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AgBiz Program

## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **AgBiz and CERM Present the Findings of the Assessment of Regulations & Practices for Seasonal Employment in Agriculture**

On **Thursday the 13th of May**, the **USAID-funded AgBiz Program** and the Confederation of Employers of the Republic of Macedonia (CERM) presented the findings from the recently completed "Assessment of Regulations & Practices Regarding Seasonal Employment in Agriculture" at a roundtable.

The objectives of this Assessment included: an analysis of laws related to seasonal employment by agribusinesses; defining the rights and obligations of seasonal workers, employers of seasonal workers, typical arrangements for hiring seasonal workers and penalties for illegal hiring; identifying and describing solutions/models for seasonal employment in agribusinesses in other countries; assessing the impact on the export competitiveness of Macedonian companies and seasonal workers as related to full compliance with existing seasonal labor and social benefits laws; and recommended adjustments to Macedonian labor and related laws to significantly reduce the negative impact on both employers and workers of current seasonal labor employment regulations.

"For seasonal agricultural labor markets to operate efficiently, seasonal workers must have the ability to move among agricultural jobs and/or to pursue non-farm employment or entrepreneurial activities from time to time. We believe that the proposed solutions provided in the assessment will be properly addressed and hopefully implemented by relevant authorities." said: Vasko Hadzievski, AgBiz's Chief of Party.

Since March 2007, USAID's AgBiz Program has worked with more than 180 agribusiness companies in four value chains. To date, the Program provided support to 25 producer organizations and four trade associations; delivered short-term training to 1,223 individuals; facilitated AgBiz customers to sign EUR 10.3 million in export orders and identified over US\$6.9 million worth of financing for 36 customers. For more information please visit: [www.agbiz.com.mk](http://www.agbiz.com.mk)

#### 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>.