

POTATO CROP EVOLUTION IN ROMANIA

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Abstract

This document presents the development of potato production in the period 2006-2012 in Romania. The study is based on the statistical data taken from the website of the Ministry of Agriculture, APIA and FAO website. As indicators for this study were: area planted with potatoes in Romania, Potato production obtained in Romania, consumption potatoes, potatoes price. In the analyzed period the area under potatoes has decreased from 283 ha in 2006 to 229 ha in 2012, a decrease of 18% compared to the base year; Potato production is also down from 14.18 kg / ha in 2006 to 10.76 kg / ha in 2012, representing a decrease of 24%; consumption is 98.3 kg / capita in 2006 and 92 kg / person in 2012 (decrease of 6.4%); the price of potatoes is up from 1.2 lei / kg in 2006 to 1.6 lei / kg in 2012, growth of 33% reflected in decline of production and exploitation of the obtained. In conclusion, the potato crop in Romania is found both in households, small and large farms, as a culture relatively easy to care for, the weather is favorable, farmers are open to contribute to the expansion of cultivated areas, but that the state must help intensify its financial support.

Key words: acreage, consumption, price, potato marketing, production

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is one of the most important sectors of the Romanian economy, farming is a basic trade since ancient times. The contribution of agriculture, forestry, fisheries in gross domestic product stands around 6%, while the EU Member States is approximately 1.7%. Potato has a relatively long tradition in Romanian agriculture, the main references are recorded in the eighteenth century in Transylvania. In time, the importance of culture increased, potatoes being considered the second bread of Romania. For potato were established following growing areas: very favorable in the north of Moldova, throughout Transylvania (not plain), eastern Banat, Oltenia high hilly and Muntenia; favorable for plateau of Moldova, Muntenia and Subcarpații Olteniei and the northwestern part of Transylvania. Currently potato decreased in the total agricultural area, the main reason being the weather conditions that may affect the crop, the lack of interest of farmers to grow potatoes as inadequate use of proper production and imports tend to dominate the food market.

Present and future objectives

To solve the problems of Romanian potato crop in the present economic and climatic conditions, the scientific research has the following objectives:

1) Development of potato breeding and genetic researches through new genomic and technological approaches, to obtain genotypes, which correspond to present and future requirements regarding the production of healthier foods, with high qualities, suitable for ecological agriculture and which permit utilization of new protective technological methods more friendly for environment, with conservation potential to regenerate natural resources.

2) Development of clean technologies types "from farm to fork" in accordance with sustainable agricultural principles, increasing food and safety security, respecting general and specific requirements of the market.

3) Promoting alternative technologies for potato crop to obtain ecological products. [1]

For Romania is imposed the respect of the developed strategies by ICPC Brasov concerning the creation of the variety and producing the material of plantation.

Creating the necessary planting material from Romanian varieties, productive and better

adapted to the environmental conditions of the country.[2]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To analyze the evolution of the potato crop, the following indicators were used: area planted with potatoes in Romania, potato production obtained in Romania, consumption potatoes, potatoes price, export and import of potato in Romania. The analyzed period is between 2006-2012. Data were taken from the Ministry of Agriculture, Agency for Payments and Intervention in Agriculture and FAO, the indicators are analyzed and interpreted in order to observe the oscillation of potato culture and identify the causes that led to these fluctuations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Romania is the third largest potato grower in Europe, as surface after Germany and Poland and on six place as productive after Germany, Poland, Holland, France and the UK. Potato acreage is in a declining percentage recorded was 18% and 54 ha from 283 ha in 2006 to 229 ha in 2012, a result of difficult market conditions, especially cheap imports that have brought to bankruptcy farmers cultivated areas where large areas. For example, potato (basic culture in Harghita) began to decline in recent years because manufacturers had difficulty in valuing crop. In Harghita surfaces were reduced by almost 5,000 acres, reaching more than 10,000 ha in 2013, manufacturers focusing on alternative culture. Areas planted with potatoes in 2013 nationally amounts to about 41,000 ha, according to APIA, compared to 250,000 ha in 1989. As seed lots, currently we have only 103 ha to 13,000 ha in 1990.

A similar situation is encountered in the production of potatoes produced per hectare crop where it can be seen swinging in Table 1. The potato production decreased by 24%, from 14.18 kg / ha in 2006 to 10.76 kg / ha in 2012, a result reflected the reduction in cultivated area, weather factors, increasing production costs, crop restriction locally,

increasing imports, and especially the reduction of profit for farmers. Also in Romania decreased interest in seed potatoes. Areas of seed lots have been dramatically reduced in recent years and it seems that they will continue to decrease in future production of seed potatoes in 2012 was 60 tons of seed potatoes on 15 ha. A solution for achieving higher production quantity and quality to withstand competition on the European market and world production is modernizing by introducing measures that may increase and its improvement in terms of ensuring economic efficiency.

Table 1. The evolution of the potato in the years 2006-2012

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Potato acreage (thousand ha)	283	272	259	260	246	248	229
Production (tonnes / ha)	14,18	13,62	14,08	15,38	13,29	16,41	10,76
Potato consumption (kg / capita / year)	98.3	97.2	101.6	95.8	98,2	98,2	92
Price (lei)	1,2	1,2	1,16	1,2	1,3	1,6	

Source: Own calculation on the basis of data from Tempo on line data base 2006-2012, NIS

Potato consumption in Romania is 95.1 kg, Romania ranks 4th in European nations where the limits are 127 kg and 39 kg. In the analysis, consumption is 98.3 kg / capita in 2006 to 92 kg / person in 2012 (decrease of 6.4%). Romanian potatoes are high quality because they do not have loads of chemical residues like imported products. However, farmers do not have access to supermarkets and hypermarkets, locations that sell large quantities of potatoes imported. The decrease may be due to the adverse effects of excessive consumption of potatoes (prepared in various forms, some toxins that attack the nervous system and increases the chances of digestive cancer).

Regarding the price of potatoes from a manufacturer, it increased from 1.2 lei / kg in 2006 to 1.6 lei / kg in 2011, an increase of 33% (Fig. 1). The market price is almost double, so that growers are increasingly less motivated to grow and appeal to foreign

markets. The fact that farmers face every year potato crop problems, question whether or not it is profitable to grow further. Thus, a rich harvest entails the need for storage space, reduced prices and can even recover its full costs. So, price increase is due to costs for the establishment and maintenance of a hectare of potatoes, the application of high technology and less ethical methods applied by wholesalers and retailers.

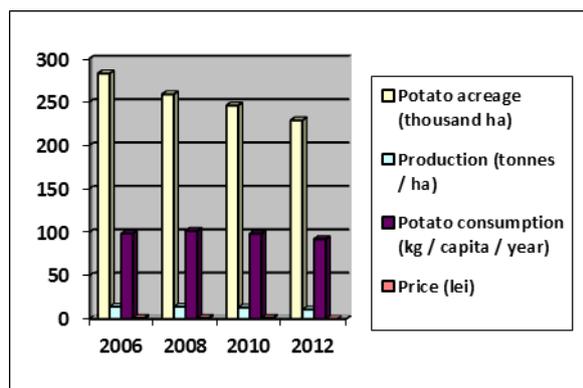


Fig.1. Share of the the evolution of the potato in the years 2006-2012

Potato trade is done arranged food markets, where it sells its own production or production acquired from farmers or producers of potatoes. The price is very low, usually they practice a price far below that of intermediaries, although merchandise may be the same or better quality than. In hypermarkets, supermarkets only meet intermediaries who sell potatoes from specialist manufacturers or imported.

Regarding foreign trade, Romania joins the list of countries which produce important potato production due to its favorable conditions for this crop. Although its production is good, we often find potatoes imported in the market, which look very nice, but they are unhealthy (the modern technology applied in other countries includes substances that hasten the culture and get the desired result). It is worrying that many Romanians prefer imported potatoes, without considering other issues such as valuing indigenous culture, health impacts, contributing to the economy. Romania occupies a middle position regarding the export of potatoes, the trend is upward, from

4,740 tonnes in 2006 to 11,526 tonnes in 2011, so potatoes are appreciated in the Romanian and foreign market. Import is decreasing from 144, 584 tonnes in 2006 to 89,597 tonnes in 2011, the main countries importing potatoes in 2013 were Germany (37%), the Netherlands (25%) and Austria (13%).

Table 2. Romania's trade balance

Anul	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Import (tonees)	144584	46234	51988	51444	64706	89597
Export (tonees)	4740	6883	6745	5220	20257	11526
Trade balance (import-export)	139844	39351	45243	46224	44449	78071

Source: Own calculation on the basis of data from Tempo on line data base 2006-2012, FAOSTAT

For consumption needs to be covered entirely in Romanian production of potatoes, the state should take action on lower quantities of imported potatoes. Some of these measures should be stricted rules and standards of quality for imported potatoes coming on one hand and, on the other hand, to support and subsidize prices of potato crop by the Romanian State aid for refurbishment, all of which serve to stimulate the growth of production volume and quality, and most importantly increased consumption of own production.

CONCLUSIONS

Potato ranks fourth in production volume bet on food crops in the world (after rice, wheat and maize). The three main producers are China, Russia and India. Romania is also a major producer of potatoes in Eastern Europe, it produces about 4 million tonnes per year. Acreage reduction brought about and decrease in production per hectare, 10.76 kg / ha in 2012.

Potato is present on the Romanians' table at least once a week, prepared in various forms, consumption was 97.4 kg /capita, the average obtained in the analized period.

Potato cultivation in Romania is achieved both in households, small and large farms, as a culture relatively easy to care for. Cultivated

area (229 ha in 2012) varies depending on the production in previous years, the existing demand, the availability of farmers to invest in culture, obtained grants and motivation.

The research conducted for this report showed overall good prospects for potential exporters of potatoes as Romanian products are of high quality because they charge chemical residues and imported products.

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