

# We operate transparently, in full compliance with all regulations!

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*Conversation of Emil Ivanov with Hristo Stoynov, vine grower and licensed wine producer from the village of Lozenets, Straldzha municipality, Yambol region, manager of the sole trader company ET "Hristo Stoynov-D"*

***Mr. Stoynov, please tell us how you made the decision to try your luck in viticulture?***

In a few words – a hard-won decision! Until 2000 I was working abroad – Cyprus, Israel, Greece... I became convinced that this was not the way to get ahead and I returned to the village. For two years I worked as a technician at the winery in Straldzha. There I learned some of the subtleties of the great art called winemaking. In spite of my great satisfaction with the chance to end up in this interesting place, the winery closed its doors

and I found myself out on the street (for who knows which time). My next stop was the greenhouse in Straldzha. After a year I made a fateful decision – I would take up viticulture. My hope rested on those 10 decarees of vineyards which I inherited. And I started step by step, forward and upward, together with my wife and my son...

***What assets does the company “Hristo Stoynov-D” have today?***

Own vineyards of 100 decarees, half of them are new plantations – the elite wine grape varieties Cabernet, Merlot, Chardonnay, Muscat Ottonel and Red Misket. From the 5 varieties we produce 7 brands of wine in our small high-tech and modern winery, which we have located in the yard of our home.

***You reached the idea of producing a final product. This is a major challenge, if only because competition is very strong...***

The family winery is of boutique type, still little known in our country. Against the general background it brings freshness, diversity, pleasant surprises and exciting experiences. As far as legitimate, regulated competition is concerned, it is not frightening; what is frightening is the “grey” competition, the thief of honest labour, which renders many good ideas meaningless and distorts the market.

***What are the basic parameters for success in viticulture and winemaking?***

The basic parameters are two. One is the quality of the grapes, the other – the technological equipment and hygiene in the winery. If you manage to control these parameters, success is guaranteed.

***What is the toolkit of Hristo Stoynov for managing the basic parameters?***

In the vineyard – plant protection; in the winery – in addition to what has been said above, I add the professional competence of the technologist-specialist.

***You placed emphasis on plant protection in the vineyard; how do you implement it at a high level?***

We rely on the expert support of Viola AE. What do I mean? The dynamics in agrochemistry, and in particular agrochemistry in viticulture, are very great. On the one hand, innovations follow one after another, and on the other hand, the rules in the fight against diseases, pests and weeds are constantly changing, depending on changes in the climatic and phytosanitary environment, the pressure of invasive species... Viola AE has the informational capacity to monitor the changes and innovations. Its specialists are in direct contact with the Bulgarian representative offices of the leading global agrochemical companies – BASF, DuPont, Arysta LifeScience, Summit Agro... In other words: the real-time exchange of information carried out by Viola AE is to our benefit, the producers. We have the privilege to work with the world's cutting-edge achievements for pest control in our vineyards.

Furthermore, the specialists of Viola AE monitor the behaviour of pests throughout the year. Their forecasting, diagnostics and proposals for action are at a perfect level. This is the formula for achieving a high health status of the vine plantations – a production which, as is well known, is highly sensitive and delicate.

***Do you feel support from the state agricultural administration?***

We use hired labour during the grape harvest. The one-day employment contracts, however, create a major headache for us. We have nothing against them, but the paperwork is overwhelming and if it were reduced, things would be simplified to the maximum extent. Another topic is the projects under various programmes. We, the small producers, reach them with great difficulty; we are deprived of easy access. The administration prefers to work with the big ones. We live with the feeling that the small producer is not of interest and is left in the background.

***What are your investment intentions, how do you see the future of your business?***

Our own business has sustainable parameters. In the 5 years since we started winemaking, we have managed to gain a foothold on the market. We have clients throughout the country. Last year we produced 30 tonnes of high-quality wine and there are indications that we will manage to sell it. This situation gives us the courage to move forward. First, we will renew the old 50 decares of vineyards, and we will also invest in the winery.

Our attempt to work “in the open”, in full compliance with all rules, is proving successful. This is our long-term, far-sighted policy, which we will firmly follow without the slightest deviation. Believe me, there is nothing more exciting than a successful person on his native land!

**Profile:** Hristo Stoynov was born in 1961 in the village of Lozenets. He has a secondary technical education. His wife Donka is an economist, and his son Stoyno is a technologist, oenologist, bachelor in agronomy.

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*As we have already informed you, in four consecutive issues of the magazine “Plant Protection” we will publish interviews with agricultural producers, clients of Viola AE, the trading company for pesticides, fertilizers and seeds, based in Sliven. In issue 3-2018 of the magazine Plant Protection we published the conversation with Nedelcho Popov, chairman of the agricultural cooperative “Tundzha 94” in the village of Panicherevo, Stara Zagora region. In issue 4, expect the interview with Hristo Stoynov, vine grower and licensed wine producer from the village of Lozenets.*

*These materials are not of an advertising nature. The aim is to show what people think about their work in the fields, the people who are part of Bulgaria’s agricultural community.*

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