

Organic Production Only As Plans

Organic agriculture is one of the priorities of agriculture development in Montenegro and has an important place in the Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy of Montenegro. We can say that at this moment the Montenegrin organic production is at its very beginning, because there were only one hundred registered manufacturers in the controls and certification process in the year 2011, which is not enough. In other words, it is a plan, but not the solution for Niksić, which has about 80,000 inhabitants.

According to **Branka Giljen**, an Advisor for Plant Protection in the Regional Centre in Niksić, this municipality has the potentials for developing organic agriculture and a large number of projects was started which did not give good results.

"I have personally been involved in activities during implementation of the DANIDA project – a supporting grant for investments in organic agriculture. The project was supported by the Danish Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Montenegro, and was being implemented over a period of three years. Eight applicants achieved the right for support for crop production in the municipalities of Niksić, Šavnik and Plužine. To my knowledge in Niksić, only one manufacturer is certified for organic production. This is Andrija Mičković from Župa, which produces potatoes. Three producers have submitted documentation and are expecting to receive certificates for practicing organic production during the year. These are **Dragica Mirjačić** from Bršno engaged in the production and processing of cornel-berry; **Ilijah Blečić**, from Brezana near Plužine, who produces potatoes and cereals and **Rajko Pavličević**, from Gornje Polje near Niksić, in the field of fruit growing. Four producers in the municipalities of Niksić, Šavnik and Plužine are in a so-call transitional period", said Giljen. She pointed out that a large number of agricultural producers are interested in organic production but that the criteria for registration are rigorous. And there is also the immense paperwork.

Healthy food without additives

Organic food is food produced without artificial additives such as pesticides and chemical fertilizers. It is not treated with radiation, industrial solvents, or chemical food additives. The movement of organic agriculture was developed in 1949 as a response to the industrialization of agriculture and is known as the Green Revolution. Organic production, as opposed to private gardening, is regulated by law. Currently, in the European Union, the USA, Canada, Japan and other countries food producers need to obtain a special certification for organic production in order to place their products on the market as "organic". In most countries, organic food cannot be genetically modified.

Organic food is produced in ecologically clean and healthy soil in a clean environment and without the use of chemicals. Only food produced in this way can be called healthy and provide what the body needs for normal and healthy functioning. It is known that organically produced foods contain up to 50 percent more nutrients, vitamins and minerals. Besides, the taste and smell of qualitative and healthy organic food is substantially different from the artificially produced food. This is what reminds the elderly of their youth, and provides full enjoyment to all.

One of the preconditions is that the farmer has to be registered in the register of agricultural producers in the Ministry of Agriculture, which means that agriculture is his main primary activity. The next step is being registered in the Register of organic agriculture producers, that is, that he has signed the Agreement on certification and control with the Certification Body Monteorganika" explained Giljen.

Andrija Mičković, the only certified producer of organic food in Nikšić, the owner of the NGO "Production of organic food" and the health food store "Biomontenegro" in Podgorica, said that the main objective of organic production is sustainable development of rural areas, while preserving the traditional and cultural values, through the promotion and development of organic agriculture in Montenegro.

"Our NGO works on protecting the environment, as well as on improving agricultural and rural tourism through the promotion and production of organic food. There is also the selling of organic food, active participation in the community and solving problems related to ecology in Montenegro. Although we have retail and wholesale of organic food we are not satisfied with the demand. The reason is probably the lack of awareness of the citizens as well as the economic crisis since the prices of organic products are 30-40 percent higher than conventional food prices", said Mičković.

Professor **Nataša Mirecki** from the Agricultural Institute, said that the Action Plan for the development of organic agriculture in Montenegro for the period 2012 - 2017 is the contribution of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to the development of Montenegro's agriculture and food sector with the aim of increasing competitiveness and environmental sustainability, as well as improving the basis for sustainable development of rural areas.

"The overall objective of the Action Plan is to support the development of organic agriculture, processing and consumption of organic products on the domestic market, also through the tourism sector, using the competitive advantages of Montenegro. The financial support to organic agriculture has been covered by the Agro-budget since 2004, but it is necessary to provide a budget for the future also", said Mirecki.

Laws must be respected

Is production in our country harmonized with international law? Do we wonder what the "organic" food that we are eating is produced of? It is no secret that many food producers, in order to achieve higher yields, and hence cash income, use a number of pesticides that are hazardous to health. An apple produced in this way looks great but even after washing it, it can contain in itself more than 30 different pesticides. This may be good news for their bank accounts, but certainly not for our health. People in our town are not sufficiently informed about organic food production, and consequently about the benefits that it offers. Pesticides and other chemicals are associated with many diseases such as cancer, Alzheimer's, allergies and obesity. However, if we do not know what we are consuming, the intake of toxins in our body is possible and it is quite normal to expect a variety of reactions in the body.

A HEALTHY, ORGANICALLY PRODUCED APPLE / AN APPLE TREATED WITH PESTICIDES



ZDRAVLJE?

ILI



IZGLED?

HEALTH OR APPEARANCE?