

PERSPECTIVES OF ROMANIAN AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This research theme aims to identify the Romanian agriculture's development perspectives by year 2025, by applying a series of measures to increase the competitiveness of Romanian agriculture.

Key words: *agriculture, development, competitiveness*

INTRODUCTION

With 14.8 million hectares of agricultural land (62.2% of the total area), Romania is the second largest agricultural producer in Central and Eastern Europe, after Poland, and of a medium level in Europe. Both the soil and the climate could prompt an efficient agricultural production. However, to this day, agriculture can't be considered the engine of Romania's economic growth

Nowadays, an approximate number of 89% of Romania's territory is situated in rural areas and about 47.3% of the total population (roughly 10 million people) lives there. The agriculture also faces a series of problems: a large number of subsistence agriculture exploits, about 70% of the production being designed for own consumption, problematic marketing of Romanian agroalimentary products and the lack of connection with external markets for a large number of products, excessive workforce, which should be integrated into collateral branches, currently involved in agriculture, low income for tillers. The mentioned problems affect the most the production of fruits and vegetables.

The low performance and profitability levels increased the growth of poverty in Romanian rural areas and the current place Romania is taking among the alimentary products market as part of the Internal European Market has a great impact on the production factors (work, soil, funds), thus increasing the farmers' costs. Moreover, the current poor infrastructure in rural areas also contributes to the problem.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to identify the development perspectives of the Romanian agriculture, I will be using the SWOT analysis, this representing a great method of identifying the general state of the Romanian agriculture so that I would be able to elaborate a development plan, in which to emphasize the company's strengths and opportunities on the market and to exclude the weaknesses and emergence of potential threats.

Table 1

SWOT ANALYSIS OF ROMANIAN AGRICULTURE

EXTERNAL FACTORS	INTERNAL FACTORS	
OPPORTUNITIES	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding access market to EU markets. • Expanding organic markets • Diversification of activities – tourism, specific products etc. • Developing common organizations concerning offer and marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fertile soils/favorable natural conditions • Traditions in the practice of agriculture, combined with the diversity of farms • Professional knowledge and development potential • Developing of organic farms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly fragmented character of agricultural property • Poor development of the land market • Low level of farms' mechanization • Low level of labour productivity • Lack of investment in agriculture • The low level of farmers' education through school
	SO STRATEGIES	WO STRATEGIES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing agricultural production to products required in the EU • exporting organic products • promoting Romanian products on EU market • Development of agrotourism and ecotourism • Developing of Romanian brands • Development of cereals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of professional associations and consumption cooperatives • Implementing new technology • Knowledge of European legislation • Creating organic farms • Development of agri-food policy which lead to the development of

	<p>exchange</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of traditions and traditional Romanian crafts (pottery, ceramics, Romanian old motifs brought to modern age, Easter egg decoration) 	<p>the organic market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing communication between manufacturers and major retailers concerning outlet • Development of rural credit • Courses in agriculture among farmers
THREATS	ST STRATEGIES	WT STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased competition on domestic markets • Loss of qualified rural work force through urban departure • Low level of investments in agriculture • High quality standards of the EU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing quality of organic products on international markets, resulting in increased competitiveness • Increasing farmers income through the development of small business in rural area (agro-tourism, handicrafts, traditions) • Access to European funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses in agriculture in rural areas, free of charge, with European funds • Attracting foreign capital • Implementing new technology • Formation of competitive markets • Attracting European funds

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In order for us to be able to talk about a competitive agricultural sector in Romania in the near future, it is highly important to:

- Ensure additional financial aid which is needed to develop the rural infrastructure and to also attract foreign investments
- Increase the development and competitiveness level of the agro alimentary sector by:
 - Modernizing the production technologies
 - Facilitating the access of the agro alimentary products to export
 - Better information and an easier access to the European funds

The Development strategy in the vegetable production zone

In the sectorial approach of agriculture, the „Orizont 2025” strategy forecasts positive progress by the year 2025, in comparison to the year 2011:

- the areas cultivated with cereals will fall 24%
- the areas cultivated with fruit-trees will go up 23% and the ones with grapevine 11%
- the oil-plant crops will go up 42%, the sugar beet ones 62%, the green house vegetables 15%, field and solar vegetables 3%
- the areas cultivated with other crops will significantly increase (tobacco, hop, herbs, flowers)
- ensuring an equal access to the facilities for the producers in the vegetable sector
- fruit and vegetable consumption will significantly grow, the species and sorts of gamuts will vary greatly, especially the fruits resulted from the fruit-trees production. The production of early vegetables will also increase, thus ensuring fresh vegetables for a longer period during the year
- the cereal production will go up 60%, the one based on the oil-plants by 2.7 times, the green house vegetables one by more than 2.5 times and the production of sugar beet tripling itself
- the fruit production will go up 43%, the field vegetables one with 26% and the grape production with 61%

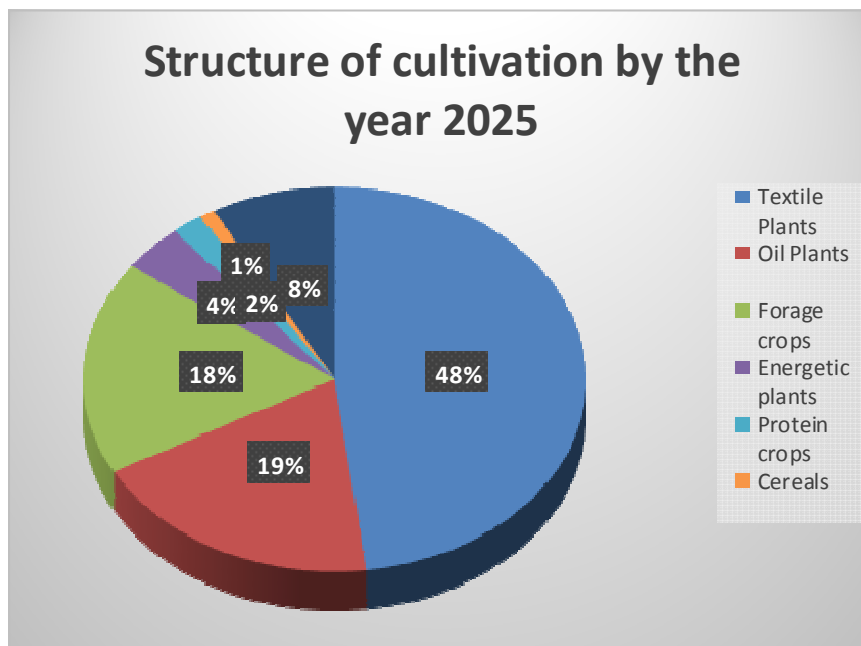


Fig. 1 Structure of cultivation by the year 2025

CONCLUSIONS

Applying these measures and giving priority to the development of local infrastructure would unarguably lead to the increase of the competitiveness of Romanian agriculture, attracting local and foreign investors. Investing in infrastructure would determine investments in agriculture, ultimately causing the investment into logistic and distribution, raising the attractiveness of rural space by generating new workplaces for the population, which wouldn't be forced anymore into emmigrating to richer countries of Europe, thus increasing the crisis of the Romanian village elements.

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