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**AgBiz Program**

## Success Story

### Macedonian Agribusinesses Learn the Latest Trends in EU Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Marketing

In February 2008 representatives of eight Macedonian agribusinesses participated in a Business Development Mission in Berlin, Germany that included attendance at the FRUIT LOGISTICA 2008 International Trade Fair for Fruit and Vegetable Marketing. This trade show provides industries involved in fruit and vegetables trading an opportunity to present their range of services from growing through to selling. One of the main attractions of FRUIT LOGISTICA is that it is a compact, highly effective show focusing on specific target groups. Specifically, it offers developing country marketers of "exotic" produce as well as newcomers from Central and Eastern Europe an excellent venue for presenting their products to the international trade, and an excellent means of establishing new business contacts.



Macedonian participants establishes new business contacts with fair's exhibitors



Latest trend in packaging fresh vegetable- exhibited at FRUIT LOGISTICA

USAID's AgBiz Program, in partnership with GTZ's MAFP and the Swiss Import Promotion Program (SIPPO), recognized the importance of such an event, especially for Macedonian export oriented fresh fruit and vegetable marketers, and organized a four day a Study Tour that included a visit to the FRUIT LOGISTICA fair, tours of German produce markets and Business to Business meetings. While in Berlin the participants met with representatives of the Munich Wholesale Market and the Association of German Wholesale Markets, and visited the BIO (Organic) Supermarket where they saw the importance of organic produce. They also toured the Fruit Wholesale Market (Fruchthof) and investigated the possibility of renting space there.

The range of products featured at FRUIT LOGISTICA included fresh fruit and vegetables, dried fruits, nuts, spices, biological produce, flowers and plants for self-service outlets. A technical center showcased equipment for produce packaging, storage, transport, shipping and display. A services market offered computerized solutions for logistics management, transport company services, marketing know-how, training and further education. There were also trade forums, ideal opportunities for the participants to exchange experience with similar companies and enhance their business knowledge and skills.

At FRUIT LOGISTICA participants were introduced to the latest trends and knowhow in post-harvest handling of fresh produce including storing, grading, packing and shipping to meet market demand. The fair also offered the Macedonian firms had an opportunity to approach a wide range of potential customers. Targeted buyers included fresh produce importers, wholesale markets, wholesale and retail outlets, and packing and shipping companies. As a result, the participants signed pre-contracts worth \$357,000. Based on this experience, the Macedonian fresh fruit and vegetable traders recognized the necessity of taking steps towards enhancing their ability to compete regionally and globally. Lessons the Macedonian firms learned during this visit included the importance of using of standard, cost effective packaging; the need to promote investment in then Macedonian packaging industry; the importance of effective labeling; and the adoption of world food standards is the only way leading to expanded, sustainable production and sales of value-added agricultural products and successful exports to EU markets.

*"New contacts, new deals, introducing new technologies and a better market understanding! This is the overall impact of the study tour supported by AgBiz. The entire world works globally and our approach to European markets must be in large quantities and with excellent quality, which has to be endorsed with quality standard certificates. These were the lessons which we have learned and will to put into practice!"*, said Mr. Kire Shoshev from DZP Dushan Kirik DOOEL, Rosoman.