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"'Danube Fruit Growers" 2026 brought together farmers, processors and agricultural experts at a specialized exhibition in Ruse'

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"Danube Fruit Growers" is a professional platform for exchanging ideas, finding solutions and showcasing the best of contemporary Bulgarian agriculture. This year's edition of the exhibition brought together nearly 40 producers, processors and traders from across the country, who presented a variety of Bulgarian fruits and vegetables, honey, nuts, tahini, natural juices, dried fruits, jams, preserves, baked goods and planting material, as well as agricultural products, services and machinery.

What does the journey of fruit from the orchard to the table look like – and what technologies, knowledge, investments and partnerships stand behind it? The ninth consecutive edition of the "Danube Fruit Growers" exhibition, held on 17 October at Arena Ruse hall, provided the answer to this question. The event, organised by the Union of Danube Fruit Growers, once again succeeded in bringing the sector together in one place, establishing itself as the most important meeting point for producers, companies and specialists.

The State in Dialogue with Business

The significance of the forum was further underscored by the presence of state institutions. The ninth edition was officially opened by the Deputy Ministers of Agriculture and Food Yanislav Yanchev and Krasimir Chakarov. Among the official guests were also the Deputy Mayor of Ruse Encho Enchev and the Deputy Executive Director of the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency Nevena Petrova.

Within the framework of the event, an open discussion with the industry was held, focusing on challenges, market realisation and the new programming period. Deputy Minister Yanchev assured fruit growers that a key priority of the Ministry is ensuring additional liquidity through advance payments in the "Fruits and Vegetables" sector. Good news for the industry was the approved budget for the so-called "Iranian aid", which will compensate for increased fuel and fertiliser costs, with the application process set to launch at the earliest opportunity and under maximally simplified conditions.

For his part, Deputy Minister Chakarov emphasised the investment interventions under the Strategic Plan for Agricultural Development. He announced a simplification of the interim payment procedure and the preparation of a new crediting mechanism that would enable beneficiaries to cover their current expenses before receiving the final subsidy. Active support for young farmers in sensitive sectors was also announced for the end of the year.

Free Marketplace for Local Farmers

This year, nearly 40 producers, processors and traders from across the country took part in the exhibition. For the general public, the most delicious and attractive part of the day was, as expected, the farmers' market. The stalls overflowed with autumnal abundance of fresh apples and pears, dried fruits, nuts, honey, tahini, artisan jams, preserves, baked goods and natural juices.

An important emphasis this year was the social and supportive function of the forum – participation in the farmers' market was entirely free of charge for exhibitors. Priority was given to agricultural producers and members of the Union offering their own produce, providing them with an invaluable opportunity for direct contact with end consumers.

Thus the event continued the enduring tradition of the specialised forum, decisively building on the interest from the previous year, 2025, when a total of 34 exhibitors participated at Arena Ruse.

Technologies and Business Partnerships

Alongside farming produce, dedicated spaces with their own stands for agribusiness companies were set up in the hall. Solutions without which modern fruit growing cannot be competitive were demonstrated – specialised agricultural machinery, drip irrigation systems, refrigeration equipment, plant protection products, planting material and innovative packaging solutions.

The specially designated B2B zone proved key for professionals in the sector, providing an excellent environment for direct negotiations. Banks and consultancy companies also participated actively to advise farmers on financing opportunities.

From Ruse to Poland: A Look at International Markets

However, the ambitions of the organisers from the Union of Danube Fruit Growers do not stop at national borders. Their efforts to promote Bulgarian produce also found expression on the international stage. Just a month before the forum in Ruse, in September 2026, the organisation participated with a large-scale national stand at the prestigious POLAGRA 4.0 exhibition in Poznan, Poland.

The exhibition provided a stage for 20 Bulgarian fruit growers, who presented the rich palette of domestic production – from fresh and dried fruits to natural juices, compotes, jellies and other products prepared according to traditional recipes. This united presence demonstrated the potential of Bulgarian producers to step onto the international stage as a unified and recognisable sector, rather than as individual companies.

"Participation in Poznan once again demonstrated the advantages of cooperation among agricultural producers and the power of collective representation at the national stand. The broad product range made it possible to showcase Bulgarian fruit growing not only through individual brands, but as a complete production base," shared Nikolay Kolev, Chairman of the Management Board of the Union of Danube Fruit Growers. According to him, when such a large number of producers with different profiles are present in one place, potential partners gain a much more complete picture of the sector's capabilities – both in terms of fresh produce and processed foods.

Science Enters the Orchard

Particular attention during the event in Ruse was devoted to the connection between agribusiness, science and education. Angel Kanchev University of Ruse, a traditional partner of the exhibition, presented the programmes of its Faculty of Agrarian and Industrial Engineering, establishing itself as an important centre for training specialists.

A highlight of the accompanying programme was the discussion panel led by Chief Assistant Prof. Dr. Maria Hristozova from the Fruit Growing Institute – Plovdiv. Her lecture was dedicated to methods for the prevention and control of the black borer (Capnodis tenebrionis L.) – an extremely serious pest of permanent plantations, and the practical advice generated enormous interest among fruit growers.

More on the topic:

Agrotechnical methods for the prevention and control of the black borer (Capnodis tenebrionis L.)

Effect of certain plant protection products against adults of the black borer (Capnodis tenebrionis (L.)) on stone fruit crops