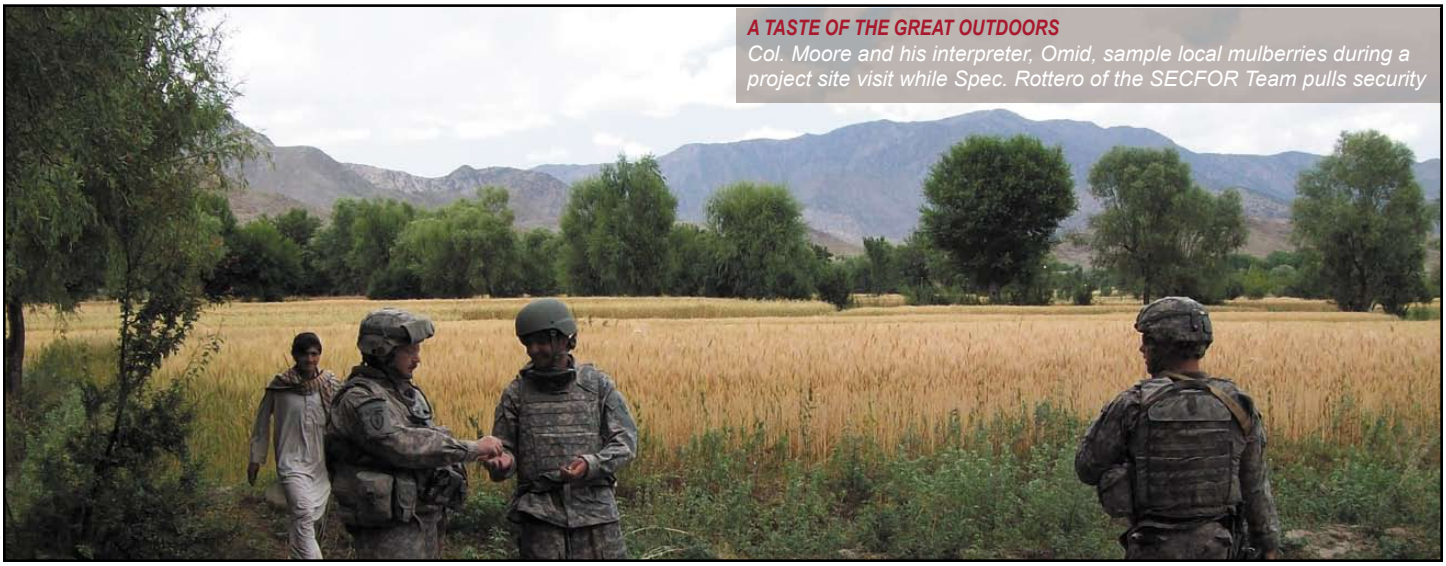

Capt. David Roberts

A TASTE OF THE GREAT OUTDOORS
Col. Moore and his interpreter, Omid, sample local mulberries during a project site visit while Spec. Rottero of the SECFOR Team pulls security

Tennessee ADT and USDA Work Together to Increase Food Capacity in West Paktika

By Sgt. 1st Class Mike Winters
ADT Public Affairs

The Engineer Section of the ADT recently constructed a solar fruit dryer using locally available materials. This was in response to a request from Caroline Clarin of the US Dept. of Agriculture. Ms Clarin, an agriculture engineer working with the Paktika PRT, wanted to increase the typical Afghan family's capacity to preserve foods longer and increase the food security in Paktika.

Drying is a common method of preserving food in Afghanistan. Drying preserves most of the nutritional value and flavor of the food. The drying processes also neutralizes bacteria, yeast, mold, enzymes and larvae which can be harmful to humans. Raisins are one of the most commonly dried fruits in Afghanistan

The traditional Afghan method of drying food consists of laying the food out on a tarp on the ground or on a roof. Contamination by insects, dust or animals while drying in this manner is a major problem with direct solar drying. An enclosed food dryer achieves better results by causing higher temperatures to dry fruits faster and the enclosure protects the fruit from the weather and insects.

L to R: Maj. Boatright, Ms. Clarin of the USDA, and Col. Moore stand with the solar fruit dryer