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Agricultural Development

# Success Story

## Albanian Farmer Shefki Haxhiu Improves His Livelihood and That of His Family

Shefki Haxhiu is from Vora, 20 km west of Tirana, capital of Albania. The land in this commune belonged to a former state agricultural enterprise, which provided Tirana with milk, fruits, and olives. The political changes of 1991 led to the rapid partition of the land to farmers. Haxhiu received 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> in the plains and 40 olive trees. His father's property, about 4,300 m<sup>2</sup>, was a piece of hilly land.

Shefki Haxhiu worked hard to provide for his family and to save money. By 1994, he had managed to accumulate savings and decided to use it to set up a 500 m<sup>2</sup> greenhouse. He built the greenhouse, planted tomatoes and cucumbers, and harvested the first crop

in June of 1995. He then expanded the greenhouse to 700 m<sup>2</sup> with the money he earned by selling produce.

He used the rest of the net earnings to develop a vineyard of about 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> in the hilly lands of his father. Mr. Haxhiu harvested 1,000 kg of grapes, worth about 100,000 leks (approximately US \$800) in year two and 1,500 kg the third year. During 1999, the harvest increased to 2,000 kg of grapes. He expects to harvest about 5,000 kg for the year 2000. Mr. Haxhiu also worked on his olive grove.

Haxhiu obtained all agricultural inputs from the local agro-input store of AFADA dealer, Fiqiri Ismaili, and was very pleased. Haxhiu said that he has seen IFDC television spots and learned many things on how and where to get the best inputs. The project publications have been of a great help to him, in particular the two titled *Fertilization* and *Manual of Pesticide Use*. The AFADA dealer provided technical assistance through IFDC published leaflets on olive cultivation. The leaflets taught him how and when to use pesticide and fertilizer, like urea and SSP, on the olive trees to boost productivity. In 1993 he harvested 4 kg per tree and in 1999 15 kg per tree.

