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SNAPSHOT

Sales Increase for Farmers, Collection Centers and Traders

USAID's promotion of improved communication enhances sales and trade in Kosovo's vegetable market.



Nehat Taç displays crates of prime quality tomatoes his collection center purchases from local farmers. They are ready for prompt delivery to the ETC distribution center.

“Instead of picking up the phone to an import supplier, the market is now able to call in orders for sizeable volumes of locally grown vegetables from the local collection center, all for prompt delivery.”

~ Mark Wood, program director,
USAID/Kosovo Agriculture Growth and
Rural Opportunities (AGRO) Program.



In Mamusha, two girls show off the abundant harvest of gherkins ready for shipping to distribution centers around Kosovo.

At the height of summer, dozens of farmers beat a path to Nehat Taç's door. It's the busiest time of the year for Taç, owner of the Euro Taç Collection Center in Kosovo's Mamusha village.

On a recent July morning, many of the 40 farmers who routinely sell their harvest to the collection center line up to deliver crate after crate of freshly picked vegetables. The farmers are happy because selling everything they grow has become a snap. Previously, the farmers had to find markets on their own.

Meanwhile, a dozen miles away, in Xërxe village, the ETC supermarket chain's newly established distribution center works closely with the collection center. Each time ETC places an order with Euro Taç for fresh vegetables, it receives delivery the following morning. ETC's fruit and vegetable distribution center in turn supplies locally grown produce to 17 supermarkets throughout Kosovo.

Beyond ETC, Euro Taç also works with every other major food processor, supermarket and distributor in Kosovo. These include ABI, Eurofood, Mix Produkt, Koral and Ask Foods.

Just a month into the 2015 vegetable harvest, and Euro Taç already has bought and sold well more than 400 tons of locally grown tomatoes, gherkins, potatoes, cabbage and onions. Business is up 30% since the start of the year, Taç says.

“Euro Taç has become a reliable supplier for traders. They have gained confidence in the quality and quantity of our products. I am delighted by how successfully we have started the season this year,” explains Taç. “USAID has helped improve our relationships with traders by facilitating our meetings and also by providing us with valuable market information.”

Efficiency ripples through the system. That only further strengthens the bonds linking farmers and the collection center and, in turn, the collection center and its clients.

“The collection center has reached an important point where the trading process has become much easier and faster,” says Taç.

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With a smile, a local farmer delivers his fresh-picked gherkin harvest to the Euro Taç Collection Center for an easy sale.

Mark Wood, program director of USAID's Agriculture Growth and Rural Opportunities (AGRO) Program explains more: "As a result of the collection center's ability to supply increased volumes of uniform product of standard quality, the market has become more reliant on the collection center, and hence volumes demanded have increased to the benefit of local producers."

USAID throughout its projects has long promoted improved communication and relationships among growers, collection centers and traders. "This not only transmits important information about the market, prices and requirements, but also builds newfound confidence among those growers doing business with collection centers, and those collection centers successfully supplying distributors," says Wood.