Foreword

The Protocols of Integrated Production of some Horticultural Crops are the mouthpiece of the project titled “Improvement of Fruit and Vegetable Yields through the Diffusion of Sustainable Productive Systems” funded by the Italian government (Law 84) of and implemented by the Italian IAMBari of the International organisation CIHEAM in the period 2004-2005 in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro. They are mainly addressed to the extension officers who work in the public and private sectors, allowing them to assist farmers for the quality improvement of horticulture products.

Through these protocols the project tries to bring a different philosophy for the integrated production of horticultural crops, starting from some major crops for the area. Their publication (in English and in the country languages) is important because (i) it is a first step towards the integrated production of horticultural crops, (ii) it helps laying a common basis with the EU standards, (iii) it is a ‘guide document’ that will help extending the integrated production in other regions and for other crops, and (iv) it will help taking the project countries closer to the EU markets.

The first step of the protocols is to increase the ability of farmers to respond to the new market demands by improving the crop technology, the farm management, by reducing the production costs, and, with the necessity to better the production quality, to meet the consumers’ needs who are increasingly concerned with the healthiness, wholesomeness, the nutritive value and traceability. By implementing EU standards and using certification, a real increase in the marketing opportunities of horticultural products is expected from the project countries vis-à-vis the EU markets as well as a more environmentally-friendly approach.

Last but not least, the present protocols are a multi-national product of collective work and discussions that have opened an institutional and technical dialogue between the IAMBari specialists and the experts from different project countries.

Cosimo Lacirignola

Director of the CIHEAM-IAMB
Preamble

At the beginning of 2004, the Croatian Agricultural Extension Institute set up a team of experts for the elaboration of the Protocols of Integrated Production of some Horticultural Crops funded the Italian government (Law 84) and implemented by the CIHEAM-IAMBari, in the framework of the project “Improvement of Fruit and Vegetable Yields through the Diffusion of Sustainable Productive Systems”

The Croatian economy is marked by constant changes which are particularly evident in agriculture. Constant market changes, changes in the production system, choice of new technology, reforms of the objectives and measures of agricultural policies are some of the basic elements of the latest years which affect the farmers and call for a re-adaptation to the new conditions.

The low income of small farmers does not enable them to keep up with the latest advances, enlargement, improved management and marketing. The current situation may be improved only by a change in the use of resources, capacities, technology with the introduction of integrated production standards.

Protocols of Integrated Production of some Horticultural Crops will give farmers new perspectives on production standards which are nowadays applied in developed countries. Protocols of Integrated Production of some Horticultural Crops are the first step towards the integrated production, certification and marketing of such certified products.

Dr. sc. Ivan Katalinić

Director CEAI