



Rural Kosovo
in pictures

Rural Kosovo in pictures

The rural communities and businesses of Kosovo face many challenges. Agriculture is the mainstay of the rural areas, but the majority of farm businesses are very small by European standards, often less than one hectare. For many years they have lacked investment in buildings, machinery and modern production technologies. There are ongoing difficulties in accessing credit to invest in agriculture. Farmers often face problems even with small, short-term loans with which to buy feed for livestock, seeds and fertilizers. The culmination of these and other factors is a fragmented industry, lacking in investment, often producing low yields of poor quality.

The Kosovo Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development (MAFRD) working in co-operation with the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) and other International donor organizations have developed and adopted the Agriculture and Rural Development Plan 2007-2013 which is aimed at:

- Improving the incomes of farmers and rural dwellers
- Increasing the competitiveness and efficiency of agriculture
- Improving the processing and marketing of agricultural produce
- Improving hygiene and quality standards of produce
- Sustainable rural development and improved quality of life
- Creation of employment opportunities in rural areas, particularly through rural diversification
- Aligning Kosovo's agriculture and rural development strategy with that of the EU

To support the implementation of the Agriculture and Rural Development Plan 2007-2013 the EAR developed and funded a number of technical assistance projects including the Marketing Support Project whose objective was to improve the marketing of domestically produced agriculture and food products inside and outside of Kosovo and so contribute to the overall development of the rural areas.

This has been a challenge for the Project team not only because of the problems facing the agricultural sector described above, but also because of the large amount of agri-food imports already entering Kosovo and the poor consumer perception of Kosovo produce.

To address these issues the Marketing Support Project established a network of Marketing Centres covering the whole of Kosovo to provide marketing advice and information to agri-food businesses to improve their competitiveness in the marketplace.

In co-operation with MAFRD, the University of Prishtina, EAR and other donors and projects the Marketing Support Project has implemented a number of approaches and interventions which have included:

- > Providing regular market price information to assist producers and processors in making informed business decisions
 - > Improvements to fruit, vegetable and livestock markets to improve the marketing infrastructure
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- > Carrying out marketing feasibility studies in the key sectors of fruit, vegetables, milk, meat and wine to identify the key issues and to develop and implement pilot approaches to improve the marketing and profitability of these sectors
 - > Support towards improving the quality of agri-food products
 - > Support the marketing and market development of Kosovo agri-food products through brand development, improved packaging and labeling, participation at trade fairs and exhibitions, as well as identifying niche market opportunities which have included: Honey, Wild berries, Jams and preserves, Medicinal herbs, Raspberries, Sweet chestnuts, Mineral water, Chocolates, Cakes and pastries, Snails.
 - > Support to the establishment and development of producer initiative groups aimed at bringing together producers to supply the identified market opportunities. These groups meet on regular basis to discuss common issues such as production technologies, product quality, buyer requirements and supply contracts.
 - > Training in marketing for producers, processors, traders, MAFRD and Municipality staff as well as support to the University of Prishtina in developing an agri-food market module for their curriculum.
 - > A key aspect in improving the agri-food marketing is an enabling policy and legislative environment for agri-food producers, processors and traders and the Marketing Support Project has been co-operating with the relevant Government Departments on an ongoing basis.

Despite the challenges facing the rural areas and communities there is real reason for hope, new agri-food businesses are emerging, small producers are starting to work together to identify market opportunities, developing their marketing skills, improving the quality of their produce and developing their packaging, labeling and branding to meet consumer needs.

This book is a photographic tribute to rural Kosovo, its agri-food producers and businesses, and the communities that live and work there.

Text: Martin Jones, EAR Marketing Support Project
Photography: ©Sonia Bressler



Kosovo produce on sale, Prishtina Green Market





Prishtina Green Market





Prishtina Green Market







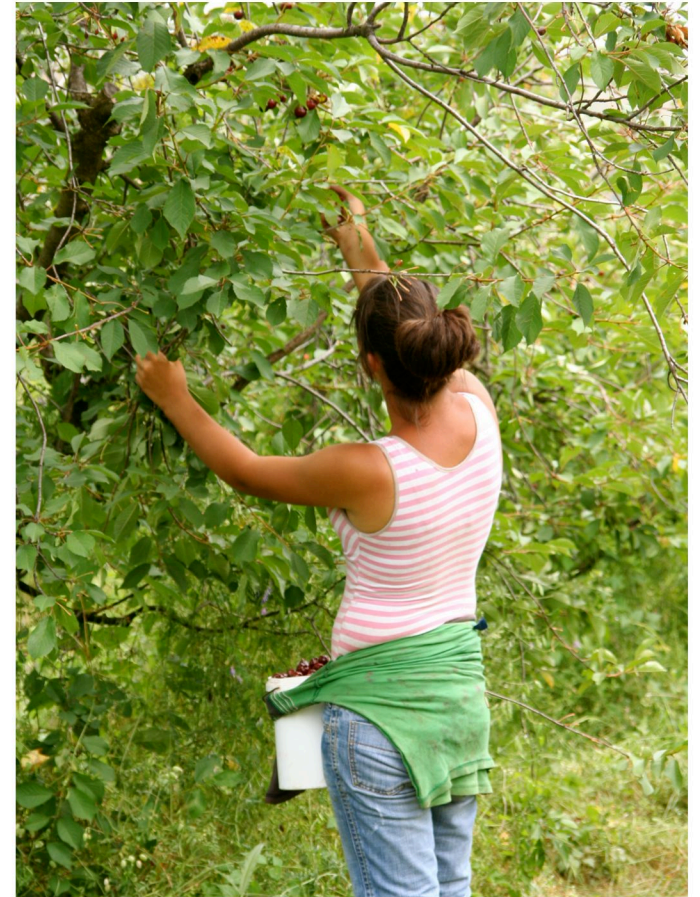
Moea Fruits, Gijlan: Poly-tunnels with tomato & cucumber crops





Moea Fruits, Gjilan: Seedlings





Moea Fruits: Picking sour cherries





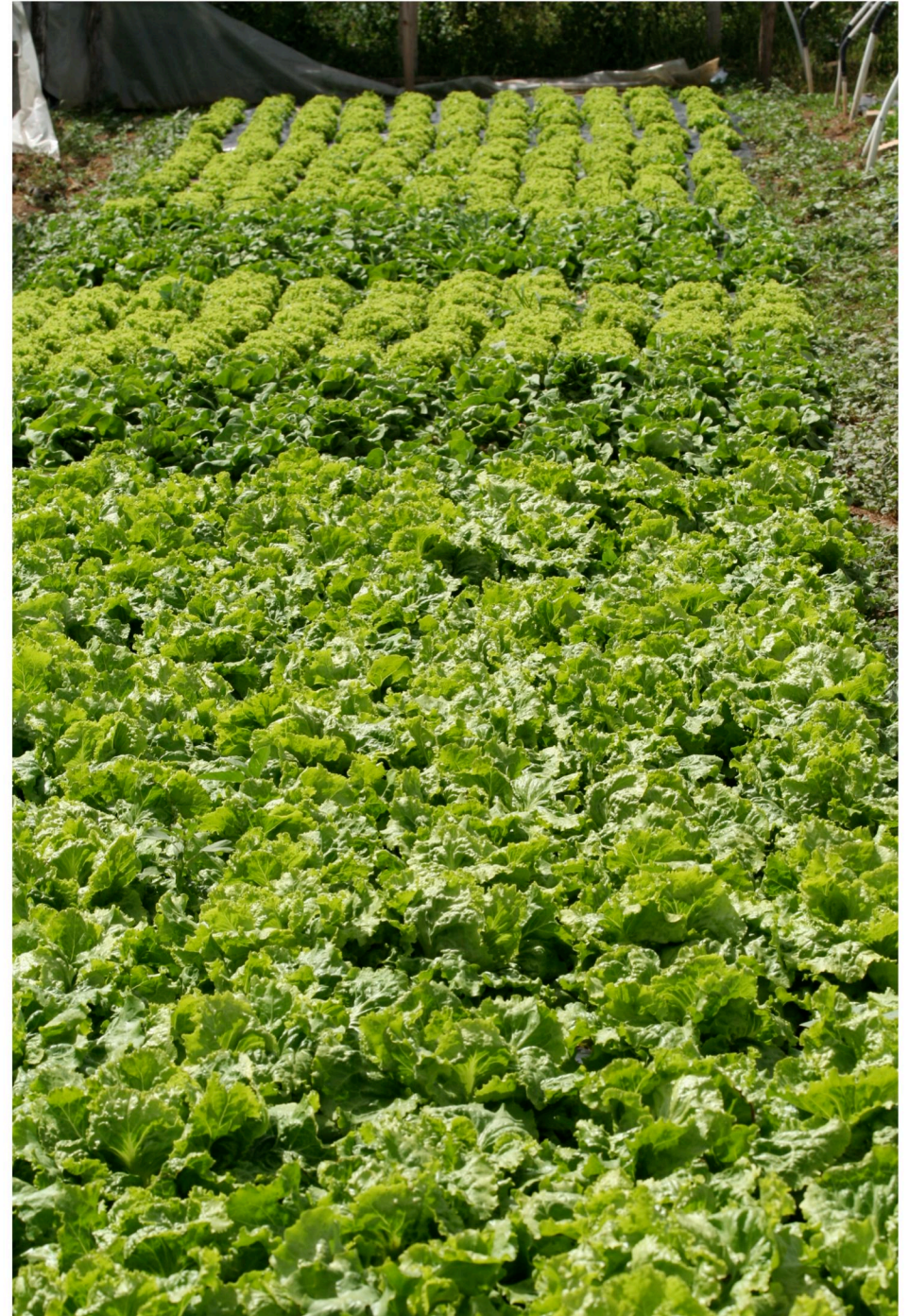
Strawberries grown in Gjilan













Peppers & tomatoes grown by RIAD, Malisheve, Gjilan



Fungo FF: Mushroom and medicinal herbs collection point & drying facility



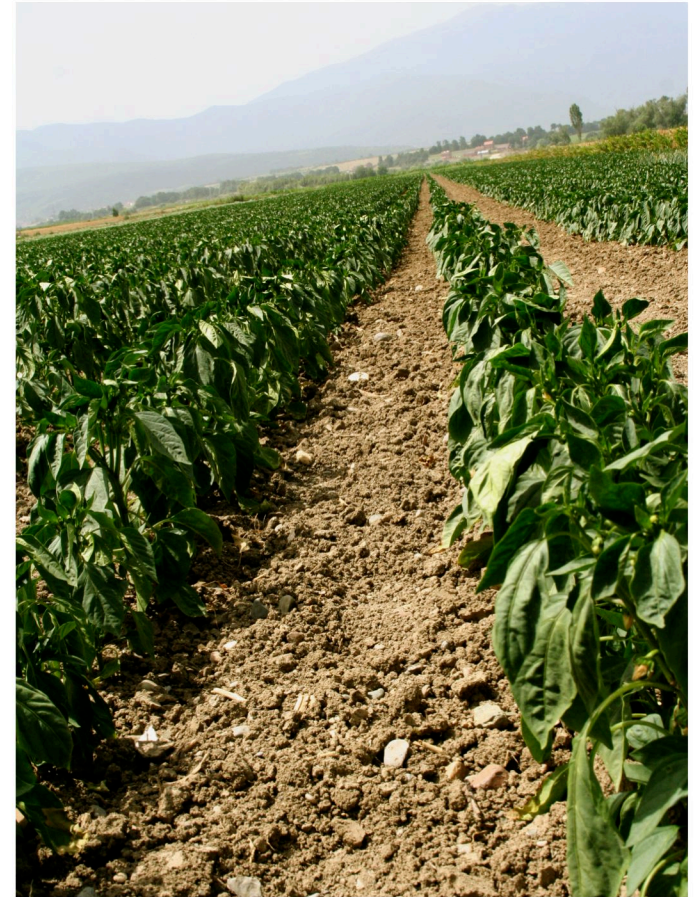
Fungo FF mushrooms and medicinal herbs, Kamenice – Gjilan





Anadrini Vegetable Association, Xërxe producers of fresh vegetables including tomato, peppers, cucumbers & water melons.





Anadrini: Field vegetables (peppers)





Cereal crops awaiting harvest in Gjakova region



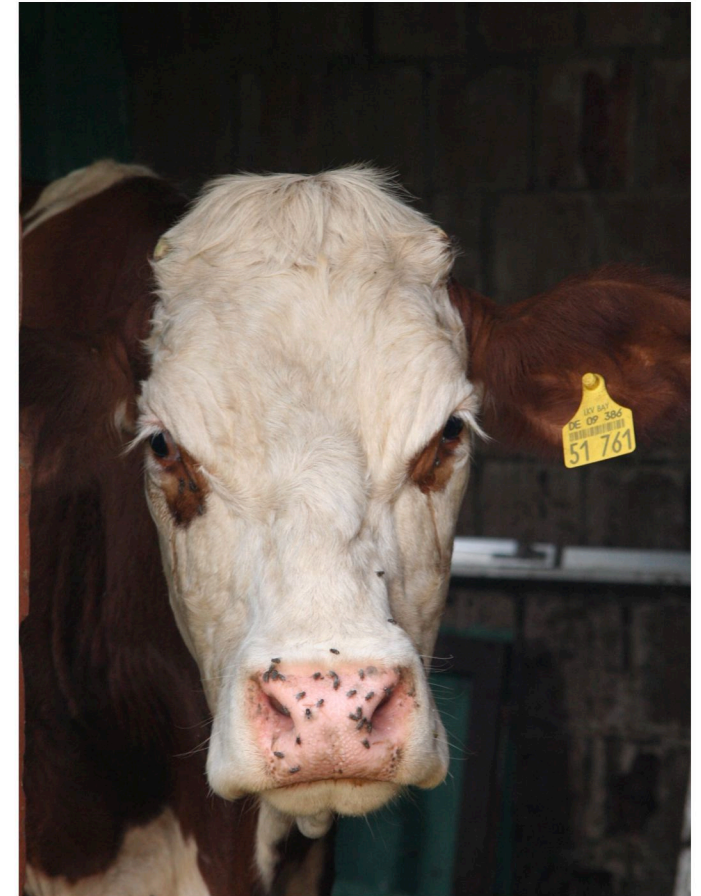


Gjakova Market: Local dairy produce





Harvesting in Gjakova region









Golaj Diary, Sheremet, Gjakova.





Golaj Diary, Sheremet, Gjakova.





Hay making in Gjakova region.







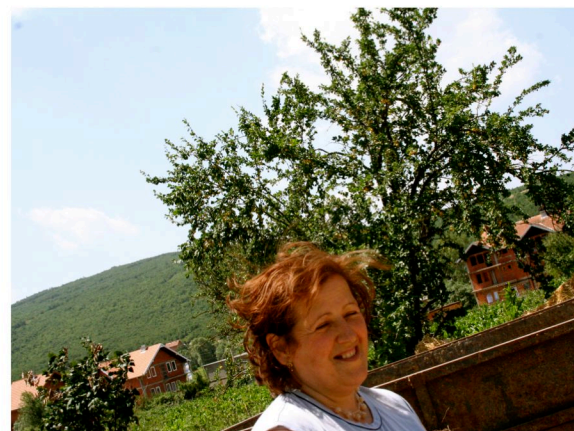


Mazreku Family: Livestock producers in Malisheva.





Producers from the Malisheva region.



Mazreku Family, livestock producers from Malisheva region.



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Gashi Family, future generations...









Morina Family, Astrozub, Malishevo.













Bee hives of Peja honey producers.





Wild Flora of Kosovo.







Hoxha family, Eko Winery, Rahovec.



Eko Winery, Rahovec.







Vineyards supplying the Eko Winery, Rahovec.







Eko vineyards.



Eko vineyards.





Small farms in Keqekolla region.





Livestock Producer, Keqekolla.















"Lady", cakeshop, Prishtina.





Tomë Hajdaraj - Deputy Minister of Agriculture



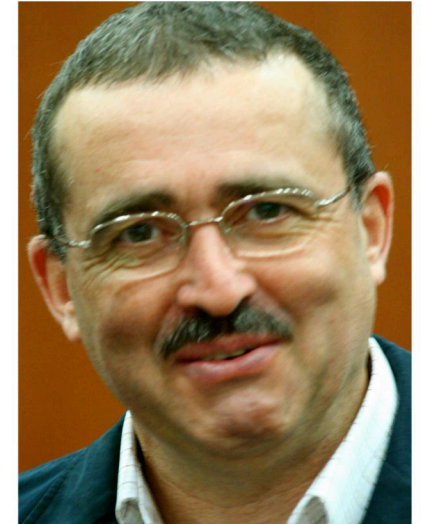
Qazim Kukalaj, Permanent Secretary, MAFRD.



From the left to the right : Agim Zajmi, Adviser to the Deputy Minister, Binak Krasniqi, Adviser to the Deputy Minister



Ministry Of Agriculture, Forestry & Rural Development staff





University of Prishtina: Faculty of Agriculture.





Chestnuts growing in a valley near Peja.



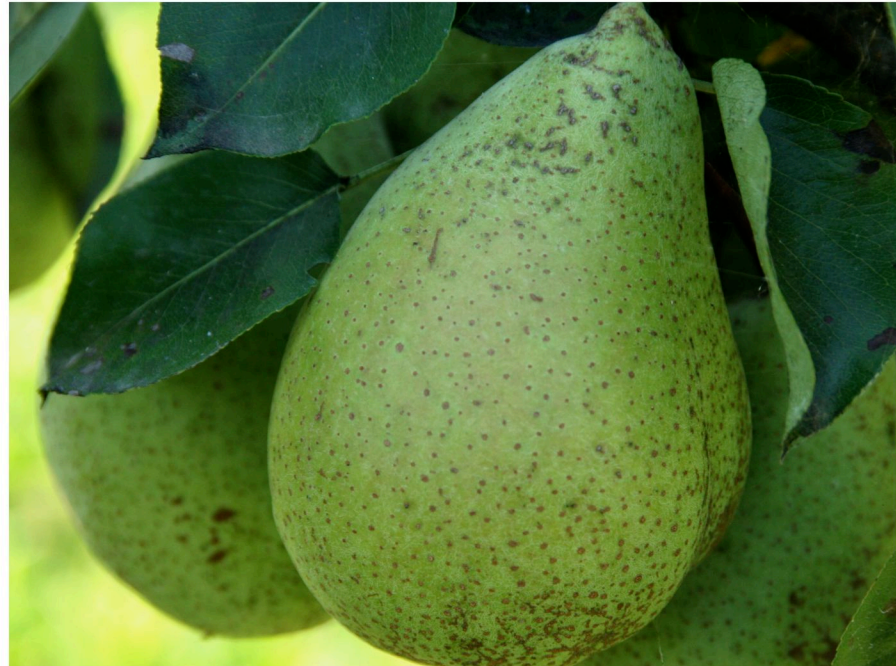






Wild flora in the Rugova Valley. 97





Apples, plums & pears : UVB Association. Peja

