



## **Presentation of Region of Central Macedonia of Greece**

The agri-food sector along with tourism is the spearhead in our local economy, with a major contribution to the national economy as well. Central target of the policy of the Region of Central Macedonia, as it turns out, is to continuously strengthen the primary sector through continuous and multiple synergies to make the most of it and maximize its added value. In the Region of Central Macedonia we have proven that we are efficient and fast in utilizing all available funds to support the rural world and to promote the high quality and competitiveness of fine Macedonian land products within and outside Greece.

It is no coincidence that the Region of Central Macedonia ranks first nation-wide in agricultural production, as well as in exports of food and agricultural products, with one of the richest agricultural product baskets in the country and the percentage of rural economy in Central Macedonia's GDP keeping steadily above 25%. Also, the primary sector of Central Macedonia accounts for 26% of the Gross Added Value of the primary sector at country level.

To exemplify, 85% of rice, 70% of fruit and 30% of cotton and cereals are cultivated within the Region of Central Macedonia. RCM also has the largest mussel production (90% exported), the largest fish canning company (with 75% exports) and two dynamic aquaculture establishments with approximately 50% exports. Correspondingly, 35% of beef, 48% of cow and 20% of sheep and goat milk are produced in our region, as well as 29% of fish and 25% of honey.

In addition, in the Region of Central Macedonia we have Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) products, such as Naoussa peaches, Pieria kiwi, Chalkidiki olive oil, spirits as tsipouro, kaseri cheese, manouri cheese, while most wines produced in all Regional Units have PDOs and PGIs certifications.

"Macedonian Cuisine" is therefore an initiative of the Region of Central Macedonia, serving as the link between the Agri-food sector and the Tourism sector of the Region. It is our way of supporting and organizing Gastronomic Tourism, offering our guests an enjoyable journey in the tastes, materials and recipes of a place rich in tradition and full of love for everything authentic. The purpose of the Region of Central Macedonia is to bring "Macedonian Cuisine" into the best restaurants and the largest hotels, offering authentic Macedonian recipes using authentic Macedonian land materials.

The Region of Central Macedonia is making every effort so that producers will promote and consolidate their products, with a plethora of exhibitions both domestically and internationally, such as Agrotica, Foodexpo, Detrop, Freskon, Fruit Logistica, Prodexpo, Anuga, Prowein, Summer Fancy Food, Sial Middle East, Sial Paris and Sial China etc. The aim of the Region of Central Macedonia in exhibitions in Greece and abroad is to network and familiarize food and beverage professionals with local products produced by companies within the Region of Central Macedonia and their producers, make the best use of the opportunity to inform consumers about our Region's certified products and to promote to new domestic and foreign markets some of our unique local agri-food products that constitute the robust identity of the primary sector of Central Macedonia.

Mr. Sotiris Batos

Vice-Governor for Agricultural Economy