

POTATO MARKET IN ROMANIA: LOCAL PRODUCTION VS IMPORTS

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Abstract

The paper analyses the Romanian potato market, focusing on cultivated areas, domestic production, consumption, and international trade. The study is based on open-access articles from international databases, reports from regional and national public institutions, and specialized articles from online media. Statistical analysis based on national and European data highlights market trends. Findings indicate a significant decline in cultivated areas and a lack of competitiveness in the domestic sector, primarily due to low productivity and high production costs. The lack of governmental support and economic inefficiency have significantly increased Romania's reliance on imports, contributing to a persistent trade deficit. In 2023, Romania imported over 800,000 tons of potatoes, covering a significant portion of domestic consumption. Additionally, a growing demand for frozen potatoes has been observed in recent years, yet Romania lacks processing facilities, making it entirely dependent on imports. In response, a Romanian company has announced a major investment in a potato processing plant, demonstrating market flexibility and business adaptability. This initiative could serve as a model for similar investments in other agricultural sectors. To counteract these challenges, a strategic approach is needed, including coherent agricultural policies, investments in technology, and financial support for local farmers to enhance self-sufficiency and food security.

Key words: Romania, potato market, international trade, processing industry

INTRODUCTION

The potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) is a plant belonging to the Solanaceae family, originating from South America, where it was a staple food for the Incas as early as 500 BC. The potato was introduced to Europe in the 16th century by the conquistadors, around 1530. From Spain, the plant spread to other European countries, and through colonial expansion, it eventually became cultivated on all continents.

In Europe, the lack of knowledge regarding the edible parts of the plant initially led to reluctance in its use for human consumption, as the leaves, fruits, and stems are toxic. In the Romanian territories, the potato was introduced through the Habsburg Empire, initially in Transylvania (around 1869), later being mentioned in Moldova (1812) and likely cultivated in Walachia around 1900.

The acceptance and widespread consumption of potatoes were driven by poverty and periods of famine (1815). Today, potatoes are a common staple food, widely available in markets and grocery stores, with an affordable price for the general population, often referred to as the "poor man's food." The Romanian word "cartof" is believed to derive from the German "Kartoffel," which itself originates from the Italian "tarantoffli" or "tartouffli" [1]. The cultivation of potatoes is a widespread activity across Romania, being carried out both in open fields and gardens, depending on favourable soil and climatic conditions. The main production areas, where the soil properties and climatic conditions allow for consistent yields, are primarily located in the central and northern counties of the country, including Covasna, Harghita, Braşov, Sibiu, Suceava, and Neamţ.

Potato cultivation is mainly intended for direct human consumption, but it is also used for industrial processing in the food industry and as animal feed. While the tubers are consumed, the aerial parts of the plant contain solanine, a toxic compound for animals.

In Romania, different varieties of potatoes are cultivated, generally classified into early potatoes (harvested between May and July) and autumn potatoes (harvested between August and September) [11].

Characterized by significant genetic diversity, the potato plant has over 4,000 known varieties. Globally, *Solanum tuberosum* is the predominant cultivated species, but there are also 10 other species commonly found in agriculture. Additionally, approximately 200 wild species exist in nature. The widespread adoption of modern agricultural techniques and the impact of climate change are accelerating the loss of potato biodiversity, affecting certain genes essential for nutrient biosynthesis. Research into the nutritional composition variations of potatoes based on their genetic characteristics could support the development of effective strategies for conserving natural biodiversity, with implications for global food security. It is estimated that potatoes contribute around 2% to global human nutrition in terms of energy intake, despite being a staple food in many countries. The average caloric intake from potatoes, primarily due to their carbohydrate content, ranges from 540 kJ (130 kcal) per person per day in developed countries to just 170 kJ (42 kcal) per person per day in developing nations [4].

The high content of dietary fiber, resistant starch, elevated water percentage, and the specific composition of dry matter contribute to the low caloric density of potatoes compared to other carbohydrate-rich foods [8].

In addition to their energy supply, many potato varieties provide significant amounts of dietary fiber (up to 3.3%), ascorbic acid (up to 42 mg/100 g), potassium (up to 693.8 mg/100 g), total carotenoids (up to 2,700 mcg/100 g), and antioxidant compounds such as chlorogenic acid (up to 1,570 mcg/100 g) and its polymers. Potatoes also contain anti-nutrients like α -solanine (0.001–47.2 mg/100 g) (Table 1) [13]. Furthermore, they contain small amounts of

proteins (0.85–4.2%), various amino acids, minerals, vitamins, and other bioactive compounds, some of which can have both beneficial and harmful effects.

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Beyond their energy contribution, many potato varieties provide significant amounts of dietary fiber (up to 3.3%), ascorbic acid (up to 42 mg/100 g), potassium (up to 693.8 mg/100 g), total carotenoids (up to 2,700 mcg/100 g), and antioxidant compounds such as chlorogenic acid (up to 1,570 mcg/100 g) and its polymers. Additionally, potatoes contain anti-nutrients like α -solanine (0.001–47.2 mg/100 g) [13].

Their composition also includes small amounts of proteins (0.85–4.2%), various amino acids, minerals, vitamins, and other bioactive compounds, which may have both beneficial and potentially harmful effects.

The nutritional composition of potatoes is influenced by various factors, with genotype being one of the most significant. Cultivation conditions - including soil characteristics, nutrient availability, altitude, and weather conditions - along with storage methods, cooking techniques, and final processing, impact the bioavailability of nutrients in the final product.

The high satiety level provided by dietary fiber and resistant starch makes potatoes suitable for inclusion in diets and weight-loss programs. Additionally, cooling cooked potatoes before consumption further enhances their satiating properties.

Thermal processing during cooking can affect vitamin C content, as it is water-soluble; therefore, boiling potatoes with their skin on is recommended to preserve it.

Specialists also suggest consuming potato skin due to its high potassium content, which is primarily concentrated in or near the peel [8].

The preparation method significantly influences the energy value of potatoes.

A comparative analysis of the caloric values of potatoes prepared in different ways, as well as rice, pasta, and bread, is presented in Figure 1.

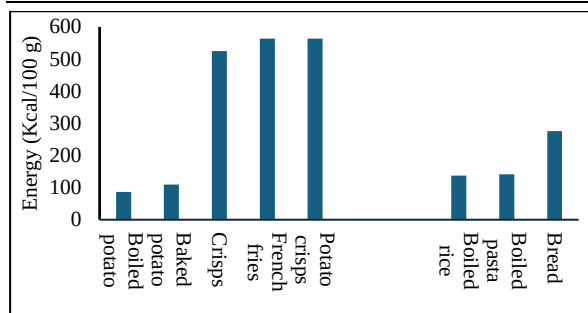


Fig. 1. Energy Content of Potatoes and Common Side Dishes (Kcal/100g).

Source: Authors, by using [8], [20], [9].

Boiled potatoes have the lowest energy value, followed by baked potatoes, making them the most recommended consumption options among the presented variants. From a nutritional perspective, baked potatoes retain the highest levels of potassium, vitamin C, and dietary fiber, with iron values relatively comparable to those found in boiled potatoes [9].

Potato chips and French fries have the highest caloric values, exceeding 500 kcal/100 g, primarily due to oil absorption during frying. Intermediate energy values are observed in boiled rice and pasta, which serve as better alternatives than fried products. Bread, with an energy level of approximately 276 kcal/100 g, falls into the category of high-energy-density foods.

When properly cooked, potatoes can provide around 30% of the daily vitamin C requirement, 7% of dietary fiber needs, a higher potassium intake than bananas, and a significant contribution of dietary antioxidants, which play a role in disease prevention. However, the presence of toxic compounds (glycoalkaloids) can cause gastrointestinal disorders [18].

From the perspective of the average annual potato consumption per capita, two regions in Europe stand out where quantities are significantly higher than in other parts of the continent: the eastern zone and the British Isles region, including the Netherlands and Belgium. The highest potato consumption levels are recorded in Belarus (182 kg) and Ukraine (139 kg), while the lowest are found in Cyprus (21 kg), Bulgaria, and Montenegro (27 kg).

Romania has a notable average consumption of 98 kg per capita, placing it above the European average (almost 90 kg).

Poland (116 kg) and Ireland (85 kg) are among the countries with high consumption, in contrast to southern European states such as

Italy (38 kg) and Spain (37 kg), where potatoes play a less prominent role in daily diets [12].

Belarus also holds the highest per capita annual potato consumption worldwide, according to a 2022 World Population Review analysis. The global statistics differ from the European or national figures, with Romania reported to have an average annual consumption of 61.5 kg per capita—approximately 50% lower [23]. According to Eurostat statistics, approximately 48.3 million tonnes of potatoes were harvested in Europe from around 1.3 million hectares of cultivated land in 2023. Out of a total of 9.1 million farms registered at the European level, around 1 million farms cultivated potatoes. More than 60% of these farms had an annual average production value of less than €8,000 per year.

Nearly 66% of these agricultural holdings were concentrated in three European Union (EU) member states: Romania (32.4% of the EU total), Poland (25.1%), and Lithuania (7.0%). Although Romania accounted for almost one-third of all potato-growing farms in 2020, these farms represented only 5.8% of the EU's total cultivated potato area in 2023, as the vast majority were small or very small farms.

A similar situation was observed in Lithuania, which accounted for 7% of the total EU potato farms, yet only 1.2% of the total cultivated potato area at the European level.

The largest potato-growing areas in Europe are found in Germany (19.9%), France (15.4%), Poland (approximately 14.2%), the Netherlands (11.7%), and Belgium (7.1%).

In 2023, Germany was the EU's largest potato producer, with 11.6 million tonnes harvested, representing 24% of the total EU production, followed by France (17.9%) and the Netherlands (13.4%). These three EU countries collectively accounted for 55.4% of the total potato production harvested in the EU in 2023 [10].

The cultivation of potatoes is a significant component of Romanian agriculture and the national economy, with a recorded production of 2.4 million tonnes in 2012.

Approximately 98% of the production is sold as fresh potatoes, while only 2% is processed. In recent years, notable progress has been made in utilizing potatoes as a source of

ethanol for fuel. Potatoes grown in southern Romania under irrigated conditions have a high starch content, enabling the production of approximately 4,000 Liters of ethanol per hectare [6].

An analysis of Romania's potato production between 2005 and 2010, conducted by Bularca et al. (2013), examines the sector through statistical indicators, providing valuable insights into the cultivation, trade, and consumption of this crop at the national level [3].

Another study by Soare (2016) assessed Romania's position in the European Union potato trade between 2011 and 2016. Although Romania contributed 5.53% of the EU's total potato production, its exports accounted for only 0.07% of the total EU export value, highlighting a trade imbalance. The research suggests that Romania could enhance its potato production and international trade performance through the implementation of targeted support measures for the sector [19].

In this context, the purpose of the paper is to analyse the evolution of the Romanian potato market, focusing on cultivated areas, domestic production, international trade, and consumption trends, in order to identify the key challenges and possible solutions for improving the sector's competitiveness and sustainability.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the preparation of the bibliographic documentation, open-access publications available on platforms such as Clarivate, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate were consulted, along with reports issued by international organizations (such as the Food and Agriculture Organization – FAO and World Population Review)[23], regional institutions (the European Commission, the U.S. Department of Agriculture), and national institutions.

The bibliographic research also included articles from scientific journals available online. The conducted research was primarily based on public information provided by Eurostat, the National Institute of Statistics,

and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Part of the process of data identification, linguistic verification of the English translation, and assistance in organizing the information was supported by an artificial intelligence model (ChatGPT), used for the efficient structuring of content and the synthesis of bibliographic resources.

The data were systematized, statistically processed, graphically represented, and analysed. The analysis and critical interpretation of the obtained results were strictly carried out by the authors to ensure their scientific accuracy and relevance.

The results were validated through comparisons with other specialized studies relevant to the research topic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Areas Cultivated and Potato Production in Romania

The evolution of the total areas allocated for potato cultivation in Romania during the period 1990-2023 is presented in Figure 2.

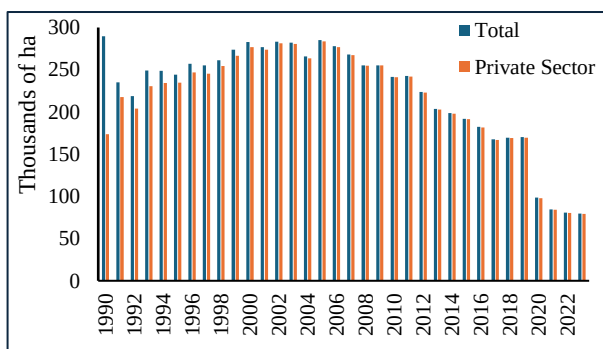


Fig. 2. Area cultivated with potatoes in Romania, 1990–2023

Source: Authors' design using the data from [15].

Except for the year 1990, when private agricultural ownership accounted for approximately 35% of the total, the restitution of agricultural land to owners led to the predominance of potato production in the private sector (over 99%) starting in 2000.

The existence of around 30% of potato crops under private ownership can be explained by household-level subsistence production and, more importantly, by the fact that potato cultivation was traditionally practiced in the

Subcarpathian hill regions, where agricultural collectivization was less extensive. Between 1990 and 2000, the total potato cultivation area remained relatively stable, with minor fluctuations. However, from 2000 onward, a sharp decline in the cultivated area was observed, likely due to the fragmentation of agricultural land and the transition to smaller cultivated plots, influenced by cheap imports and declining farmer profits.

This downward trend continued in the following years, reaching a minimum value of 79,396 hectares. The difference between total and private cultivation areas, about 173 hectares, corresponds to land cultivated within research institutes/stations or leased by the State Property Administration to private producers.

Compared to 1990, the total potato cultivation area has drastically decreased, reaching only 27% of its initial value. Several factors may be responsible for this reduction, including the decline in the number of small producers, increasing pressure from growing imports within the European single market—dominated by major producers such as Germany, France, Poland, and the Benelux countries with advanced technologies and lower production costs—rising agricultural input costs for Romanian farmers, a shift towards more profitable crops, and, more recently, the impact of climate change on a production system with limited and inefficient irrigation infrastructure.

The evolution of areas cultivated with maincrop potatoes and those allocated to extra-early, early, and summer potatoes is presented in Figure 3.

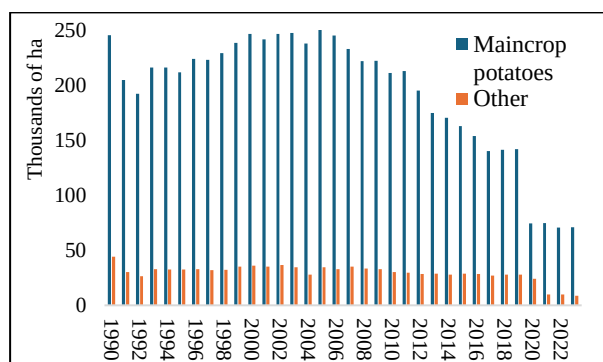


Fig. 3. Area allocated to maincrop potatoes and other potatoes in Romania (1990–2023)

Source: Authors' design using the data from [15].

The share of areas cultivated with extra-early, early, and summer potatoes represents approximately 14-15% of those allocated to main crop potatoes.

The much steeper decline in the cultivated areas of maincrop potatoes, compared to other potato varieties, can be attributed to the high perishability of early, extra-early, and summer potatoes. Importing these varieties from external markets requires specialized transport and storage facilities to minimize losses. Due to their limited shelf life, these potato varieties have a restricted market, while imports from countries with favourable climates may be more competitive.

It is likely that the cultivated potato areas will continue to decrease, with imports covering an increasing share of domestic demand. The low production levels and the ongoing decline in potato cultivation have prompted the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR) to introduce a support measure for local producers in 2024.

This measure takes the form of a *de minimis* aid program, with a total budget of approximately 2.3 million euros. The maximum support is set at 200 euros per hectare, granted proportionally to the cultivated area. To be eligible, applicants must cultivate at least 0.3 hectares of potatoes, achieve a yield of 15 tons per hectare, and sell at least 6 tons per hectare by November 18. The program targets both individual farmers and legally registered producers, including agricultural companies.

The quantitative variation of Romania's potato production between 1990 and 2023 is illustrated in Figure 4.

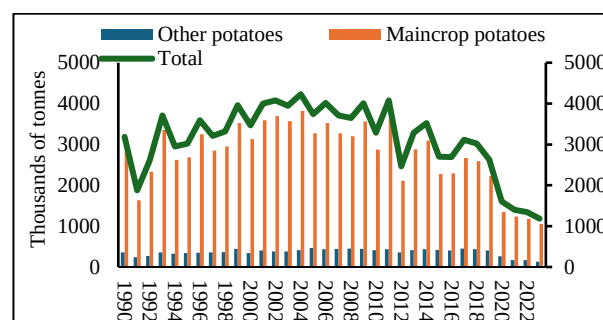


Fig. 4. Potatoes production in Romania (total, maincrop, other) 1990–2023

Source: Authors' design using data from [15].

The data presented in Figure 4 indicate that between 1990 and 2010, Romania's total potato production experienced relative fluctuations but remained at a relatively high level. However, following Romania's integration into the EU, the decline intensified, especially after 2016. This trend is closely linked to the reduction in cultivated areas mentioned earlier. The decrease in areas allocated to maincrop potatoes was significantly steeper compared to extra-early, early, and summer potatoes.

A key factor influencing this decline was the lower agricultural productivity in Romania compared to Western European countries, combined with a lack of effective policies to support domestic potato production. This resulted in an increase in imports and a decline in the competitiveness of local production.

The impact of climate change is evident when comparing 2022 and 2023, two consecutive years with different levels of precipitation. In 2022, Romania harvested approximately 1.3 million tonnes of potatoes from 81,000 hectares, with an average yield of 16.6 tonnes per hectare. However, in the extremely dry year of 2023, the harvest dropped to about 1 million tonnes from 77,000 hectares, with an average yield of 14 tonnes per hectare.

Experts' forecasts for 2024 are not optimistic. According to a study published by Economica.net in September 2024, at the end of the potato harvesting period, Romanian producers recorded the lowest average potato yield per hectare in the European Union [16]. Estimates suggest that Romania's 2024 potato production will total 1.58 million tonnes, which is 262,200 tonnes less than in 2022. The projected average yield is 14.8 tonnes per hectare, 4% lower than the initial estimates from July. Although there is a slight increase of approximately 5% compared to 2023, the productivity remains over 10% lower than in 2022. Compared to other European countries experiencing productivity declines in 2024, Romania recorded the third-largest drop after Greece (-10%), Belgium (-6%), and the Netherlands (-6%).

In contrast, potato producers in Denmark achieved an average yield of 44 tons per hectare in 2024—three times higher than

Romanian farmers. The extremely low productivity of Romanian potato farms compared to Western European states can be attributed to the lack of irrigation systems and the excessive fragmentation of agricultural land. Unlike Western European farms, which average 18-20 hectares with compact and fertile land, Romania's farms are often small and inefficient. To be profitable under Romania's cost structure, farmers would need to achieve a minimum yield of 50 tons per hectare; anything below this threshold results in financial losses [14].

The area cultivated with potatoes has drastically decreased in recent years, from over 198,500 hectares in 2014 to just 77,000 hectares in 2023. This sharp decline in both cultivated area and yield, driven by a lack of profitability, has led to an increased reliance on imports to meet domestic demand. Estimates for 2024 indicate that Romania has harvested only 10% of the potatoes needed for national consumption, with a significant portion of the harvest reserved for seed potatoes for the next planting season.

Romania's international trade in potatoes is illustrated in Figure 5.

In 2023, Romania exported potatoes worth approximately 4 million euros while importing over 80 million euros' worth of potatoes.

Potato imports have increased significantly since the 2000s, reaching peak levels after 2010. Romanian exports were almost non-existent until the 2000s and have remained modest throughout the analysed period. The trade balance has consistently shown a deficit, as Romania has continuously imported more potatoes than it has exported.

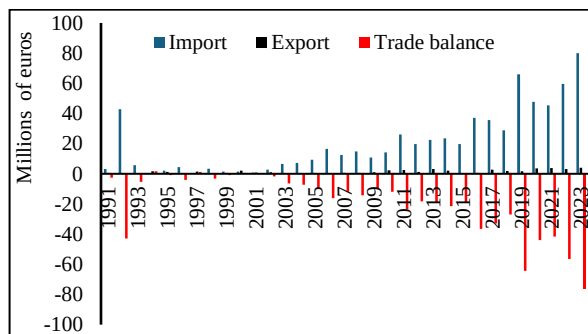


Fig. 5. Romania's Potato Trade Balance (1990-2023)
Source: Authors' design using the data from [15].

This deficit became more pronounced after 2010 due to the sharp decline in domestic potato production. In 2023, Romania's trade deficit in the international potato market exceeded 76 million euros, with more than 800,000 tonnes of potatoes imported[2].

In 2022, Romania's potato exports were primarily directed toward Italy, with a total value of \$4.23 million, followed by Ukraine (\$1.23 million), Moldova (\$934,000), Greece (\$519,000), and Poland (\$373,000). This distribution reflects a strong demand from neighbouring countries and southern European nations, where domestic production does not meet consumption needs. On the other hand, imports were significantly higher, with the largest quantities of potatoes sourced from France (\$17.3 million), the Netherlands (\$12.3 million), Germany (\$12.3 million), Greece (\$4.79 million), and Poland (\$3.9 million).

These figures highlight Romania's high dependency on potato imports from Western Europe, particularly from countries with advanced agricultural production and high yields. The country's negative trade balance in this sector underscores the need for measures to enhance domestic production competitiveness and reduce import dependency.

Despite declining production, domestic demand for potatoes continues to rise. In 2023, total consumption reached 2.461 million tonnes, an increase of 57,000 tonnes compared to the previous year. Of this total, 1.953 million tonnes were used for human consumption, representing 79.4% of the overall consumption volume. This combination of declining production and rising internal demand, which reached 2.461 million tonnes in 2023, has resulted in a significant reliance on imports to cover a deficit of approximately 880,000 tonnes [17]. The average annual per capita potato consumption in Romania saw a notable increase between 1990 and 2010, surpassing 104 kg/year in 2008 (Figure 6).

The period coincided with a relatively stable market supply and consistent access to essential consumer products.

Potatoes have remained a staple food for the population.

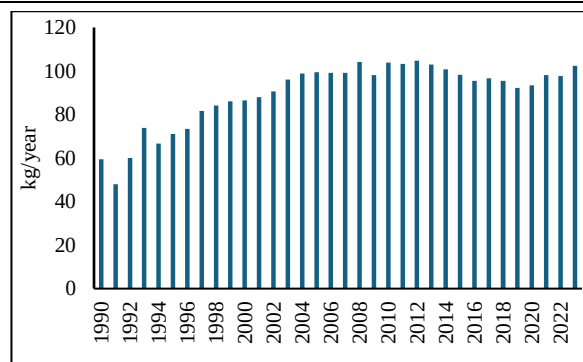


Fig. 6. Annual Average Potato Consumption in Romania (1990-2023)

Source: Authors' design using the data from [15].

After 2010, the average annual potato consumption experienced a slight decline, a phenomenon that can be attributed to changing dietary preferences, a more diversified food supply, and increased access to alternative carbohydrate sources such as pasta, rice, and whole grain bread.

Additionally, the reduction in domestic potato production led to a growing dependence on imports, impacting product availability in the market. In recent years, a slight increase in consumption has been observed, which may be linked to economic changes and a renewed interest in traditional foods.

The rising demand for frozen potatoes, a trend seen across Europe, could also explain this evolution. As with other agri-food products, Romania exports raw agricultural materials with relatively low added value while importing processed goods with higher value. The evolution of Romania's frozen potato imports is illustrated in Figure 7.

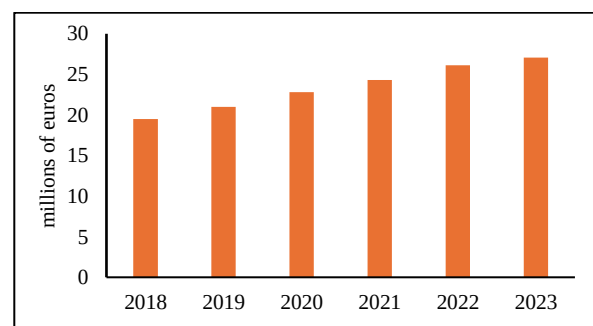


Fig. 7. Romania's Imports of Frozen Potatoes

Source: Authors' design using the data from [22].

In recent years, Romania has imported increasing quantities of frozen potatoes due to the absence of domestic producers for this

product. In 2023, the retail market for frozen potatoes in Romania reached 124.5 million lei, marking a 4% increase compared to the previous year [24].

Although Romania ranks among the significant producers of fresh potatoes in Europe, the lack of processing and freezing facilities results in a high dependency on imports, exceeding 80 million lei annually.

Frozen potatoes are typically sold in 1 kg and 2.5 kg packages, with prices ranging from 28 to 40 lei per sack, corresponding to approximately 3-4 million units sold in 2023. Regarding their origin, the primary supplier of frozen potatoes to Romania in 2023 was Poland, followed by France and Belgium (Table 1).

Table 1. Romania's Imports of Frozen Potatoes (2023)

Country	Trade Value (1,000USD)	Quantity (kg)
Total	27,083.08	60,164.9
Poland	6,201.53	21,136,200
France	6,118.10	13,935,500
Belgium	4,616.67	3,814,960
Netherlands	3,573.42	6,625,550
Greece	3,209.60	7,453,560
Germany	1,599.38	3,958,370
Denmark	677.71	2,006,640
Czech Republic	355.86	255,533
Bulgaria	296.44	171,610
Hungary	138.44	124,368
Austria	137.99	427,321
Italy	87.32	66,885
Lithuania	51.85	159,410
Spain	15.08	24,944
Portugal	2.56	2,762
Serbia, FR(Serbia/Montenegro)	1.12	1,280

Source [22].

The frozen potato market in Romania has significant growth potential and is currently expanding. The average annual per capita consumption of frozen potatoes is estimated at 3–3.5 kg, which is approximately one-third of the level recorded in Western European countries, where consumption reaches up to 15 kg per capita [5].

In the context of increasing demand for these products and market forecasts, correlated with the continuous decline in domestic potato production and the growing dependence on imports, Grup Șerban Holding announced in October 2024 an investment of 62.5 million euros for the construction of a potato processing factory in Sascut, Bacău County. The proposed unit will have a production capacity of 6 tons of French fries per hour and 1.2 tons of potato flakes per hour. The

processed products will be marketed both on the domestic market and for export, depending on demand.

The initiative of Grup Șerban Holding could have a significant impact on reducing Romania's trade deficit in the international potato market, providing new opportunities for processing locally grown potatoes, and encouraging local farmers to increase both productivity and crop quality [21].

CONCLUSIONS

Romania's domestic potato production has experienced a significant decline following the country's political transition, leading to increased dependence on imports. The country has maintained a consistent trade deficit in the international potato market, with imports rising steadily while exports remain modest. This situation can be attributed to the reduction in cultivated areas, excessive land fragmentation, and lower yields compared to other European countries.

Several factors have contributed to this sector's decline, including the lack of substantial investments in modernizing agricultural technologies, the absence of effective support policies for farmers, rising production costs, and strong competition from imports originating in highly industrialized agricultural sectors in Western Europe. Additionally, the impact of climate change—manifested through prolonged droughts and the absence of efficient irrigation systems—has significantly affected Romania's potato productivity.

Despite these unfavourable conditions, potatoes remain a staple food for Romanian consumers, and domestic demand has continued to grow. Moreover, recent trends indicate an increasing preference for processed potato products, such as frozen potatoes, which presents an opportunity for developing Romania's food processing industry. However, the lack of adequate processing and storage facilities has heightened the country's dependence on imports, particularly from Poland, France, and Belgium.

To prevent a crisis in Romania's potato market, it is imperative that authorities and farmers

collaborate to identify viable and sustainable solutions.

Key measures that need to be implemented include:

Modernizing agricultural technologies – Investments in mechanization, irrigation, and sustainable farming practices are essential for improving yields and reducing production losses. Examples from countries such as Belgium and the Netherlands demonstrate that productivity can be tripled through efficient technologies.

Financial support through subsidies and favourable policies – The government should assist farmers by offering more effective subsidies, implementing production stimulation programs, and facilitating access to EU funds dedicated to the agricultural sector.

Investments in processing and storage facilities – Developing Romania's agri-food infrastructure would allow local producers to maximize the value of their harvest and reduce reliance on imported processed potato products.

Enhancing the competitiveness of domestic production – Strengthening farm structures and reducing land fragmentation would enable Romania to achieve an optimal level of economic efficiency and higher productivity.

Diversifying production and promoting sustainable agriculture – Encouraging farmers to adopt ecological practices and cultivate climate-resistant potato varieties could contribute to long-term food security.

In conclusion, the future of Romania's potato sector depends on the implementation of coherent policies and integrated strategies aimed at supporting local producers and reducing import dependence.

Without urgent measures, the national potato production risks becoming insignificant within the European market, while Romanian consumers will face increasing price fluctuations and vulnerabilities in the global supply chain.

The response of the domestic market to the increasing demand, through the establishment of a processing unit tailored to market needs, demonstrates flexibility and maturity, as well as an increased attention from Romanian entrepreneurs to industry trends. The fact that

this investment is made by a Romanian company is even more significant, serving as a potential model for other agricultural production sectors aiming to enhance local value-added processing.

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