



## NEWSLETTER

July 2010

### Macedonian Products Successfully Marketed in Canada



Meeting Potential Buyers at the Promotional Event (left Macedonian Exporters; right Canadian Importers)

According to the World Trade Organization, Canada is one of the world's ten largest importers of processed vegetables. Exports of these products from Macedonia to Canada are currently small, but Canada's openness to imports and impressive record of economic growth make it a very attractive market for Macedonia's processed vegetable exporters.

In May, the USAID AgBiz Program, together with the Macedonian Association of Processors (MAP) organized a six-day sales and marketing mission to Toronto, Canada for seven leading Macedonian processed vegetables exporters.

Executives from Bonum Plus, Vipro, Tehnoalat, Altra, Trgoprodukt, Best Foods and Lars had the opportunity to visit several retail stores, both supermarkets and ethnic food shops, in Toronto and its surroundings. They found that Macedonian pepper-based products, including roasted peppers, lutenica, ajvar, and pepper spreads, are available in almost every ethnic food store in Canada, but less in retail chains, and enjoy a very good consumer reputation.

Program participants were asked to give anonymous evaluations of the mission. The manager of one of the stores visited wrote: "In our daily work, there is a constant demand for new and unique products, and even traditional items. This is an excellent opportunity for Macedonian exporters and their very tasty products such as home-style ajvar and lutenica."

To increase their visibility on the Canadian market, the Macedonian companies held a promotional event at the largest family-owned salad company in Canada, where they presented their products. While Canadian food importers, food brokers and distributors tasted the Macedonian products, participants explained how their products are traditionally consumed, and the raw materials and technology used to produce them. The event was organized in cooperation with the General Consulate of the Republic of Macedonia in Toronto, and Ambassador Martin Trenevski greeted the guests.

The contacts established during this marketing mission have already resulted in new Canadian orders for Macedonian pepper-based products worth 150,000 Euros, and an additional meeting with potential Canadian buyers will take place in Macedonia in August.

## Objective Performance Appraisal Leads to Increased Staff Motivation

Once a year, the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) is required to conduct performance appraisals of its 125 employees. Until recently, these annual appraisals were simply *pro forma*, lacking objectivity and any systematic structure, and therefore did not fulfill their original purpose of providing employees guidance for their further professional development. But this year, with support from the USAID Human and Institutional Development Program (HIDP), the BDE introduced a comprehensive Personnel Development System with a systematic approach for assessing its staff.



BDE senior management staff create job profiles by weighting the roles and responsibilities of each position

"The system contains very useful instruments to evaluate the work of the staff in my sector," said Silvana Veteroska, Head of Sector for Professional Development at the BDE. "First, the job profile gave staff an opportunity to self-evaluate their work in an objective way, identifying their strong and weak points, as well as areas where they need to improve their knowledge and skills. Second, as their supervisor, the profile gave me a base to agree or disagree with certain points of their performance and discuss those points during interviews when we came to mutual final conclusions about the marks given. It proved to be a very objective evaluation and accepted by both evaluators and evaluatees, giving opportunity to both sides to improve communication and mutual trust."

One of four bodies within the Ministry of Education and Science, the BDE is responsible for national and subject curricula development, professional development of teaching staff, and research on education. As a knowledge-based organization, the staff of the BDE must have advanced knowledge and skills, which is why the comprehensive Personnel Development System is so essential. The System is based on job profiles that serve both the institutional level (by providing an overview of the main duties of each position, together with actual and desired proficiency levels) and the individual staff member level (by providing an easy to understand overview of what the staff member is expected to accomplish and at what level of proficiency).

USAID helped the BDE design job profiles for each position within the BDE, outlining roles and responsibilities. The job profiles serve as a self-evaluation tool from which the staff member can clearly recognize his/her development needs and, in addition, can get systematic and structured feedback on his/her performance from the supervisor. Moreover, following a thorough analysis of these profiles, the BDE designed a Personnel Development Plan that mirrors the priority professional development needs of all employees.

With this effective system in place, the BDE is now able to continuously monitor its human capacities, provide development opportunities for its staff, and utilize the staff capacities in an optimal way.

"The established Personnel Development System provides the BDE management with a clear overview of staff skills, competences and achievements. This allows us to more appropriately allocate work and the workload within the BDE. The transparency of the expectations of each position has resulted in motivated staff delivering better results," said Vesna Horvatovik, Director of the BDE.

## USAID Newsflash

**Open Day of Parliament** – On May 7, the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia organized an Open Day of Parliament to mark Europe Day, with support from the USAID Parliamentary Development Project (PDP). Citizens had an opportunity to tour the parliament building and



meet with the Speaker of the Assembly and other parliamentary leadership, including parliamentary coordinators, individual Members of Parliament (MPs) and staff. The Institute for Parliamentary Democracy, a local legacy organization of the PDP, helped organize free transportation to Skopje for 300 citizens from across Macedonia to tour the national legislature and meet with their representatives. This was coordinated through the MP constituency offices in Bitola, Gostivar, Ohrid, Prilep, Radovis, Stip, Struga, Strumica and Tetovo. Several NGOs used the Open Day as an opportunity to meet with MPs and parliamentary leaders to brief them on their legislative initiatives and try to enlist the MPs' support. The event was organized with financial support from the National Endowment for Democracy and USAID.

**First Certified PPP Specialist in Macedonia** – On June 8<sup>th</sup>, Marjan Nikolov, President of the Center for Economic Analysis, became the first certified Public-Private Partnership Specialist in Macedonia. For the past three and a half years, the USAID Business Environment Activity has provided support to Marjan and four other individuals to participate in the certification program conducted jointly by the Institute for Public-Private Partnerships in Arlington, Virginia, USA and the Water, Engineering and Development Centre of Loughborough University in Leicestershire, UK. Marjan has already been applying the knowledge he's gained, conducting PPP feasibility studies and financial structure briefs for both government entities and private businesses in Macedonia, and contributing to a national strategy for PPP.

**New NGO Law** - On April 12, 2010, the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia enacted a new Law on Associations and Foundations, known as the NGO Law. While not perfect, the law is a significant development for Macedonia, as it: (1) provides a comprehensive and progressive framework regulation for NGOs; (2) supports their sustainability by allowing NGOs to engage in economic activities; (3) helps increase the social impact of the civil sector by introducing "public benefit status"; and (4) brings the Macedonian legal system into closer harmony with European standards. Civil society was involved in providing comments and suggested changes to the draft law. USAID provided support for the new law through the European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL) from Budapest, which was a partner in the Civil Society Strengthening Project. Throughout the drafting process, ECNL provided technical assistance and comparative expertise to the stakeholders including the NGO Law working group in the Ministry of Justice, and the local organizations which were representatives in the working group.

**Student Science Clubs Boost Interest in Science**—In March of this year, the USAID Primary Education Project invited schools to establish Student Science Clubs with the aim of helping students improve their grades and motivating them to continue their education in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Thirty clubs were formed, led by 44 teachers from 22 primary schools. Just before schools let out for summer vacation, PEP held exhibitions in Veles, Bitola and Skopje where different Science Clubs came together to display their projects. Club members gave presentations to explain and demonstrate their work. Over 200 people, including teachers, students, parents, school directors, education advisors and inspectors, attended each of the exhibitions.



## USAID Newsflash



**USAID Macedonia and USAID Albania Promote IPA Cross-Border Cooperation-** The USAID Macedonia Local Government Activity (MLGA) and the Local Government Project Albania (LGPA) together held a conference June 17-18 to assist municipalities in developing successful applications for EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) Cross-Border Cooperation Program funding. This funding would enable investment in implementation of municipal capital improvement programs. The conference assisted municipalities in establishing long-term partnerships and networking, developing successful project proposals, and improving their capacity for planning and project management. This was the second event that two USAID projects organized together. Smaller working groups of the partner municipalities from both sides of the region worked together on translating the identified project ideas into specific project proposals. Prior to this conference, with USAID assistance, 10 eligible cross-border municipalities from both countries (Struga, Gostivar, Prilep, Mogila and Tetovo and Pogradec, Korca, Librazhd, Elbasan and Gramsh) signed Memorandums of Cooperation, which are pre-requisite to apply for IPA Cross Border funding.

**USAID Bids Farewell to Senior Staff** – This summer, three senior staff members from the Mission have moved on. **Mission Director Michael Fritz** is retiring from USAID, which he first joined in 1988 as an International Development Intern based in Washington, D.C. He served the Agency in Cote d'Ivoire, Burundi, Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana and the Central Asian Republics, and was Mission Director in Bulgaria prior to arriving in Macedonia in 2008. Mike will still be “in the neighborhood” as he will move with his family to Belgrade where his wife Susan will serve as the USAID Mission Director.



**Tim Donnay** served as Supervisory Program Officer in Macedonia from August 2006. He first joined USAID in 2002, serving in the same position in Ghana. Tim has accepted a one-year assignment as a General Development Officer for USAID in Iraq, but plans to periodically come to Skopje during the coming year, as Macedonia will remain his home base when on leave from his duties in Iraq.



**Ken Lizzio** held a one-year position as the Democracy and Local Governance Team Leader. Prior to coming to Macedonia, he served as DG Team Leader for USAID/Guyana and USAID/Rwanda, and Senior DG officer for USAID Indonesia. Ken has left USAID to serve as Country Director for American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA) based in Jerusalem.



The contributions of these Senior Staff members have been invaluable in supporting USAID's mission to promote economic growth, democracy and local governance and education in Macedonia. We wish them well in their next endeavors. We welcome Erin Nicholson Pacific as our new Supervisory Program Officer, and Erik Pacific as our new D&LG Team Leader, and will tell more about them in our next Newsletter.



**USAID | MACEDONIA**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

### United States Agency for International Development

U.S. Embassy, Samoilova 21, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia

Telephone: +(389) 2 310 2000; Fax: +(389) 2 310 2463

USAID Communication office: +(389) 2 310 2314, [skellman@usaid.gov](mailto:skellman@usaid.gov)

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 about USAID programs on economic growth, education, democracy and governance, please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>.