

SUCCESS STORY

Remarkable presentation of Macedonian Wines at Novi Sad Wine Festival



Crowds Visiting the Macedonian Pavilion



Tasting Macedonian Wines at the Pavilion

Photo: AgBiz Program's staff

In the past year USAID's AgBiz Program has organized seven trade fairs: "Anuga" and "ProWine" in Germany; "Fancy Foods" in the US; "International Agricultural Trade Fair" and "Interfest" in Novi Sad, Serbia; "World of Private Label" in the Netherlands; and the "AKA Trade Fair and B2B" in Kosovo.

At these fairs, 33 Macedonian agribusinesses represented by 77 individuals had an opportunity to observe new technologies and management practices, and use that experience to increase their competitiveness and export sales.

To date, the AgBiz Program has stimulated over US\$1 million in sales of Macedonian products to Balkans and overseas markets.

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The International Wine Festival "INTERFEST '08" in Novi Sad, Serbia is considered the most relevant event to bring together winery managers and wine experts from all around the Balkans to experience regional wines. 150 wineries from Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Hungary and Macedonia, as well as a large number of well-known Serbian wineries, presented more than 600 of their best wines at Interfest '08. More than 50,000 visitors arrived by bus, train and boat to attend the three-day festival and enjoy first-class regional wine, food and music.

Macedonia's neighbor Serbia buys around 58% of Macedonian bottled wine exports. USAID's AgBiz Program understands this and therefore helped Macedonian wineries to enhance their intra-regional (Balkan) sales by supporting six wineries - Kartal, Radevski, Vinar, Pivka, Grkov, and Château Kamnik - to exhibit at Interfest. AgBiz engaged "Old Grips Dooel" from Skopje, with its proven capability to organize wine festivals based on its management of the famous "Vino Skop" wine festival in Macedonia, to develop a common presentation that would maximize the benefits to Macedonian winery participants and optimize the visibility and positive impression of the six wineries.

Thanks to help from AgBiz, Macedonian wineries for the first time offered a coordinated, joint presentation of Macedonian wineries and exhibited in an attractive Macedonian national pavilion. As a result, the impact was outstanding, and the wineries and their wines achieved high visibility and extensive publicity. The attractiveness of the Macedonian pavilion stimulated many people to visit the stand and taste the Macedonian wines being offered. The number of visitors to the Macedonian pavilion confirmed regional wine drinkers' respect for Macedonian wines.

Serbia's best sommelier for 2007, Ms. Katic, gave a remarkable public presentation of one wine from each of the participating Macedonian wineries. She led the audience through a very enjoyable wine testing experience, explaining the wines one by one while the wineries served samples to the audience. These presentations resulted in many superlatives from the experienced participants, who were particularly overwhelmed by the Macedonian "Vranec". The oak-aged "Cuvee de Prestige" from "Chateau Kamnik" moved the boundaries beyond the expectations of even for the most knowledgeable and rigorous wine connoisseurs. As a direct result of this trade fair "Pivka" and "Château Kamnik" wineries signed deals worth \$87,480 for exporting their wines to Serbia.

"Interfest helped us meet potential buyers and key people in Serbia related to the wine market. We learned much about wine culture in Serbia and how to promote our wines in this market. We established contacts with 3 potential distributors and defined our export potential. This coming September we will start exporting to Serbia!" said Mr. Ili Malinkovski, owner of "Château Kamnik".

AgBiz will continue to support the participating wineries to enhance potential consumers' awareness of the high quality of Macedonian wines, and develop sales strategies for competitive marketing and achieve sustainable sales to regional as well as EU markets.