

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: 4/30/2012

GAIN Report Number: BK1203

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Post: Sarajevo

Bosnia Equips Two Laboratories for Biotech Testing

Report Categories:

Biotechnology and Other New Production

Technologies

Biotechnology - GE Plants and Animals

Approved By:

James Dever

Prepared By:

Sanela Stanojic-Eminagic

Report Highlights:

Two laboratories that are authorized for biotech testing recently received biotech testing equipment worth \$0.3 million. These laboratories are located in Sarajevo at the Federation Agricultural Institute Butmir and in Banja Luka at the Republika Srpska Agricultural Institute. The laboratories can now detect the presence of biotech events in both food and feed samples.

General Information:

There are four laboratories authorized for biotech testing in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). So far, two laboratories, which are located in Sarajevo at the Federation Agricultural Institute Butmir and in Banja Luka at the Republika Srpska Agricultural Institute, have received equipment worth \$0.3 million through a World Bank loan.

Using this new equipment, the laboratories will be able to use the Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) technology to detect not just the presence of biotech event (as before), but also the amount of the biotech event present in food and feed samples. The labs also can conduct an event-specific detection to identify the biotech event but there is no need for such testing presently because there are no approved biotech events in BiH yet.

BiH recently adopted by-laws that establish procedures to import and market biotech products. BiH harmonized its by-laws with EU biotech regulations and directives. The by-laws are based on the Law on Genetically Modified Organisms (BiH Official Gazette #23/09), which is BiH's main biotech law regulating agricultural biotechnology. Although BiH adopted the law in 2009, it could not implement it. The Council of Minister adopted all the by-laws. According to the law, the applicant must obtain a permit from the BiH Food Safety Agency (FSA) to market any novel food, including biotech products, in BiH for the first time.

The Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Regioni Lazio e Toscana in Italy recently trained BiH staff on the use of the new PCR equipment. BiH appointed this Institute to be its reference laboratory for biotech testing because none of BiH's domestic laboratories had that capacity. BiH's FSA signed a cooperation protocol with the Italian Institute on April 22, 2011, and intends to continue training the FSA and laboratory staff regarding EU requirements for biotech testing of foods and feed.