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THE IMPORTANCE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM EUROPEAN COMMUNITY IN ROMANIAN FRUIT PRODUCTION

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Abstract

Fruit growing in Romania has passed through different phases in the past time. The fact that Romania is EU member since 2007 brought a number benefits regarding the funds for development in different domains. First of all the economic development of all EU members is the main objective, that's why in the National Program of Rural Development for 2014-2020 the focus is distributed to fruit growing. The studies made on the development of this section of agriculture brought positive conclusions regarding the investments in this sector, with respect to the eco-climatic conditions in Romania. The main objective is focusing on building new crops, investment in equipment, rehabilitation of nurseries, appearance of new and competitive products and last but not least investment in research studies in the field of fruit growing. All these together are the motor of economic competiveness growth of the fruit crops that can bring a number of financial benefits for all the implicated factors. The EU initiative of offering financial support for the fruit crops is necessary, welcome and in the same time certifies the development of Romania in this sector that has an excellent perspective.

Key words*: development, European Union, financial support, fruit production, Romania.*

INTRODUCTION

Fruit growing sector has been in a steady decline over the past 23 years, with negative consequences for the economic development of rural areas (Cojocaru, 2000; FAO Statistics; PNDR 2014). The surface covered with orchards, during 1990-2013, decreased by about 50% (from 313,400 ha in 1990 to 158,600 ha in 2013). In the last five years deforestation rate was faster than the establishment of new ones, in 2008-2012 only were cleared 5722 ha and 3007 ha established (FAO Statistics; Isac, 2002; PNDR 2014). Most orchards are aging, older than 25 years; from the total area of orchards, 73.8% (117, 000 ha) are plantations older than 25 years, 18.7% (29,700 ha) are plantations aged 10-25 years and only 7.5% (11,800 ha) are plantations aged 1-10 years (FAO Statistics; Merce, 2010; Mitre, 2002; Pânzaru, 2007; PNDR 2014). 83,000 ha of plantations are declining (52.4% of the total area), about 67,000 ha are fruit plantations (42.2% of total area) and 8540 ha are young plantations (5.4% of total surface). 108,500 ha plantations (68.4%) are cultivated in an extensively system, 47,200 ha plantation (29.7%) cultivated intensively and 2,930 ha (1.9%) are plantations super intensive (FAO Statistics; PNDR 2014; Ra i, 2001). The area cultivated organically increased from 211 ha in 2006 to 6,083 ha in 2012. Of the 6,083 hectares approximately 86% are under conversion and only 14% are certified (FAO Statistics; PNDR 2014). In Table 1, are given data regarding the orchards in Cluj County by species and ages.

Table 1. The centralized orchards by species and age, in Cluj County

Nr.	Basin orchards	Species	Area (ha)	Ages			Category			Cultural system		
				>25 years	10-25 years	1-10 years	In decline	In production	Young	Extensive	Intensive	Super intensive
				(ha)	(ha)	(ha)	(ha)	(ha)	(ha)	(ha)	(ha)	(ha)
1	DEJ	Apples	616	607		9	448	159	9	188	428	
		Pears	21	21			10	11			21	
		Plums	147	147			147				147	
		Cherries	10	10			10				10	
		Sour cherries	5	5			5				5	
		Nuts	2			2			2		2	
		Black currant	1			1			1		1	
TOTAL AREA DEJ			**802**	**790**		**12**	**620**	**170**	**12**	**188**	**614**	
2	APAHIDA	Apples	752	749		3	729	20	3	109	643	
		Plums	116	116			116				116	
		Cherries	7	7			7				7	
		Sour cherries	2	2			2				2	
		Seabuckthorn	15.03			15.03			15.03		15.03	
		Nuts	4.5			4.5			4.5		4.5	
TOTAL AREA APAHIDA			**896.53**	**874**	**0**	**22.53**	**854**	**20**	**22.53**	**109**	**787.53**	
3	TAGA	Apples	242	217		25	217		25	217	25	
		Plums	46	46			46			24	22	
		Seabuckthorn	24.24			24.24			24.24		24.24	
TOTAL AREA TAGA			**312.24**	**263**		**49.24**	**263**		**49.24**	**241**	**71.24**	
4	CLUJ	Apples	868	858		10	858		10	109	759	
		Pears	15	15			15			15		
		Plums	574	574			574			44	530	
		Cherries	20	20			20				20	
		Sour cherries	8	8			8				8	
		Huckleberry	3.6			3.6			3.6		3.6	
		Black currant	2			2		2			2	
		Experimental collection	20									
TOTAL AREA CLUJ			**1490.6**	**1475**		**15.6**	**1475**	**2**	**13.6**	**168**	**1322.6**	
5	BACIU	Apples	274	269		5	269		5	120	154	
		Plums	359	359			359			2	357	
		Raspberry	1			1			1		1	
		Huckleberry	2.5			2.5			2.5		2.5	
TOTAL AREA BACIU			**636.5**	**628**		**8.5**	**628**	**0**	**8.5**	**122**	**514.5**	
6	TURDA	Apples	307.54	295		12.54	295	10.04	2.5	295	12.54	
		Pears	5	5			5			5		
		Plums	12.46	10		2.46	10	2.46		10	2.46	
		Cherries	29	29			29			29		
		Sour cherries	27	27			27			27		
		Nuts	3.23			3.23			3.23		3.23	
TOTAL AREA TURDA			**384.23**	**366**	**0**	**18.23**	**366**	**12.5**	**5.73**	**366**	**18.23**	**0**
TOTAL			**4522.1**	**4396**	**0**	**126.1**	**4206**	**204.5**	**111.6**	**1194**	**3328.1**	**0**

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main objective is focusing on building new crops, investment in equipment, rehabilitation of nurseries, appearance of new and competitive products and last but not least investment in research studies in the field of fruit growing.
The data, collected from Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and from the National Program of Rural Development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A major factor that led to the decline of the sector is excessive fragmentation of land, especially in hilly favourable fruit crops, average surface area owned tree farm is 0,38 ha in 2010, much less than the minimum area required for a holding fruit to become viable (minimum 0,3 - 5 ha). According to the General Agricultural Census (GAC) 2010, the largest average size occurs when plantations of peaches and nectarines and lowest for pears, 0,64 ha, 0,16 ha respectively. The main species grown (by area) are plum (43,8%), apple (42,4%) (Figure 1.) (FAO Statistics).

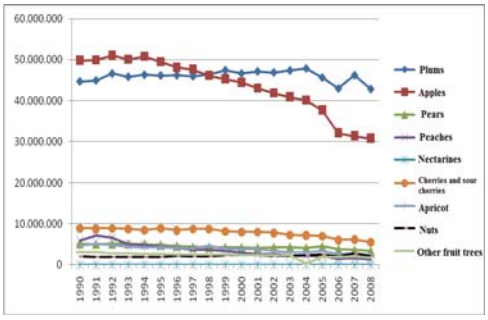

Figure 1. Evolution of the number of trees by species during 1990-2008 (Statistical Yearbook of Romania; FAO STATISTICS)

In terms of ownership structure, 88% of holdings are individual properties and only 10% are held by associations or societies (Figure 2.).

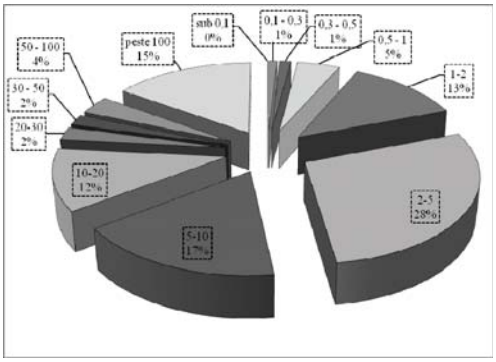

Figure 2. Distribution orchards on every farm size in 2007 (Statistical Yearbook of Romania; FAO STATISTICS)

The share of the fruit production on farm types in 2008 is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The share of fruit production on farm types in 2008 (Statistical Yearbook of Romania)

	Companies and associations	Individual farms	Other holdings
Pomiculture	10%	88%	1%
Apples	16%	83%	2%
Pears	1%	98%	0%
Plums	3%	97%	1%
Peaches, nectarines	18%	75%	7%
Cherries, sour cherries	10%	89%	1%
Other fruits	7%	93%	1%
Expenses for fruit plantations	52%	43%	5%
Seedlings for plantation establishment	92%	2%	6%

CONCLUSIONS

A main objective is the establishment of new fruit tree plantations, of all kinds, depending on the specific area of orchards and market demands (super-intensive farms, intensive, extensive, green); investment in rejuvenation/conversion fruit crops; investment in modernization of farms and orchards and economic competitiveness and environmental thereof; supporting investments in equipment, machinery and facilities for performance, storage, processing, packaging, transport and to increase the

quality and quantity of fruit production (including investments in more efficient irrigation systems or creating new and good water management infrastructure) support the setting up of young farmers; support for small farms; rehabilitation nurseries and research stations capable of meeting market needs to produce high quality seedlings, adapted to the specific soil; development of processes/innovative products to increase competitiveness of the sector; supporting investment in research and innovation for endangered tree species to maintain and improve genetic resources and for making efficient tree varieties adapted to specific local conditions.

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