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NEWS RELEASE

BELGRADE'S CULINARIA FINE FOOD SHOW GROWING INTO THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS FOOD SHOW IN THE REGION

BELGRADE - Over 60 representatives of the diplomatic core, foreign Chambers of Commerce, large local & international companies and the media gathered to discuss how to make this year's Culinaria Fine Food an even better than the highly successful, 1st Culinaria Fine Food Show held in September of last year.

The organizers of the Culinaria Fine Food Show, the Zizgin Company and the USAID Agribusiness Project, held this event as part of a campaign to grow the fair to a level where it will become an essential venue on the fine food circuit for potential producers and buyers from around the world. .

The concept of the Culinaria Fine Food Show, scheduled to take place again this year in Belgrade between the 28th and 30th of September, generated considerable interest among those present.

Ms. Susan Fritz, the USAID Mission Director pointed out "*Judging by the interest stimulated by last year's event, it is safe to say that Culinaria is on track to become the largest and most prestigious food industry event in the region*".

During the first Culinaria Show that took place in 2010, 3000 visitors had the opportunity to meet and negotiate contracts with 79 companies from Serbia and 6 other countries. The organizers helped facilitate the attendance of 60 professional buyers from 14 countries. Amongst them were TESCO from the U.K. and Central Europe; Lidl from Croatia; retail chains and buyers from the region and some of the largest importers from the US and Canada. This program to support the attendance of international buyers will be carried out again this year.

The organizers have already begun promoting the Show at other major international shows - SIAL in Paris; InterFood and Drink in Sofia and Indagra in Bucharest. Promotions at Fruit Logistica in Berlin; Biofach in Neemberg; Ethnic Food in Brussels; MIHAS in Malaysia; Private Label in Amsterdam and World Food in Moscow will follow in the months ahead.

"Most often, the attendance at large international shows is limited to larger food producers and as such, the Culinaria Fine Food Show was conceived by USAID with the aim of bringing international buyers to Serbia. This will ensure that smaller Serbian companies get the chance to introduce their delicious products onto international markets," says USAID's Remer Lane.

Apart from USAID, the Culinaria Fine Food Show was supported by the Republic of Serbia Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Serbian Chamber of Commerce, Serbian Export and Investment Promotion Agency (SIEPA) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

For more information on the Culinaria Fine Food Show, kindly visit www.culinariafinefood.com

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Agribusiness Project of the U.S. Agency for international development (USAID) is working with Serbian agricultural producers in all stages of the value chain "from field to fork" to help them increase sales and employment in Serbian agriculture.