

***MEDIA RELEASE***

*Winners of the fifth cycle of Intesa Farmer contest announced*

**Banca Intesa chooses the best farmers in 2017**

**Belgrade, October 31, 2017** – Banca Intesa announced the winners of Intesa Farmer 2017 contest for the most successful farmers at an official ceremony which was attended by Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management Branislav Nedimović and high ranking bank representatives.

Robert Silađi from Bajša near Bačka Topola won the first place in the Intesa Stockbreeder category, while Vladimir Ostojić from Sremska Mitrovica was the winner in the Intesa Crop Farming category. Dušan Petrović from Gospođinci near Žabalj was the most successful in the Intesa Vegetable Grower category, while Zorica Kovačević from Čerević near Beočin was victorious in the Intesa Fruit Grower category, and Stevica Marković from Brestovac near Leskovac in the Slow Food Producer category.

Winners of Banca Intesa contest will be awarded with a study trip to the 20th International Agricultural Exhibition & Conference Agritech 2018 to be held from May 8 to 10, 2018 in Tel-Aviv.

“Intesa Farmer contest is marking a small jubilee this year – five years. During this period we attempted to promote extraordinary individuals and share their success with the public and therefore additionally promote the development of the agriculture sector. On the other hand, we have continuously improved the offer through the introduction of innovative products, cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture in the subsidized loan segment, and adjustment of interest rates to market trends. It is my belief that this way we significantly contribute to the comprehensive efforts of the state to put agriculture as the strategic development chance of Serbian economy a step closer to its full potential,” said Draginja Đurić, president of Banca Intesa Executive Board.

More than 600 farmers applied to the fifth cycle of the Intesa Farmer contest. Winners were chosen by a commission of experts who decided on the winners according to general criteria including annual results accomplished through agricultural production, ownership of storage facility, participation of family members in production process, and established cooperation with Banca Intesa. In the Intesa Crop Farming category, the additional criterion was the use of advanced and energy efficient machines, and the additional criterion for the Intesa Fruit Grower category

was the implementation of irrigation system, anti-hail system, and certified plantations. The additional criterion in the Intesa Stockbreeder category was breeding of livestock of registered breeds, and in the Intesa Vegetable Grower category production in enclosed space, which required greenhouse or foliar production.

The expert jury was comprised of Predrag Milenović, Head of Small Business Client Department, Đorđe Radulović, head of Banca Intesa Office for Managing Sales to Registered Farming Households, Vojislav Živanović, Sponsorship, Donations, and Events Manager at Banca Intesa, Biagio Carrano, president of Slow Food Convivium in Serbia, and Goran Đaković, editor-in-chief of Agrobiznis magazine.

Banca Intesa is one of the leading banks in the domestic market in regards to supporting agriculture. Since 2008 when it started operating in this segment, the bank provided credit support to registered farming households worth a total of EUR 240 million. In the first three quarters of 2017, Banca Intesa approved nearly EUR 32 million in loans to registered farming households, up 19% year-on-year.

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*Banca Intesa ad Beograd, member of **INTESA**  **SANPAOLO**, is a leading bank in the domestic market, a reliable partner of 1.45 million clients, natural persons and legal entities. With a net balance sum of EUR 4.9 billion, EUR 3.2 billion in total deposits and EUR 2.5 billion in total loans, Banca Intesa is at the helm of the list of the most successful banks in Serbia. Owing to a developed business network comprised of 165 branches all over Serbia, the most developed network of ATMs and POS terminals, as well as a professional team of around 3,000 employees, the Bank achieves stable results in all areas of business by developing activities in the retail, small business, agriculture and local administration sectors.*