DYNAMICS AND STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES OF THE ROMANIAN SHEEP SECTOR IN 2020–2024

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Abstract

This study assesses the dynamics of Romania's sheep sector between 2020 and 2024 using official national statistics and Eurostat data. Indicators describing flocks, holdings, meat, milk, wool, slaughtering, consumption and self-sufficiency were compared by relative change. The sheep population rose by 1.7%, to 10.443 million head, while holdings fell by 2.2% by 2023. Carcass output increased by 24.0% and apparent carcass weight by 22.0%, but meat self-sufficiency declined from 110.0% to 105.7%. Total sheep milk grew by 5.9%, whereas deliveries to dairies fell by 20.7%, reducing the collection rate from 5.51% to 4.13%. Romania retained 18.5% of the EU sheep population in 2024, but fragmented farms and weak formal milk collection continue to limit value added.

Key words*: sheep population; farm structure; meat production; sheep milk; value chain*