

ORGANIC AGRICULTURE OF ROMANIA AS COMPARED WITH OTHER COUNTRIES OF EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract

The paper presents a case study aiming to highlight the present state of the organic agriculture in Romania as compared with other European countries with the goal to warn about its level, much under other countries taken in study. Several indicators have been considered: certified organic crop areas, certified organic crop productions and yields from fully converted areas, certified organic livestock, certified production of organic animal products, number of certified registered operators processing and importing products issued from organic farming. The results of study showed that for all studied indicators Romania reported data with lower values as compared with the other analyzed European states, and for most of items our country has no data to report. This study distinguishes on the one hand the low representation of organic agriculture in Romania as component of sustainable agriculture, and on the other hand demonstrates the lack or the inefficacy of instruments of the specialized institution of the Romanian state to collect and centralize data referring to several items which characterize the level of organic agriculture in Romania.

Key words: organic, agriculture, livestock, operators, certified

According to Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the form of agriculture that relies on techniques such as crop rotation, green manure, compost and biological European Commission, organic farming is the pest control. Also, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements defines organic agriculture as „a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic agriculture combines tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved...”. In the last years, it was observed an increasing interest of population for organic food products as a concern of their health state, so that the food market was changed toward a higher orientation to organic foods (Botezatu *et al.*, 2002).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Study has been conducted using the official statistics of the European Union (EU) between years 2002 – 2011, excepting the number of certified registered organic operators with statistics only until 2010, data which are available on

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database, last update July 2012.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Romania recognizes the role of the ecological agriculture and reveals its position regarding this role by the following statement on website: „the role of the ecological agriculture system is to produce cleaner foods, more appropriate to human metabolism, in full correlation with environmental conservation and development. One of the main purposes of the ecological agriculture is to produce fresh and authentic agricultural and food products, by environmental friendly processes”. In addition, the followings are enunciated „the ecological agriculture is a dynamic sector in Romania, which reached an ascendant evolution in the last years, both in vegetal and animal production sectors”.

Even so, studying the statistics of EU in this field, we observe that Romania is much behind other EU countries and, moreover, for several years the exact situation is unknown, it was not reported, because data referring to organic agriculture of Romania either were not centralized, either have not been reported (tables 1-6). Referring to the certified organic crop areas,

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Romania did not report statistics for years 2002-2005, but as compared with other states our country is not the last in Europe in this field,

although its land potential is greater than other European states (table 1).

Table 1

Certified organic crop areas (hectares)

COUNTRY/TIME	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
European Union (27)	0	0	0	0	0	3,997,440	4,487,798	3,761,884	0	0
European Union (25)	0	0	0	0	0	3,904,464	4,411,965	3,678,022	0	0
European Union (15)	0	0	0	0	0	3,166,493	3,449,259	2,997,829	0	0
Belgium	24,820	16,176	19,853	19,764	21,754	23,842	27,376	29,778	30,410	0
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	2,728	8,387	4,236	4,955	12,691	8,902
Czech Republic	0	195,219	208,000	226,209	16,319	224,373	232,939	267,483	296,379	0
Denmark	148,279	149,106	149,219	132,283	133,048	0	139,021	139,539	145,638	0
Estonia	0	0	0	36,487	44,878	55,445	71,848	76,200	82,391	101,906
Ireland	0	0	24,568	23,533	0	0	0	37,662	0	0
Greece	65,555	192,190	202,790	206,205	82,848	174,724	266,745	293,644	292,584	0
Spain	314,643	374,000	430,900	470,835	505,296	640,536	691,196	605,366	1,084,589	0
France	342,406	406,338	468,476	0	499,589	497,314	502,234	525,638	571,815	0
Italy	746,517	751,860	708,047	731,537	801,350	903,254	812,139	735,327	821,921	0
Cyprus	0	0	111	230	665	1,398	0	1,890	0	0
Latvia	0	0	12,142	20,691	51,213	62,321	141,524	141,070	140,946	0
Lithuania	0	0	18,395	13,905	30,498	56,542	89,890	106,060	103,225	99,410
Luxembourg	1,019	2,130	2,741	0	0	2,721	0	3,245	0	0
Hungary	54,264	70,514	75,834	84,765	92,167	98,243	108,578	110,916	97,584	101,801
Malta	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	16	0
Netherlands	38,340	40,681	46,137	46,877	47,045	45,463	46,895	47,450	43,659	0
Poland	0	0	37,724	38,609	47,570	135,815	178,670	222,022	309,219	375,086
Portugal	35,364	54,480	75,143	110,370	0	0	0	0	0	0
Romania	0	0	0	0	65,111	84,590	71,597	83,862	82,981	96,606
Slovenia	0	0	14,354	15,985	20,151	23,560	26,125	25,816	25,056	27,448
Slovakia	0	35,302	25,590	27,247	40,085	80,268	113,132	111,466	112,314	0
Finland	135,434	142,054	148,183	135,223	130,940	133,543	134,820	143,033	142,012	0
Sweden	186,695	207,322	206,632	200,632	201,298	234,429	246,628	303,298	329,319	0
United Kingdom	536,866	529,482	535,495	527,836	489,108	510,673	582,205	607,940	651,930	505,582
Norway	25,255	30,883	34,957	36,510	38,881	40,096	40,376	43,986	47,027	50,167

Although certified organic crop areas exist in our country, an issue arises: the problem of certified organic production and yields from fully converted areas. In this field, Romania did not report statistics so that it appears with “not available data” in the European Union statistics,

excepting the year of 2006 (table 2). The question is what was the reason why our responsible authorities did not centralize these data: the lack of these data, the low implication in this subject, or which other?

Table 2

Certified organic production and yields from fully converted areas (tonnes)

COUNTRY/TIME	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20,073
Czech Republic	44,731	0	1,038,464	1,508,228	1,610,426	558,951	643,585	798,277	0
Spain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,689,934	0
Latvia	0	0	79,807	114,896	369,834	0	69,257	344,780	0
Lithuania	0	0	0	0	0	0	239,916	97,468	210,399
Hungary	0	0	0	0	179,522	186,341	154,480	134,843	100,118
Malta	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38	0
Poland	0	0	0	0	0	0	440,199	709,457	1,026,931
Romania	0	0	0	603,725	0	0	0	0	0
Slovenia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10,348
Slovakia	0	0	87,702	111,415	751,777	0	274,670	351,774	0
Finland	0	0	0	0	0	0	516,297	0	0
United Kingdom	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	699,638	0

Romania has not reported data concerning the certified organic livestock between years 2002-2005, and analyzing the values reported for the rest of years it can be observed also a low value related to the great agricultural and animal breeding

potential of our country (table 3). Concerning the certified production of organic animal products, the situation is even more controversial, because Romania has not statistics reported for years 2003-2010, and only for year 2011 has been reported a

value of 4 tonnes of total meat, which makes the analyze difficult (table 4).

Table 3

Certified organic livestock (number)										
COUNTRY/TIME	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Belgium	20,732	29,677	32,190	30,116	33,422	37,897	43,026	53,338	64,171	0
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	329	395	470	272	364	976
Czech Republic	0	0	100,304	67,956	115,192	137,382	151,723	136,026	151,814	0
Denmark	144,977	133,279	125,200	122,760	132,147	0	141,896	170,155	164,523	0
Estonia	0	0	0	9,289	13,312	13,774	16,131	21,074	19,126	22,498
Ireland	0	0	0	21,950	24,450	29,000	33,200	32,700	0	0
Greece	7,760	14,219	14,776	22,900	22,292	25,104	20,254	28,618	23,109	0
Spain	0	0	53,295	56,701	81,471	85,598	101,248	128,004	143,039	0
Italy	164,536	189,806	215,022	222,516	222,725	244,156	216,476	185,513	207,015	0
Latvia	0	0	10,037	21,439	55,319	50,530	41,153	53,867	45,697	0
Lithuania	0	0	6,616	3,843	15,997	19,964	22,665	21,927	23,076	0
Luxembourg	952	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,252	0	0
Hungary	8,661	7,926	8,747	0	0	17,174	17,746	25,089	32,445	24,650
Netherlands	36,373	36,669	34,841	36,269	36,799	40,129	44,117	59,000	62,000	49,410
Austria	0	0	331,441	333,826	338,593	342,055	352,781	373,720	0	0
Poland	0	0	0	31,556	54,811	33,436	44,030	51,391	40,301	40,457
Portugal	8,202	18,329	54,351	62,218	0	0	69,097	0	0	0
Romania	0	0	0	0	11,365	6,985	7,567	8,145	5,358	6,894
Slovenia	0	0	13,098	14,539	14,464	17,488	18,174	18,238	20,623	22,915
Slovakia	0	8,786	12,761	20,133	28,922	28,922	30,433	33,486	43,668	0
Finland	17,134	18,227	18,029	19,048	22,409	25,512	28,574	32,354	35,879	0
Sweden	0	92,304	91,515	0	95,936	110,000	141,825	194,063	221,035	0
United Kingdom	91,310	216,779	200,959	214,276	244,752	250,376	319,587	331,156	350,183	334,759
Norway	0	0	18,649	18,533	18,881	20,311	21,192	23,863	27,042	28,441
Switzerland	145,012	152,583	155,953	160,333	160,950	159,630	156,773	150,905	148,282	0

Table 4

Certified production of organic animal products (tonnes of total meat)

COUNTRY/TIME	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Czech Republic	0	0	724	6,715	4,830	5,894	7,266	7,176	0
Estonia	0	0	0	0	1,067	1,158	987	1,217	1,546
Ireland	0	0	0	1,375	1,565	1,740	0	0	0
Greece	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,346	0	0
Spain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25,039	0
Latvia	0	0	552	1,383	1,758	5,343	2,767	2,407	0
Lithuania	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,009	773	0
Poland	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,459	2,894	227
Romania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Slovenia	0	1,272	5,432	0	1,161	1,040	153	68	134
Slovakia	16	6	0	6	12	0	0	443	0
Norway	0	0	0	0	0	1,809	0	2,283	2,283

In tables 5 and 6 are listed the number of certified registered operators processing and importing products issued from organic farming and the number of certified registered organic operators corresponding to Romania, with low values.

CONCLUSIONS

Admission of the necessity of health food by Romanians is reflected in promoting the ecological products, this sector becoming very attractive for investors, especially because the European Commission supports up to 50% of the amount provided by the information and promotion programmes proposed by the professional and inter-professional organisations, which participate with minimum 20% of the real

cost of actions, the co-funding being assured by the state budget according to stipulations stated by the Regulation (CE) no. 3/2008 of the Council regarding the actions of information and promotion of the agricultural products on the internal market and in the third countries, and by the Regulation (CE) no. 501/2008 of the Commission for establishment of the application norms of the Regulation (CE) no. 3/2008.

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Table 5

Number of certified registered operators processing and importing products issued from organic farming

COUNTRY/TIME	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Belgium	0	64	53	62	0	43	0	57	0	0
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Czech Republic	0	26	10	15	28	20	72	63	65	0
Denmark	0	0	0	66	51	0	53	131	128	0
Estonia	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	3	6
Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	36	33	22	0	0
Greece	18	32	35	0	40	60	72	96	56	0
Spain	60	104	143	152	125	244	220	223	255	0
France	225	226	263	0	387	0	391	0	575	0
Italy	0	141	197	266	296	285	308	383	320	0
Latvia	0	0	2	2	2	3	3	6	5	0
Lithuania	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	2	3	0
Luxembourg	3	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hungary	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	19	19
Netherlands	50	54	113	100	95	96	138	151	151	210
Austria	0	0	0	318	0	0	0	0	0	0
Poland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	11	16
Portugal	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
Romania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	2
Slovenia	0	0	976	4	7	6	10	8	11	18
Slovakia	0	0	0	2	2	1	5	5	3	0
Finland	0	0	0	0	1	41	33	53	51	0
Sweden	0	0	0	0	35	61	71	128	64	0
United Kingdom	0	0	0	461	525	455	650	542	464	450
Norway	57	59	68	67	96	101	107	129	88	88

Table 6

Number of certified registered organic operators

COUNTRY/TIME	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
European Union (15 countries)	0	156,631	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Belgium	1,498	1,310	1,210	1,282	1,481	1,558	1,662	0	0
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	214	339	311	0	0
Czech Republic	0	1,095	1,123	1,234	1,167	1,693	2,228	0	0
Denmark	4,611	4,285	3,875	3,757	3,584	3,563	3,792	0	0
Germany (including former GDR from 1991)	19,244	20,367	20,909	22,032	23,978	26,820	29,244	0	0
Estonia	0	0	0	1,026	1,190	1,244	1,292	0	0
Ireland	1,010	878	946	1,066	1,208	1,334	1,410	0	0
Greece	6,299	6,642	9,885	16,399	24,654	24,729	24,860	0	0
Spain	17,751	18,505	17,688	16,790	18,318	20,031	23,253	27,627	27,627
France	16,670	16,327	16,082	16,566	0	18,561	20,877	25,203	25,203
Italy	55,902	48,353	41,357	49,469	51,065	50,267	49,654	0	0
Latvia	0	556	1,050	2,883	4,105	4,120	4,218	0	0
Lithuania	0	718	1,202	1,817	2,358	2,861	2,812	0	0
Luxembourg	84	89	104	110	0	119	0	0	0
Hungary	0	1,495	1,898	0	0	2,020	1,994	0	0
Malta	0	0	1	7	11	0	0	0	0
Netherlands	2,388	2,299	2,216	2,234	2,316	2,417	2,616	0	0
Austria	0	20,527	21,235	21,455	0	0	0	0	0
Poland	0	0	0	0	0	0	15,040	0	0
Portugal	1,145	1,226	1,461	1,660	0	0	0	0	0
Romania	0	0	0	0	3,409	3,273	2,901	0	0
Slovenia	0	1,434	1,615	1,758	1,992	2,063	2,142	0	0
Slovakia	93	100	127	210	298	338	418	0	0
Finland	5,586	5,471	5,324	4,646	4,443	4,402	4,343	0	0
Sweden	4,456	4,294	5,406	3,456	6,230	3,358	4,686	0	0
United Kingdom	5,929	5,954	5,947	6,356	6,889	7,631	7,896	0	0
Norway	2,599	2,747	2,875	2,825	2,796	3,082	3,359	0	0