

SNAPSHOT

THROUGH INTENSIVE APPLE PRODUCTION TRIAL PLOTS TO NEW MARKET DEMANDED VARIETIES



Photo: AgBiz Program's Staff



Practical training for the Prespa region farmers at the demonstration plots in Bolno village, near Resen

Currently produced apple varieties, combined with the use of obsolete production technology has been recognized as the major obstacle for increased competitiveness of the Macedonian apple sector. The existing apple orchards are established with old varieties and outdated production technologies without advanced techniques of anti-hail and ultraviolet ray protection nets. Therefore, the result is an uncompetitive production of low yield (25t/ha) and scalded fruits either from hail or sun burns.

Prespa, the main apple production region in Macedonia, was chosen for the establishment of an apple demonstration plot for educational purposes. The main objective was to introduce new apple varieties and raise awareness for the need of alternate and advanced production technologies that will result in intensive high density apple production.

USAID AgBiz Program realized this activity in close partnership with the consulting company Epicentar, UNDP Project for Restoration of the Lake Prespa Eco-system and local High School "Car Samoil". The demonstration plot, located in the area of Bolno village, was constructed in accordance with the environment protection conditions of the area using adequate high quality planting material, appropriate irrigation system and mini meteorology station.

The first training session for intensive modern apple production with the practical instructions for spring pruning of young apple plantlets was held on March 22, and it attracted great interest among Resen region farmers. More than 20 trainees, gained practical knowledge on: (1) categories and classification of the planting material quality; (2) planting process – plot preparations, planting and fertilization; (3) intensive orchards system-trellis; (4) anti-hail and ultraviolet ray protection net, and (5) the most important - pruning of young apple plants including general instructions for apple tree pruning, different pruning cuts and the impact of pruning on growth and fruiting.

The trainer, university Professor Marijan Kiprijanovski emphasized that the growth of the Macedonian apple sector can be assured by such practical demonstration of the high density production technologies and growth of the new market demanded varieties. Therefore, the trial plots in Resen will serve as a training polygon for all interested apple producers in the country.