restaurant sheep heads

were the menu. You could purchase a full head, half of a head, or boneless. The heads were cooked for a full 24 hours. I declined. Clearly, no one was concerned about Scrapie.



Mostly the food was delicious. Soup—yogurt or broth based, bulgur wheat, fresh vegetables, and meat (lamb or beef). Fresh cucumbers were served for breakfast, for a snack, for a salad, just because. Hotel breakfast was always a large spread of fresh cucumbers, tomatoes, melon with fresh cheese and bread, olives and usually eggs. There is a lot of egg production in Republic of Türkiye. Lest I forget the tea. Hot tea was offered up for breakfast, for snack, as a courtesy, late at night. Would you like some tea?—actually I would like some water. Tea has water. Turkish coffee was a social thing—no one swigged large mugs of coffee in the privacy of their office, home or car. Turkish coffee is brewed in tiny batches, served and savored from miniature cups—request light sugar. It is recommended. But if you just want a caffeine fix and don't want another tea (fair)—there is always Nescafe available—who would know?

I have spent the last month revisiting my time in Türkiye and there are real systemic reasons for our obesity epidemic. Food deserts are real. The morning of our return was a Denver hotel with hotel



breakfast—the difference was stark. The only fresh food was a road weary tangerine. I have spent two weekends in the Big Horn Basin—a hub of agriculture for Wyoming. While the vastness and imprint of agriculture is apparent. It was also apparent there isn't much to eat. I do think we could do better. It would take will and government support. Right now, there is not will.

For me, I am eating fresh tomatoes for breakfast and a cucumber on most days. I fix up a drink of Aryan and buy fresh from the farmers market—the small stands. I am not sure what I will do in October.

This was an amazing trip. I learned so much. I am grateful to Global Perspective for funding, and Zekeriya Kiyma, PhD and UW Alumni, for the invitation. Dr. Kiyma and I have similar backgrounds and it is possible we could collaborate on future science initiatives, but mostly I gained perspective of another culture. Dr. Kiyma shared his extended family. We were instructed on proper mosque etiquette from a stranger that couldn't speak one word of English— and us, not one word of Turkish—but we communicated and understood and perhaps appreciated each other. That matters—there is change in there.