

STIMULATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP ON MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FRUIT GROWING IN ARGES AND DAMBOVITA COUNTIES

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Abstract

This article is based on the overall analysis of the existing situation up until the actual efficiency level that the fruit farming sector has in Romania's southern development region, particularly in Arges and Dambovita counties. Arges county is located proportionally down in steps from north to south, enjoying all structures geo-morphological carpathian trans-danubian, from an altitude of 160m up to over 2500 m. There are prevailing hilly areas – 55%, mountains – 25% and plains-20%. Dambovita county is in the Muntenia region of Romania, belonging to southern development region, an area of 4054 km². The territory is built in three levels of relief that succeed each other from north to south, it is made up of plain – 50%, 41%, hills and mountains-9%. The region has a varied landscape, arranged in stairs, which allows maintenance and development of fruit orchards. It will consider implementation of this article strategies for modernizing and development of each county, in relation to their contribution to the fruit growing sector. It also will consider ways to stimulate entrepreneurship, especially by people aged 25-40 years to achieve a sustainable development of this sector.

Keywords:

Fruit, sustainable development, modernization, productivity

Introduction

The development areas in Romania have a specific tradition, an inherited history and preserved until nowadays, a different relief, but at the same time is something that binds them; more exactly, there is something specific that can be understood only by the Romanians. It is envisaged to analyze mostly southern area development, especially Arges and Dambovita counties known for the large productions of fruit-growing industry. The yield of this sector in the previously mentioned areas is very important, especially due to the fact that region is disposed on stairs, which allows, maintenance and development of fruit orchards. Also you may find here lower elevations and a favorable climate for development of fruit growing. South region's economy is in a constant growth since its founding, the second most industrialized counties of the region are Arges and Prahova. Concerning the agricultural sector, the most developed counties are Dambovita, where we can find the famous apple Voinesti, and Arges.

1. The number of fruit trees, by ownership, macro regions, development regions and counties

Fruit growing is one of the most important branches of the Romanian agriculture and it has as defining element a very large percentage of subsistence farms. They are aimed mainly for self-consumption production, trading only sometimes on market the products obtained or just their processing as various traditional alcoholic beverages. The total area of fruit plantations in Romania is about 1.7% of the arable land, being concentrated generally on Arges (20.370 ha, estimated 12.96%) and Dambovita (9.293ha, estimated 5.91%). The distribution by age group, is showing that the total area of orchards, 74% (117.090 ha) are filled with plantations that are

older than 25 years, 19% (29.650 ha) are plantations aged between 10-25 years, and 7% (11.810 ha) are new plantations, aged between 1-10 years. In this analysis, it took into account the major categories of fruit trees in Romania, namely: plum, apple, pear and peach. In table number 1, we can observe the number of fruit trees, by ownership, macro regions, development regions and counties. The analysis carried out is based on data supplied by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) for the period between 2013-2015.

Table 1 The number of fruit trees, distributed by ownership, macroregions, development regions and counties

Categories of fruit trees	Ownership	Macroregions, development regions and counties	Years		
			2013	2014	2015
			UM: Number		
			Number	Number	Number
Total	Total	Arges	6632768	29894122	5437631
-	-	Dambovita	3576413	3543916	3553428
-	Private sector	Arges	6479544	29727341	5269311
-	-	Dambovita	3534853	3493529	3503269
-	of which: individual farm	Arges	6365867	29651113	5206583
-	-	Dambovita	3448815	3419073	3413573
Plums trees	Total	Arges	4587977	27912441	3525219
-	-	Dambovita	1704687	1692443	1697502
-	Private sector	Arges	4539540	27864178	3475249
-	-	Dambovita	1704612	1692268	1697327
-	of which: individual farm	Arges	4509922	27816091	3432346
-	-	Dambovita	1691782	1680825	1685796
Apples trees	Total	Arges	1438041	1384084	1323491
-	-	Dambovita	1319787	1301848	1307791
-	Private sector	Arges	1342704	1274713	1214241
-	-	Dambovita	1278302	1251636	1257807
-	of which: individual farm	Arges	1259576	1247870	1196245
-	-	Dambovita	1207202	1190422	1182086
Pears trees	Total	Arges	282085	277792	272409
-	-	Dambovita	162602	161805	159382
-	Private sector	Arges	280835	277792	272409
-	-	Dambovita	162602	161805	159382
-	of which: individual farm	Arges	280613	277549	270610
-	-	Dambovita	160974	160666	157803
Peaches trees	Total	Arges	5101	4842	4896
-	-	Dambovita	13141	14000	14021

Categories of fruit trees	Ownership	Macroregions, development regions and counties	Years		
			2013	2014	2015
			UM: Number		
			Number	Number	Number
-	Private sector	Arges	5101	4842	4896
-	-	Dambovita	13141	14000	14021
-	of which: individual farm	Arges	5076	4842	4896
-	-	Dambovita	13141	14000	14021

Source: National Institute of Statistics, www.insse.ro

As you can see in the table above, the total number of fruit trees (plum, apple, pear, peach, nectarine, cherry, sour cherry, apricot, walnut and other trees), in Arges county, dropped dramatically in 2015, reaching approximately 5 times lower than the previous year; but it experienced a significant increase in 2014, when the number of fruit trees has increased almost 4 times higher than the previous year. In the neighboring county, in 2015 the number of fruit trees increased by approximately 0.10%. We can observe a steady number of species of fruit trees in this area, which is due to the work and the involvement of the local entrepreneurs in this activity – fruit growing. In the private sector and also in the individual farms, the specie which is significantly diminished is the plum. The other trees were maintained in 2015 at the same limit or even sometimes the number of orchards suffered some increases. In Dambovita county there is a constant, what we can find in the table above formulated, the only specie that has suffered an insignificant diminution being the pear. Regarding the ownership, the quantities are largely symmetrical, which demonstrates that there are still many subsistence farms, which creates the self-consumption. Most of these entrepreneurs are people aged over 65 years old. Meanwhile, there are agricultural associations that have united in order to increase production per hectare and achieving a sustainable business. In the following table we can see a classification depending on the production of fruit tree species, ownership, macro regions, development regions and counties.

Table 2 Production of fruit tree species, ownership, macroregions, development regions and counties

Categories of fruit trees	Ownership	Macroregions, development regions and counties	Years		
			2013	2014	2015
			UM: Tonnes		
			Tonnes	Tonnes	Tonnes
Total	Private sector	Arges	138228	113487	106578
-	-	Dambovita	104074	83403	92248
-	of which: individual farm	Arges	136566	112026	105393
-	-	Dambovita	101519	81904	89799

Categories of fruit trees	Ownership	Macroregions, development regions and counties	Years		
			2013	2014	2015
			UM: Tonnes		
			Tonnes	Tonnes	Tonnes
Plums trees	Private sector	Arges	73217	57383	55747
-	-	Dambovita	35964	29966	37067
-	of which: individual farm	Arges	72538	56596	54980
-	-	Dambovita	35647	29791	36830
Apples trees	Private sector	Arges	48217	43722	39672
-	-	Dambovita	56239	41412	44130
-	of which: individual farm	Arges	47257	43067	39281
-	-	Dambovita	54095	40143	42042
Pears trees	Private sector	Arges	8875	4649	4085
-	-	Dambovita	5025	4233	3848
-	of which: individual farm	Arges	8868	4643	4059
-	-	Dambovita	4949	4209	3763
Peaches trees	Private sector	Arges	92	130	86
-	-	Dambovita	260	390	338
-	of which: individual farm	Arges	91	130	86
-	-	Dambovita	260	390	338

Source: National Institute of Statistics, www.insse.ro

As you can see in the table above, the total of fruit production in the counties taken into account in the present study, Arges and Dambovita, it's considered to be around 1,3 million tones. As to the total production of plums, Arges county overtakes Dambovita county by producing 50% more. Comparing the plums production levels of 2014 to 2015, we can see a 7000 tone increase in Dambovita county. This indicates that in Dambovita there have been some investments in the fruit farming sector. As for the apples total production, we can see that it has remained constant throughout the 3 years taken into account in the present study, not registering major difference between the 2 counties either.

2. The modernization and development of the fruit farming sector in Arges and Dambovită counties

„Romania’s climate and soil provide favorable conditions for fruit farming, various species, based on biological demands, throughout the whole country’s plain landscape up to altitudes of 800 – 1000m.”(The national strategy for operational programmes in the fruit and vegetables sector, MADR, 2008.)

Arges and Dambovită counties are known for their fruit farming potential. However, a series of reasons limiting the production potential in the upper mentioned areas, and we state:

1. The existence of a high number of small sized fruit farming orchards;
2. The lack of a consolidation strategy for the fields given the fact that an increased level in fragmentation of fruit farming surfaces has been noticed;
3. The existence of a high number of declining fruit farming;
4. A reduced degree of existing orchard’s rejuvenation;
5. Accentuating the youth migration phenomenon to urban centres;

On the other hand, Arges and Dambovită counties offer the locals a variety of fruit farming produce: apples, pears, plums, apricots, nectarines, cherries, peaches and many others. Even though the offer is quite varied, the added value for fruit farming produce is very low due to the lack of marketing knowledge, lack of technological sorting, packaging and storage facilities for fruit farming produce, also the lack of a centralized production system based on the market’s needs.

The plan of action towards modernizing and developing the fruit farming sector in Arges and Dambovită counties must engulf different measures, amongst which:

6. Ensuring the financial support for farmers willing to start a new orchard or for those that want to rejuvenate declining orchards. Even though, at the level of the national rural development programme the sub-programme destined for fruit farming has been formulated, bureaucracy is maybe the most significant factor stopping farmers from accessing financial funds.
7. Realizing at the level of each of the two counties, a plan for reducing land fragmentation. By diminishing the land fragmentation level the number of family or small sized orchards will be reduced.
8. Realizing a planned production. By accomplishing this objective a planned production will be achieved based on the market’s demands. Thus avoiding fruit market crisis. The excess or deficit will affect pricing thus the level of the producers income.
9. Starting processing units and modernizing the existing ones. More often than once, the production excess is quantified as a loss because of the lack of collection and processing units destined for fruit farming produce.
10. Realizing a marketing plan destined towards promoting fruit farming sector produce from Arges and Dambovită counties. Promoting represents one of the most important measures that need to be developed, taking into account that it impacts fruit consumption over time.
11. Investing in fruit farming sector research. Through this measure, by investing in nurseries we can obtain breeds adapted to the pedoclimatic conditions of the counties taken into account in the present study.

Conclusions

Throughout time, Romania was characterized by a strong tradition of family farms. The communist era has marked the end of this nationalization and collectivization of lands. The post-communist era has made it's impact of the infrastructure, field fragmentation, culture capitalization, as well as the agricultural research sector.

The present study is based on the analysis of Arges and Dambovită counties with regard to the fruit farming present the situation of surfaces occupied by fruit growing trees of the main varieties: apple, pear, plum and peach.

The main modernization and development methods of the fruit farming sector in Arges and Dambovită counties must be based on investments in the sector of processing, collection, calibration, sorting and storage of fruit, ensuring the financial support for modernization and starting new orchards, creating a plan for reducing field fragmentation towards increasing cultures and starting new ones. Also, an important step in the modernization of the fruit farming sector in the studied counties is represented by the investment in the marketing of fruit farming produce, being that promoting represents maybe one of the most steps towards increasing fruit consumption.

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