



Building Capacity for Macedonian Higher Education,
Research and Policy Analysis in Agriculture
- with a focus on Agricultural Economics

Unicoop

NEWSLETTER

Issue 2011

The Story of a Swedish-Macedonian Development Co-operation
Two Agricultural Universities, Two Institutions and One Common Interest for Agricultural Economics

In the middle of 2011

This newsletter covers the period between April and November 2011. The Annual Review Meeting was organized in September 2011 where FASF management team and Sida representatives discussed the activities that had already happened and the future plans. One of the PhD students has finished with her last seminar in Uppsala, and the second one was staying in Macedonia and preparing for her last seminar. The third PhD student has been in Uppsala attending his regular courses. One MSc student at SLU has defended her master thesis in Uppsala and the other SLU student presented in Macedonia together with the first generation of BICA students. The second generation of BICA students has started with the third semester.

You can read more about all these events in this newsletter!



Macedonia and EU-27

The Institute of Agricultural Economics at St. Cyril and Methodius University in Macedonia has been co-operating with the Department of Economics at SLU in Sweden since 2000. Visit

www.slu.se/ekonomi/unicoop.

News in the management team

At the end of September, 2011 there were some changes in the management team at SLU. Tina Ericson came back from her maternity leave. She is now responsible for most of the administration activities at SLU, while Ingrid Naeslund continues with some of the administration concerning the International Master Programme. Kristina Jansson is also involved in preparing a new double degree agreement for the period after the project ends.

During the concerned period there were no changes in the management team at FASF.

Marina Petrovska

Annual Review Meeting

The VIIth Annual Review Meeting on the university cooperation programme was organised on September 28, 2011 at the Institute of Agricultural Economics in Skopje. Participants in the meeting were representatives of the project at FASF as well as Sida representatives. The annual review meeting was focused on two main activities.

The first activity was elaboration of the project activities that took place during the previous phases and until today. This activity was of an informative kind due to changes in the management team at Sida. Therefore, Ivana Janeska Stamenkovska, Project Coordinator at FASF, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the background of the project, project objectives and project implementation.

The second meeting activity was to ensure sustainability of the double degree master programme and to find a solution on how to provide the educational activities after closing of the project. It was agreed that both universities will continue to offer the International Master in Agribusiness programme by signing an agreement of cooperation. The participation of students will depend on their willing to pay the participation fee on the both universities or to find other sources of scholarship.

The date for the next Annual Review Meeting will be announced by Sida.

Marina Petrovska

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This newsletter is published by the Department of Economics at SLU, Sweden and the Department of Agricultural Economics and Organization (UKIM) at St Cyril and Methodius University, Macedonia. The aim is to create a venue for news and discussions for all interested in education, policy and economic analysis related to the agricultural sector in FYR Macedonia.

Library renovation

The renovation of FASF Library started during this autumn. For performing the renovation activities a construction company was chosen according to the procurement guidelines of Sida. According to the renovation plan, the library should be finished at the end of December, 2011.

Marina Petrovska

Agriwise workshop

Agriwise workshop called “*Entering in the farm business planning*” was organised on October 31, 2011 at FASF, Macedonia. It was held by Aleksandra Martinovska-Stojceska from IAE and Bo Öhlmér from SLU. The workshop was attended by 18 participants from different Macedonian organisations: FASF, Payment Agency, Federation of farmers and other private organisations.

Marina Petrovska

EAAE Congress 2011

The XIIIth Congress of the European Association of Agricultural Economists (EAAE) was held in Zurich, Switzerland from August 30 until September 2, 2011. The Congress was attended by representatives from 54 countries, including 9 participants from Macedonia (7 professors and assistants of IAE: Dragi Dimitrievski, Nenad Georgiev, Dragan Gjosevski, Aleksandra Martinovska-Stojceska, Ana Kotevska, Ivana Janeska-Stamenkovska and Ana Simonovska, and 2 PhD students: Emelj Tuna and Jordan Hristov). The Macedonian contribution consisted of 4 poster presentations, 2 of them were:

- Kotevska A., Dimitrievski D., Erjavec E. *Assessing the Future Development of the Macedonian Agriculture: Partial equilibrium model of livestock-feed sector*, and
- Martinovska Stojcheska A., Surry Y. *The productivity situation in Macedonian agriculture: Gainers and losers during the first decade of the 21st century*.

The other 2 posters were presented by the Macedonian PhD-students. They are all available at: <http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/>.

Marina Petrovska

Final seminar for PhD candidate Gordana Manevska Tasevska

In mid-October, Gordana Manevska Tasevska, PhD student in the project had her last seminar on her PhD study before the final thesis defence. The title of her study is "Efficiency Analysis of Commercial Grape-Producing Family Farms in the Republic of Macedonia. - Influence of Selected Targets from the Rural Development Programme".

The seminar took place at the Department of Economics in Uppsala with close to 15 persons in the audience. Gordana gave a good overview of her four articles (out of which two are already published and the other two are currently under revision). Lars Lönnstedt, professor emeritus at the Department of Forest Products acted main opponent and structurally discussed Gordana's work giving useful comments on all papers as well as tips for the kappa.

Currently, Gordana is finalizing the last parts in her PhD work. In January 2012, she will be the first PhD candidate in our project to hold her thesis defence, which we are of course looking forward to! The presentation will take place in Uppsala and will be further announced on www.slu.se/ekonomi.

Ingrid Naeslund

News about the other two PhD-students

The second PhD candidate, Emelj Tuna, is preparing for the final seminar and plans to have a draft version of her PhD thesis ready for pre-evaluation in February, 2012. Starting from April, 2010 until December, 2011 Emelj Tuna is engaged in the International Master of Agribusiness programme as a teaching assistant on the Cooperatives and Agricultural Marketing course.

Also, she participated in EAAE 2011 Congress in Zurich, where she had a poster presentation

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The project has produced several publications. You will find them on the new project website:

<http://www.slu.se/ekonomi/unicoop>.

News about the other two PhD-students, cont'd

for her paper: *“Foreign Direct Investments as initiators of change, The “Swedmilk” dairy case—Reasons behind the failure”*.

During the covered period Jordan Hristov, the third PhD student, attended three courses in Uppsala: “Soil and Water Ecosystems”, “Applied nonparametric modelling” and “International Food System Analysis”. He moreover participated in two conferences

with poster presentations:

- *“The environmental impact of irrigation”* presented in *“Ecosystem services in soil and water research” - FOSW symposium* held on June 7-10, 2011 in Uppsala, and
- *“The economics of highly fragmented land of Skopje and South-eastern region vegetable growers in the Republic of Macedonia”* presented in EAAE 2011 Congress held on August 30 till September 2, 2011 in Zurich.

Currently Jordan works on a paper about input-output analysis of waste in the Republic of Macedonia, related to the course „Applied Economic Modelling of Environmental Issues using GAMS” held in Umeå. In the meantime, he is waiting for the requested data from Hydro-meteorological Institute needed for preparing the PhD thesis. His 50% seminar is planned for April 2012.

Marina Petrovska

Macedonian MSc-students at Uppsala

The last two Macedonian master students, Iva Joveva and Aleksandar Joncevski, have successfully finished their studies at Uppsala and defended their master thesis.

Iva Joveva defended her master thesis on August 26, 2011 in Uppsala. The title of her thesis is *“Internationalization of the Macedonian Wine Exporters”* for which Iva got the highest grade. The defence was attended by: her supervisor Bo Öhlmér from the Department of Economics at SLU and the co-supervisor Nenad Georgiev from the Institute of the Agricultural Economics at UKIM, her opponent, Kelvin Omorowa, some other colleges and her family. Iva’s impressions are: *“In general I am satisfied with how the defence has gone, the positive critiques and the comments that I received and the final results”*.

Aleksandar Joncevski defended his master thesis later on November 1, 2011 in Macedonia, together with the students at the International Master Programme in Agribusiness at FASF. His supervisor was Bo Öhlmér from the Department of Economics at SLU and his co-supervisor was Aleksandra Martinovska-Stojceska from the Institute of the Agricultural Economics at UKIM. His thesis *“Profitability of dairy farms in Republic of Macedonia”* is a comparative financial analysis between modern and traditional dairy farms (case study). Aleksandar comments are: *“I am satisfied with the cooperation between students and professors, and thankful to the supervisors for their suggestions and tolerance”*.

Marina Petrovska

BICA news



Ana Simonovska

“Two and a half years of success for the International Master in Agribusiness.”

The cooperation between teachers at the International Master leading to a double-degree has been going smoothly. A proof for the efficient cooperation is the success that students are showing during their studies. The first generation of students is preparing their master theses, and the second generation is at the third semester of studies. This year, besides the regular courses at the third semester, the thesis course was initiated as well. There was a need for students to start the thesis course earlier in order to have a plenty of time to finish their master thesis until the end of August 2012 (a scheduled period for the thesis seminars). During this period we expect all students from both study generations to finish their thesis work.

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BICA news, cont'd

"Five students at the International Master in Agribusiness had a thesis seminar."

Thesis course is the last one that students must complete in order to get their MSc degree from both academic institutions: *Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food-Skopje (FASF) at the University "Ss. Cyril and Methodius" (UKIM) in Skopje and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) in Uppsala*. After completion of thesis work, half of



List of students that had a thesis seminar



No	Student	Thesis topic	MK Supervisors	SE Supervisors
1	Aleksandar Ivanovski	Business Plan as a decision making tool for improvement of the performance in the enterprises of food processing sector in Republic of Macedonia	Dragi Dimitrievski	Bo Öhlmer
2	Daniela Buzarovska	Optimization of agricultural production under climate change up to 2050 in Pelagonia region	Dragan Gjosevski	Hans Andersson
3	Marina Petrovska	Efficiency of pig farm production in the Republic of Macedonia - Data Envelopment Analysis approach	Aleksandra Martinovska-Stojceska	Bo Öhlmer
4	Saso Risteski	Vertical Integration strategies- A case of Macedonian vegetable processing companies	Dragi Dimitrievski	Konstantinos Karantininis
5	Vladimir Hristov	Sensitivity analysis indicators of economic efficiency -Of investments co-financed by IPARD Program 2007-2013 in Republic of Macedonia	Dragan Gjosevski	Maltreyi Mandal



the students from the first generation had a thesis seminar during November 1-2, 2011 in Skopje, where they presented the main findings from their original research, and they have been opponents one to another. The seminar was conducted according to SLU's principles. These students are now finishing their thesis manuscripts considering the suggestions they received from supervisors, opponents and the audience. The final version shall be approved by both Macedonian and Swedish supervisors. Students have to have a thesis defence according to UKIM's principles as well, after having the final version of their thesis. The same master thesis shall be published by FASF (UKIM) and by SLU with a note that the thesis has been prepared within the framework of an international program leading to a degree from both universities.

Ana Simonovska

Interview with one student at International Master Programme



"If someone told me that I could study abroad from home and get an international degree I would not believe him. Now, I am at the very final stage of attaining a double degree from studying at the International Master Program in Agribusiness."

Thanks to the joint project UniCoop, I have got an opportunity to study abroad by being home at the same time. By joining this Master program, my dreams come true. These master studies have enlightened me with a deeper knowledge and have broaden my horizons with new perceptions on how various economic issues are dealing problems within the agricultural sector. It was an interesting study program of individual and collaborative work, integrated with plenty of discussions, presentations, debates and research. The sophisticated concepts and interactive character of the studies were particularly useful which have helped me to develop a critical thinking and fair-minded judgments when confronting real case multiple dilemmas. These learning methods have really helped me to strengthen my professional capacities and to improve my performance at work.

Preparing the master thesis was one of the most challenging things I have ever faced before. The last six months, I was devoted on the master thesis work with a title "*Optimization of Agricultural Production under Climate Change up to 2050 in Pelagonia Region*", under the supervision of Hans Andersson and Dragan Gjosevski. I expect to have the very final version of my master thesis by the end of 2011, hopefully.

Daniela Buzarovska

Epilogue

This issue of the newsletter covers the period April - November 2011. During that period the second phase of the project has finished and the third phase started.

For the UniCoop team,

Ivana Janeska-Stamenkovska, Ana Simonovska, Marina Petrovska, Tina Ericson and Ingrid Naeslund

This newsletter is published several times during the year. The next issue will cover the period between end of 2011 and the beginning of 2012 and will be published in the middle of 2012.