

Code: TCP/MNE/3201 (D)

Title: ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN MONTENEGRO: CONCERTED SUPPORT FOR SMALL-SCALE GROWERS IN ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

Country: Montenegro

Starting date: April 2008

Duration: 24 months

Contact: Regional Office for Europe

Email: REUD-Operations@fao.org

PROJECT SUMMARY

The law on Organic Agriculture (OA) was adopted in the middle of 2004 and a national certification body was established in November 2005. Establishing a well functioning certification system, aligned with international standards and certification procedures, is a prerequisite for Montenegro to enter the domestic and international markets for organic produce. The staff of the extension service has so far dealt only with conventional farming practices and is not familiar with the production system needed for organic agriculture. The capacity building for staff of the certification body and of the extension services is therefore of crucial importance.

The first initiatives regarding OA supported by the Ministry in three regions resulted in the formation of several growers associations. The success of these initiatives is at risk due to lack of a well functioning certification system and limited support by the extension service as well as the lack of distribution channels and marketing skills. In addition to these associations, there are an increasing number of individual farmers interested in OA. However, a recently conducted survey indicated that producers and consumers are not sufficiently familiar with the concept, norms and requirements of organic food production limiting both production and demand of organic products.

The Government of Montenegro has requested FAO's technical assistance to enhance the institutional framework necessary to promote and develop organic agriculture as well as the expertise of the extension services, certification bodies and farmers.

The main outputs of the project include: (i) certification system and human resource capacities strengthened; (ii) extension workers' capacity in organic agriculture strengthened; (iii) producers capacity and skills in organic agriculture of selected organic grower's associations strengthened; (iv) market strategy to increase awareness and promotion of organic agriculture products formulated and implemented; and (v) plan of action for the organic agriculture development produced.

The project will provide one international consultant at UN rates for a total of 80 person days, one consultant under the Partnership Programme (Retired Expert) for two person months, two national consultants for 15 person months and FAO technical support services for about four person months. In addition, the project will provide supplies, equipment, travel, training and general as well as direct operating expenses.

National Counterparts

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

Funding Source

FAO Technical Cooperation Programme

FAO contribution

US\$494 000