



## SUCCESS STORY

### Dutch and Polish Importers and Journalists Very Impressed by Macedonian Wines; Orders Forthcoming

**AgBiz helped 10 wineries to organize professional presentations and wine tastings in Warsaw and Amsterdam**



Presentation of Macedonian Wines in Warsaw

Photo: AgBiz Program Staff



The Editor in Chief of "Perswijn" Tasting High Quality Macedonian Wines

***"I didn't know Macedonia as a wine country until now. I tasted some wines in the Netherlands and was curious to come and see what is going on here.***

***What I see is a big change in the Macedonian wine industry! There is lot of investment, and many new and rebuild wineries with great export potential. To achieve better positions in markets, the wineries need to present their wines together and to present Macedonia as a country."***

- Ronald de Groot, Editor in Chief of "Perswijn Magazine" for national private TV (pictured above)

As part of the process of developing an Export Marketing Plan for Macedonian Wines, jointly supported by AgBiz and CBI (Centre for Promotion of Import from Developing Countries), winery representatives and other participating stakeholders identified the Polish and Dutch markets as having particularly good prospects. In their efforts to enter and grow in these markets, Macedonian wineries needed to develop marketing and promotional campaigns to present their high quality wines and enhance their visibility.

In October 2010, USAID's AgBiz Program in partnership with CBI organized Wine Road-Show presentations in Poland and the Netherlands starting with wine seminars and professional wine tastings, and followed by B2B meetings with the most relevant importers, distributors and wine journalists. For the first time, ten Macedonian wineries - Skovin, Dalvina, Bovin, Stobi, Popova Kula, Tikvesh, File, Imako Vino, Vardarska Dolina and Ezimit - had the unique opportunity to jointly present their high quality wines to Polish and Dutch buyers and promoters.

More than 300 guests, including the most relevant wine buyers, importers and wine distributors participated in the promotions, official seminars and wine tastings in Poland and Holland. The Macedonian Ambassadors to the respective countries and the Deputy Minister of MAFWE greeted the audiences and encouraged business partnerships for exporting Macedonian wines. Wineries presented their portfolios and discussed sales opportunities with wine buyers from all market segments. Potential importers evaluated the quality of the wines, their profile and potential match with consumer preferences - and reviewed price offers. Many took wine samples and agreed to trial shipments.

*"Classic and modern at the same time"; "What a surprise"* were just a few of the very positive articles and accolades published about Macedonian wines in *"Perswijn"* the largest independent, professional wine magazine in the Benelux region.

One month later AgBiz coordinated an inbound buying mission to Macedonia for the most interested importers and wine distributors, including Dobre Alkohole and Makro Cash & Carry from Poland and Vinoblesse from Holland, as well as the Chief Editors of both *"Magazine Vino"* and *"Perswijn"*. They visited the 10 wineries that were presented in Warsaw and Amsterdam, they observed the vineyards, wine making technology, the types of wines produced and their capacity to meet EU standards.

The richness in color and flavor and the uniqueness of the wines they tasted, especially "Vranec" which they named "Macedonian Shiraz", encouraged the marketers to start serious negotiations for importing wines, and the journalists to write extensive and positive articles about Macedonian wines.

*"...The countryside is beautiful; you have some excellent indigenous varieties; the vineyards are very well-developed; there are nice archeological places and you can put all these together, and create a story to tell..."* said Tsjitske Brouwer from Vinoblesse, a major wine importer from the Netherlands.