



USAID
OD AMERIČKOG NARODA

MEDIA ADVISORY

PRESS CONFERENCE - USAID Launches Project to Help Serbian Agribusinesses Meet Globally Accepted Standards

On Tuesday, 23 December 2008, at 11:00 am in the Tanjug International Press Center, the USAID Agribusiness Project will hold a press conference to announce the project of support related to meeting GlobalG.A.P. (Global Good Agricultural Practices) and ISO (International Organization for Standardization) standards.

The key speakers at the press conference will be Mr. Goran Radojevic, USAID Agribusiness Project Operations Director; Ms. Marilyn Schmidt, USAID Deputy Mission Director and Ms. Brankica Obucina, USAID Agribusiness Project Policy Advisor.

The Program will be implemented during 2009 and will be comprised of two stages. During the first stage, GlobalGAP Seminars will be held throughout Serbia (Novi Sad, Subotica, Smederevo, Cacak and Nis) and during the second stage, the USAID Agribusiness Project will implement a process through which financial assistance regarding the implementation of GlobalGAP, ISO 14001 and ISO 22000 will be provided to interested Serbian food producers and exporters. The primary goal of the Program is to improve the overall quality and competitiveness of Serbian agricultural products by facilitating the implementation of international quality and food safety standards.

Many countries have adopted and now enforce strict requirements regarding standardization and certification of processes and the quality of products. As a result, Serbian companies face rising technical constraints to exports that can be removed only by successful implementation of quality management systems and international standards. In order to address this issue, the USAID funded Agribusiness Project has designed a support program for Serbian agribusinesses in the Process of International Standardization and Certification of their products.

USAID has invested \$24 million through its Agribusiness Project which focuses on improving agricultural productivity, expanding value-added agricultural processing, opening new markets for export, and building the capacity of producer organizations and service providers which support Serbia's agribusiness sector.

What is an ISO standard? An ISO standard is a documented agreement containing technical specifications or other precise criteria to be used consistently as rules, guidelines, or definitions of characteristics to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purpose. It is a living agreement that can have a profound influence on things that deserve to be taken seriously - such as the safety, reliability and efficiency of machinery and tools, means of transport, toys, medical devices, and so on. The ISO is a network of the national standards institutes of some 157 countries, with a central office in Geneva, Switzerland, that coordinates the system and publishes the finished standards.

What is GlobalGAP? GlobalGAP is a private sector body that sets voluntary standards for the certification of agricultural products around the globe. The GlobalGAP standard is primarily designed to reassure consumers about how food is produced on the farm by minimizing detrimental environmental impacts of farming operations, reducing the use of chemical inputs and ensuring a responsible approach to worker health and safety as well as animal welfare. Increasingly, importers of agricultural products only want to do business with exporters that meet GlobalGAP standards. This is why meeting these standards is so important for Serbian companies.

For further information kindly contact Ms. Ana Martinovic, USAID Agribusiness Project Communications Advisor at ana_martinovic@agrobiznis.net; +381 11 243 66 11.

Interesting fact: Because "International Organization for Standardization" would have different acronyms in different languages ("IOS" in English, "OIN" in French for Organisation internationale de normalisation), its founders decided to give it also a short, all-purpose name. They chose "ISO", derived from the Greek isos, meaning "equal". Whatever the country, whatever the language, the short form of the organization's name is always ISO.

USAID Agrobiznis projekat
Internacionalnih Brigada 57
11000 Beograd, Srbija
Tel: 011 243-6611 Fax: 011 344-5363
E-mail: office@agrobiznis.net
www.agrobiznis.net