

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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**Date:** 10/18/2013

**GAIN Report Number:** BK1310

## **Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**Post:** Sarajevo

### **EU Report Finds BiH Makes Little Progress in Agriculture**

**Report Categories:**

Agricultural Situation

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**Report Highlights:**

The European Commission released its Progress Report on BiH's pre-accession efforts and concluded that considerable work remains to be done in the fields of Agriculture and Rural Development, Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy, and Fisheries. BiH has yet to adopt a rural development strategy and it needs to improve its agricultural statistics and information system. Implementation of the food safety and veterinary acquis also has been unsatisfactory. In particular, BiH's official control capacity needs to be improved. Some progress has been made in residue monitoring plans for honey, dairy, poultry and eggs according to the European Commission, thus allowing BiH to export honey to the European Union. However, the overall lack of progress in the food safety area has adversely affected BiH's trade in agricultural products.

### **General Information:**

The European Commission published its Progress Report for Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) on October 16, 2013. The EC's summary assessment is that little progress has been made in 2013 in the areas of agriculture and rural development, food safety, veterinary, phytosanitary policy and fisheries. A national rural development strategy has yet to be adopted and BiH's agricultural statistics and information systems still need to be improved. BiH's productivity and competitiveness is being hampered by the lack of an efficient administration and effective rural credit schemes. Also, BiH needs to upgrade its official control capacity and improve its implementation of the food safety and veterinary acquis.

Regarding **agriculture and rural development policy**, the country has yet to adopt a country-wide rural development strategy and coordination, including on support measures, remains insufficient between the two Entities. The Entities' budgets for agriculture and rural development is also insufficient. BiH has not reached an agreement on the institutional structure for utilization of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance for Rural Development (IPARD), nor has BiH adopted yet the agricultural information strategy or the Law on the Agricultural Census. The European Commission recommends that BiH's agricultural statistics and the agricultural information system be improved and harmonized between the Entities. Land registration systems also need to be harmonized and land management requires strengthening.

Regarding **food safety**, BiH adopted new EU-like bylaws on hygiene rules for food and feed establishments and microbiological criteria for foodstuffs. Residue monitoring plans for honey, dairy, poultry and eggs were positively evaluated by the European Commission, thus allowing export of honey from BiH into the EU. However, BiH needs to improve its official control and remove the overlapping authorities between the food and feed control systems. As a temporary measure, a political agreement was signed between the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Water Management of the Republika Srpska and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry of the Federation on "The Establishment of a Chain of Command Meeting EU Requirements for Exports of Milk and Milk Products from Bosnia and Herzegovina to the EU", but has yet to be implemented. There is no system to ensure that information on official controls is shared adequately amongst lower-level authorities and central authorities. BiH still lacks a lab capacity to cover analysis of samples in line with the official controls for food and feed.

Regarding the **veterinary sector**, BiH adopted implementing legislation on the movement of pets and the control of animal diseases, including bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and zoonoses (i.e. salmonella). Vaccinations against brucellosis and rabies are being conducted regularly. Still, the existing animal identification and movement control system cannot ensure proper implementation of animal health measures or facilitate planning on animal health measures. The national system for the management of animal by-products needs to be upgraded to comply with EU requirements. These weaknesses in the veterinary sector are preventing BiH from meeting EU import requirements for animal products.

Regarding the **phytosanitary sector**, some progress was made in implementing legislation that is harmonized with the acquis across the country. BiH started with the issuance of phytosanitary

certificates in line with the International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures and started registering phytosanitary operators. A national plan for monitoring residues was finalized. However, BiH has yet to adopt a new Law on Plant Protection Products in line with the *acquis*, and still needs to expand the application of integrated pest management principles.

Regarding **genetically engineered products (GE)**, BiH made progress in adopting the implementing legislation regarding GE product authorization, traceability and labeling.

Regarding **fisheries**, the Entity legislation on freshwater fisheries needs to be fully aligned with the *acquis* to facilitate exports of fish and fishery products to the EU.