



USAID | **MACEDONIA**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

AgBiz Program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 16th, 2009

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PRESS RELEASE

USAID Supports Macedonian Fresh Produce Exports to Russia

USAID, a part of the U.S. Mission in Macedonia, is investing in economic growth in the country by assisting individual agribusinesses to increase their competitiveness and productivity, and successfully and sustainably enter new markets for value added agriculture-based products. Through its AgBiz Program, USAID is supporting four Macedonian fresh produce exporters - Agohemija, Rudine, Goce Delchev Tikves and Zegin - to exhibit their products at World Food Moscow being held between the 15th and 18th of September 2009.

"With a population of 150 million people, Russia is a very large market for fresh foods. Russia's production of fresh vegetables is decreasing and does not meet domestic demand, thus the country increasingly depends on imports. This is an excellent opportunity for Macedonian fresh produce exporters to enter then increase their market share in this massive market. Macedonian producers also have the ability to deliver fresh produce to Russian buyers earlier in the season than many of their competitors, and AgBiz is helping our customers capitalize on that opportunity by supporting them to exhibit and find customers at World Food Moscow"; said James L. Maxwell, AgBiz's Chief of Party.

The goal of exhibiting on this trade show is to establish direct contact with buyers and thereby avoid middlemen importers, identify potential Russian buyers and establish contacts with importers and distributors serving Baltic countries.

To date USAID's AgBiz Program has provided support to 164 agribusinesses to improve their export competitiveness and thereby sustainably expand their exports. AgBiz is supporting 20 large export focused agribusiness expansion projects that have a total cost of US\$5.4 million and are projected to result in US\$25 million in increased exports.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The American people, through USAID, have invested nearly \$500 million in Macedonia since 1993. USAID is implementing projects that create jobs, reduce corruption, and prepare Macedonian students for the workforce. These initiatives improve the quality of life and support Macedonia's transition to a stable and prosperous democracy. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit

<http://macedonia.usaid.gov>.