

## New Way Of Doing Business For Dairy Processor



Photo: USAID/Albania Karla Christensen

Ferdinand was one of the first dairy processors to sign up with USAID's Land O' Lakes Good Management Practices program.

**“It was just me and my brother producing cheese. We were pasteurizing the milk over wood-burning stoves and emptying the waste into open ditches. The smell was horrible and many people in the community were angry at us. Since we joined the USAID program in 2002, we have built a large plant with a septic system and six cooling tanks for testing and storage of milk employing over 25 people. The neighbors are not complaining any more.”**

**- Ferdinand Gjata, Dairy Processor**

Ferdinand Gjata began his business after the communist regime in Albania fell in 1991. The dairy industry was non-existent then with individual farmers processing their own products and selling only at the local level. Ferdinand was one of the first dairy processors to sign up with USAID's Land O' Lakes Good Management Practices program. Ferdinand, along with many others throughout Albania, have benefited from USAID's assistance. With improved sanitation and hygiene conditions, they are consistently producing high quality products and are able to maintain a profit level above their expectations.

The economic restructuring program in Albania has introduced new technology to the dairy industry along with increased employment, sales, capacity and profitability. With the interest and the initiative for improved dairy quality, the country will soon export their high quality products in the near future. Now Ferdinand collects from over 800 farmers and distributes milk products like cheese, yogurt and milk to over 180 stores in the capital city of Tirana.