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PRESS RELEASE

USAID's Accomplishments in Macedonian Agribusiness

The USAID AgBiz Program congratulated twenty leading Macedonian agribusiness exporters at a ceremony to honor them for the successful results of their Business Expansion Projects. These Projects focused on making Macedonian agribusiness exports more competitive by adding value to existing products, developing and expanding to new export markets, increasing the capacities of the businesses as well as implementing food standards.

"The AgBiz program is a prime example of success in tapping into the power of market forces" said U.S. Ambassador Philip T. Reeker. "AgBiz expansion projects generated \$28.5 million of exports in 2009 and stimulated over \$7.6 million of additional private sector investments."

Since March 2007, the AgBiz Program has worked with more than 180 agribusiness companies in four sectors: fresh fruits and vegetables, wine, processed vegetables and wild gathered food products. The program enables agribusinesses to identify, understand and sustainably enter export markets for value-added products; enhance market linkages between producers, processors and traders; improve business management and operations; achieve greater incomes for agricultural producers and processors; and create new employment opportunities.

To date, the AgBiz Program has provided support to 25 producer organizations and four trade associations; trained over 1,200 individuals; assisted agribusiness companies to sign 10.3 million Euros in export orders and helped 36 agribusinesses to identify financing of over US\$6.9 million. For more information please visit: 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>.