ASPECTS REGARDING THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AGRICULTURAL EXPLOITATIONS IN TIMIŞ COUNTY

ASPECTE PRIVIND CARACTERISTICILE EXPLOATAŢIILOR AGRICOLE DIN JUDEŢUL TIMIŞ

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Abstract: *Organizing agriculture requires restructuring its subsystems in terms of profitability and economic competitiveness.*
Timiş County is characterized by an extension of private ownership, in 2006 holding a 98,13% share of the total agricultural area.
Small-sized exploitations prevail in Timis County, with a significant degree of agricultural land fragmentation.
The agricultural potential of Timis County has not been fully capitalized because of the excessive fragmentation of agricultural land, the lack of variety in forms of association, but also because of insufficient and used agricultural equipment, both physically and morally.

Key words: *agricultural exploitation, private ownership, farm*

INTRODUCTION

During the transition period, Romanian agriculture has undergone fundamental changes in what concerns the structure of ownership and the organization forms of agricultural activities. Technically, there was an economic restructuring, with changes occurring in the price formation mechanism, in approaching the various economic and social phenomena, especially as a consequence of privatization and restitution of land [3]. This restructuring process had a macroeconomic facet, emphasized by the use of certain tools and mechanisms within strategic actions of the government, as well as a microeconomic facet, revealed by the actions of economic agents in tight connection with the market [4].

Thus, organizing agriculture requires restructuring its subsystems in terms of profitability and economic competitiveness [1]. For agricultural exploitations, implementing these concepts implies developing production

activities so that they respond quantitatively, qualitatively and structurally to the needs of consumers, in a strategic way able to reduce uncertainty and the direct impact on demand. This is where the production unit plays an important part as a center of economic results which determines the viability of agricultural exploitations [2].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In what concerns the structure of agricultural exploitations, in 2007 it was the following:

Table 1
Agricultural exploitations by legal status

Agricultural exploitations using farmland and/or owning livestock by legal status of agricultural exploitations					
Legal status of agricultural exploitations	**TOTAL**		**out of which in 2007:**		
	Agricultural exploitations in 2005	**Agricultural exploitations in 2007**	**Owning farmland and livestock**	**Owning only farmland**	**Owning only livestock**
Individual agricultural exploitations	4.237.889	3.913.651	3.252.011	582.396	79.244
Units with legal personality	18.263	17.699	2.231	15.152	316
Agricultural associations	1.630	1.475	185	1.276	14
Trading units	4.824	5.147	908	4.039	200
Public administration units	4818	4.177	376	3.759	42
Cooperation units	108	71	10	60	1
Other types	6.883	6.829	752	6.018	59
TOTAL	4.256.152	3.931.350	3.254.242	597.548	79.560

Source: I.N.S. Statistical Yearbook of Romania 2007, 2009

We may notice there is a very high number of individual agricultural exploitations and few agricultural associations and trading units with legal personality, while there's a significant reduction in the number of cooperation units.

In 2007, the number of individual agricultural exploitations was 3.913.651, which is 7,7% lower than in 2005 whereas the number of units with legal personality was 17.699, 3,1% lower than in 2005. There was a slight increase in the average size of exploited land per agricultural exploitation. Thus, in 2007, it was 3,5 ha per agricultural exploitation, compared to 3,3 ha in 2005.

According to the Farm Structure Survey 2008, the average size of exploited agricultural land was 2,3 ha per individual agricultural exploitation, compared to 2,2 ha in 2005. For units with legal personality it was 270,5 ha per unit, compared to 263,1 ha in 2005 [5].

The number of individual agricultural exploitations with an exploited agricultural land under one hectare has decreased in 2007 compared to 2005 by approximately 166 thousand exploitations, while they were still holding a significant share (around 44% of the total individual agricultural exploitations).

In 2007, the average size of exploited agricultural land per small-sized agricultural exploitation was 0,4 ha, the same as in 2005. Approximately 21,6% of individual agricultural exploitations had en economic size of at least 1 ESU (European Size Unit).

Timiş County is characterized by an extension of private ownership, in 2006 holding a 98,13% share of the total agricultural area. The agricultural potential of Timiş County has not been fully capitalized because of the excessive fragmentation of agricultural land, the lack of variety in forms of association, but also because of insufficient and used agricultural equipment, both physically and morally.

Table 2
The number of agricultural exploitations according to the size of exploited agricultural land

The size of exploited agricultural land (ha)	Number of agricultural exploitations
Size under 0,1 ha	17.172
Size of 0,1 - 0,3 ha	15.339
Size of 0,3 - 0,5 ha	3.881
Size of 0,5 - 1 ha	10.169
Size of 1 - 2 ha	9.526
Size of 2 - 5 ha	17.086
Size of 5 - 10 ha	12.931
Size of 10 - 20 ha	4.833
Size of 20 - 30 ha	921
Size of 30 - 50 ha	482
Size of 50 - 100 ha	363
Size over 100 ha	630
TOTAL	**93.333**

Source: Farm Structure Survey, 2005

As revealed by the data in the table, small-sized exploitations prevail in Timiş County, with a significant degree of agricultural land fragmentation. Agricultural exploitations that have a small size and a large number of plots incur major deficiencies in terms of agricultural equipment yield, as well as additional costs related to travelling in vain. Small-sized exploitations also encounter problems related to the placement of crops and observing the appropriate crop rotation.

According to the size category of exploited agricultural land, agricultural exploitations with sizes of 2-5 hectares or even up to 10 hectares generally own a larger livestock compared to larger-sized exploitations, the latter focusing mainly on cereal cultivation.

The number of registered farms in the Agricultural Register in 2007-2008 in Timiş County was 23.266. Their state according to size is the following:

Table 3
The number of agricultural exploitations registered in the Agricultural Register of Timiş County

Size of exploited land (ha)	The number of agricultural exploitations
Under 1 ha	8
1-4,99 ha	12.895
5-9,99 ha	5.522
10-49 ha	3.747
50-99 ha	443
100-499 ha	493
500-999 ha	94
1.000-1.999 ha	46
2.000-10.000 ha	17
Over 10.000 ha	1
TOTAL	**23.266**

Source: Payment and Intervention Agency in Agriculture, 2008

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

An analysis of the data presented reveals the fact that the largest number of registered farms in the Agricultural Register have a size between one and five hectares, followed by those with sizes between 5-10 hectares, and then those with sizes between 10-49 hectares, and their number decreases as the size increases.

A comparison between the total number of agricultural exploitations in Timis County and those registered in the Agricultural Register reveals the fact that the number of the latter is a lot smaller than their total number in Timiş County.

In what concerns the agricultural exploitations with a size under one hectare, their total number in Timiş County is 46.561, while the number of those registered in the Agricultural Register is only 8 exploitations.

The number of exploitations with sizes between 1 and 5 hectares in Timiş County is 26.612, while 12.895 exploitations of the same size were registered in the Agricultural Register.

In Timiş County there are 12.931 exploitations with sizes between 5 and 10 hectares, while 5.522 exploitations of the same size registered in the Agricultural Register.

Significant differences also occur in the case of exploitations with sizes over 10 hectares.

The analysis reveals the fact that the most important differences occur in exploitations with sizes under one hectare, their number being significantly smaller in the Agricultural Register compared to the total number in Timiş County.

The explanation for the significantly smaller number of registered exploitations in the Agricultural Register resides in the fact that some of the exploitations in the county don't work their land, others have noncompliant sizes with registering regulations in the Agricultural Register, while others have leased most of their farmland.

CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, we may assert that the current state of agricultural exploitations is the result of outdated technologies, low productivity, low job performance, insufficient technical equipment, disastrous rural infrastructure, as well the bureaucratic and underperforming agricultural consultancy.

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