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A Case Study Analysis of Changes in Selected Bulgarian Agribusiness Firms between 1996 and 2009

Albert J. Allen, Charlie Forrest, and Steve Murray

The period after the breakup of the Soviet Union and the transformation of the countries of Eastern Europe to democracies with market-based economies was exciting for many faculty members of land-grant universities. It was a period of faculty exchanges among universities on each side of the Atlantic, universities that were far from the national capitals and which seldom made national news. During this period faculty and government officials from Eastern European countries and countries of the former Soviet Union began to visit U.S. land-grant universities to find out how the U.S. agribusiness sector functioned. U.S. agriculture faculty had opportunities to travel to these countries to observe and participate in the transition from planned to market economies. Thus it is important to seek answers to questions that might arise regarding the economic changes, positive or negative, that have occurred in the agribusiness industry since the breakup of the Soviet Union from firms that have experienced the changes that have occurred in this part of the world: Bulgaria.

Objectives, Data, and Methodology

The general objectives of this project were to obtain information on the economic changes that have occurred between 1996 and 2009 and evaluate how these changes have impacted a set of selected agribusiness firms in Bulgaria. The case study research method was used to obtain information and data from agribusiness firms by travelling to Bulgaria during the period May 23–June 3, 2009.

Results

We have developed a draft of the final report for the project. As of this research update, the draft of the final report is divided into four sections. The first section deals with general background information and observation of the authors. The next section provides a historical development of the Extension Service at the Thracian University.

The third section of the report is focused on the changes in agricultural production in Bulgaria. The fourth section deals with the case study approach of the ten agribusiness firms interviewed.

Allen is Professor and Forrest is Professor Emeritus, Department of Agricultural Economics, and Murray is retired Extension Service Professor, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State.

This research update is produced under the auspices of the project titled "Changes in Bulgarian Agriculture between 1996 and 2009: Case Studies of Ten Farms and Agribusinesses sponsored by the Center for International Studies, Title VIII Program, University of Delaware, Newark.