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AgBiz Program

Success Story

Macedonian Non Timber Forest Products Companies Learns

FairWild Global Standards

In April, OSEC, the Swiss Import Promotion Programme and the u USAID's AgBiz Program continued their joint effort in organized two day FairWild Workshop in Mavrovo about **“Standards for Fair Wild Collection and Production of Medicinal, Aromatic and other Wild Crafted Plants”**.



Working session during the workshop

Companies from all over the country, from Kichevo on the West to Berovo on the East represented the twenty two participants from 16 Macedonian Non Timber Forest Products companies, one public enterprise and one Certification body attended the workshop to obtain information on the basics and details of FairWild. The workshop was conducted by trainers from OSEC, the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs of Switzerland organization and Swiss based Institute for Marketecology, a certifying body accredited to do Organic, Fair Trade and Fair Wild certifications.

The workshop marked considerable open and especially interactive discussion in various topics; such as: how to enhance the capacity of the enterprises in Non Timber Forest Products the value chain and how to obtain international certifications in quality and safety; as well increasing of the marketability of company's products.

First hand feedback was provided by the AgBiz customers about what types of capacity enhancement activities they need in order to grow their business. Establishing an association to advocate company's interest; consulting; in-company trainings; participation on trade fairs; business to business meetings, were part of identified critical needs. “Companies should establish an association, so there will be a body we can contact when we need information.” said Mr. Tomislav Petrov, the manager of Pelister National Park.

“We need this kind of knowledge and guidance from well-known experts! We must understand what market demand is! Implementing standards, marketing, better representation of our products and enhanced production process, are our specifics and key needs in order to entry markets no meter regional or/and global.” said, Mr. Ilber Sadiku co-owner of Green Fungo from Gostivar, a company specializing in value added wild mushroom export.

Representatives of the two Macedonian leading companies from the Non Timber Forest Products value chain, “Alkaloid” and “Koro”, acknowledged the importance of the “FairWild” Certification processes and they initiated its implementation within their companies.

USAID's AgBiz Program will closely monitor the following activities coming out of the workshops and work with participants in the Non Timber Forest Products Value Chain to help them achieve several of these objectives.