

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY  
USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT  
POLICY

Voluntary  Public

**Date:** 4/6/2011

**GAIN Report Number:** BK1103

## **Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**Post:** Sarajevo

### **EU Strengthens BiH Phytosanitary Service**

**Report Categories:**

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

**Approved By:**

**Prepared By:**

Sanela Stanojic-Eminagic

#### **Report Highlights:**

The European Union (EU) will assist Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) phytosanitary service through a two-year project worth approximately \$1.1 million. The project should establish a national integrated phytosanitary service and policy harmonized with the EU legislation and international obligations and standards in this area. BiH ratified the International Plant Health Convention (IPPC) in 2003, but is still unable to meet its obligations. The main plant health laws exist but by-laws are still missing, and enforcement of these laws is consequently poor.

## **General Information:**

### **Executive Summary**

The European Union (EU) Delegation to BiH has recently announced the start of a new two-year assistance project called “Support to BiH Plant Health Administration”, worth 790.000 Euros (about \$1.1 million). The project should establish a national integrated phytosanitary service and policy harmonized with the EU legislation and international obligations and standards in this area. The project includes plant health, plant protection products, and seeds and vegetative materials. The special emphasis will be on drafting, adoption and enforcement of EU-like regulations, strengthening of the inspection service and laboratory capacities, and raising awareness of operators of the improved system functioning.

### **Background**

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) Plant Health Protection Administration (PHPA) was established in May 2005. It has remained understaffed for several years and has done very little in drafting the secondary legislation and harmonizing it with the international standards and the EU standards (BiH is a potential EU candidate country). BiH ratified the International Plant Health Convention (IPPC) in 2003 but is still unable to meet its obligations. The main framework laws in the plant health area have been adopted, as follows:

- The Law on Plant Health (BiH Official Gazette #23/03),
- The Law on Mineral Fertilizers (BiH Official Gazette #46/04),
- The Law on Protection of New Varieties (BiH Official Gazette #46/04),
- The Law on Phyto-pharmaceuticals (BiH Official Gazette #49/04), and
- The Law on Seeds and Seedlings (BiH Official Gazette #3/05).

A number of by-laws should be drafted and enforced in order to fully enforce these laws. These are some of important by-laws that PDPA recently drafted:

- The Rulebook on Harmful Organisms Lists (BiH Official Gazette #69/09),
- The Rulebook on Conditions of Phytosanitary Laboratories with Reference to Professional and Technical Readiness for Laboratory Diagnostics of Harmful Organisms (BiH Official Gazette #/10),
- The Rulebook on Conditions for Appointment of Phytosanitary Inspectors (BiH Official Gazette #33/10),
- The Rulebook on Establishment and Maintenance of BiH Agricultural Variety List (BiH Official Gazette #59/10)
- The Rulebook for Registering Agricultural Varieties (BiH Official Gazette #6/11)
- The List of Approved Active Substances (BiH Official Gazette #11/11)
- The Rulebook on Conditions for Marketing, Quality Control, Storage and Handling of Mineral Fertilizers (BiH Official Gazette #90/09 and 13/11).

Detailed regulations are still to be drafted, adopted, and enforced. In the meantime, the Entities (BiH consists of two Entities, the Federation and the Republika Srpska) are enforcing different regulations, they are issuing different export certificates, and their lists of approved varieties was different and confusing for importers until recently, when the national-list was adopted last year. The border inspection is entity-level, and sometimes importers have to chose between two border

phytosanitary inspection post at the same crossing, e.g. at the Samac border crossing. These inspection posts apply different procedures at the border, and apply different fees.

The PHPA stressed the importance of establishment of various phytoregisters, plant passport system, and the chain of command, and division of responsibilities in the sector. In BiH, various institutions share responsibility for plant health, so the project should clearly define their responsibilities and coordinate their work in the future. These institutions are:

- *Entity Agricultural Ministries /Brcko Agricultural Department* are responsible for preparing and implementing entity-level agricultural strategy and entity-level agricultural support (subsidies). Their Phytosanitary Departments maintain lists of approved seed varieties and they certify exported products.
- 
- *Entity Ministries of Health* are responsible for public health and they have food testing laboratories, while the *Entity Ministries of Trade* are responsible for the entity-level food quality control, consumer protection, and labeling.
- *Entity/Brcko Inspectorates* are responsible for inland and border inspections (except for border veterinary inspection) of various foods. They include veterinary, agricultural, sanitary and market/quality inspection departments. The procedures for food control and inspection are different between the Entities and inconsistently implemented throughout the country. Actually, the phytosanitary inspection doesn't exist, and agricultural inspectors conduct the actual work inland and at the border. Only recently the PHPA started activities on establishment of phytosanitary inspections.
- *Institutes for accreditation and standardization* recently started working in the food sector. The Institute for Accreditation has accredited some food testing and certifying laboratories but it applies mainly to the country and is unrecognizable internationally because this Institute doesn't participate in all international and regional accreditation organizations like the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), and the European Committee for Standardization (CEN).

The EU also requires that BiH strengthen its phytosanitary laboratories, and tailor them better to the needs of inspectors, and also increase awareness of operators (farmers, distributors, importers and exporters) of the new system requirement for them according to national and international standards.

## **Labeling Requirements:**