

ON THE EVOLUTION OF CEREALS OFFER IN ROMANIA

Elena PET¹, Corina RUSET¹, I. PET¹,
I. BRAD¹, T. IANCU¹

^{1,2,3,4,5}Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and
Veterinary Medicine Timișoara,
300645 Timisoara Romania
e-mail: petz_elena@yahoo.com

Tradition and expertise show that Romania is a country with an agriculture mainly dominated by cereals, which ranked – with few exceptions – among exporters. Its position among world cereal producers is also determined by natural conditions favourable to this group of agricultural crops. The main cereal-producing feature of Romanian agriculture lasted till our days, the share of cereal crops of the total cultivated arable area between 2001-2006 being of over 58%. The changes in share of cultivated areas with different cereal species shows both the structural changes that have taken place in Romania's agriculture and their influence on technological level, i.e. capitalising level in agriculture. Grain production is correlated with seeding surface, but, sometimes paradoxes appear, where even if the cultivated surface is large the production is low. Year to year, agricultors and agriculture specialists are confronted with varied problems, most of the time being impossible to deal with these situations that occur. There are many explanations: either related to meteorological aspects (repeated flooding or prolonged drought, high or very low temperatures), or occurrence of diseases and pests. Therefore, the obtained grain production is not always determined by the cultivated surface; Situations occur when even if the cultivated surfaces are large, the productions do not yield the expected amounts.

Key words: offer, demand, and production.

Romania has favourable natural conditions and a long-lasting tradition in cultivating cereals, which gave it the name of “Europe's granary” between the two world wars.

In order to analyze the market offer, the cultivated surfaces and the obtained productions are presented in the present paper. The increase and decrease of cultivated surfaces and efficiencies are the causes that determined severe oscillations throughout the years of the grain productions in Romania.

Under the conditions engendered by the land resource reform and by the transition in our country, maize and wheat occupy an important place as they have multiple functions from both an economic and social points of view.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The main cereal-producing feature of Romanian agriculture lasted till our days, the share of cereal crops of the total cultivated arable area between 2001-2006 being of over 58% (*figure 1*).



Figure 1 The share of crop cereals of the total cultivated arable area

The changes in share of cultivated areas with different cereal species show both the structural changes that have taken place in Romania's agriculture and their influence on technological level, i.e. capitalising level in agriculture.

The dynamics of areas cultivated with main cereals is shown in *figure 2*.

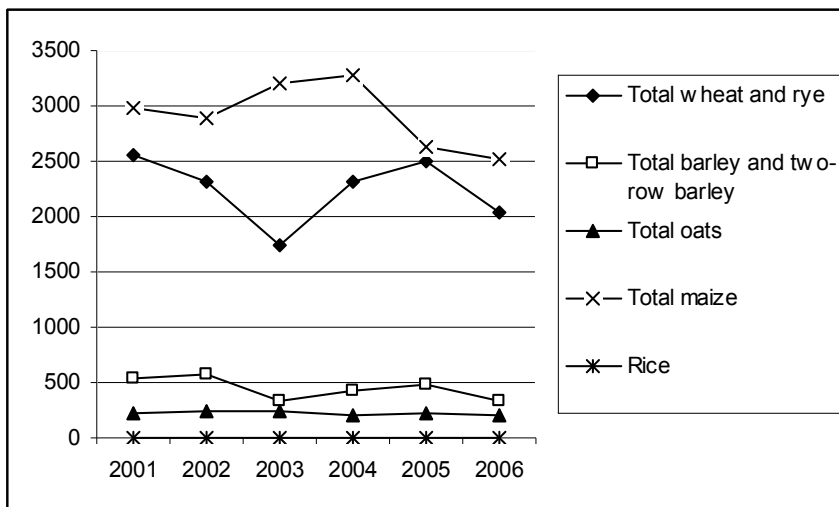


Figure 2 The dynamics of areas cultivated with main cereals (thousands hectares)

The development of the total wheat-cultivated area shows very clearly the impact of land resource reform, producers' reaction to non-incentive prices on internal and international markets.

Data analyses show that there are fluctuations in the areas cultivated with wheat and rye. Surface area cultivated with wheat and rye was between 1748 thousands hectares (in 2003) and 2558.6 thousands hectares in 2001.

Also, comparing the cultivated surfaces with the obtained productions, most of the situations underline the high productions from the large surface, while low productions fit small surfaces.

The total maize-cultivated area is about over 2.5 million hectares per year, as maize is a more accessible crop within the new agrarian structures appeared after 1989. High level of surface area cultivating of maize to be recording in year 2004 (3274,1 thousands hectares).

Barley-cultivated area, a crop which is mainly a forage crop, decreased with the diminution of animals in animal husbandry farms and with the shift of small producers towards mixed-destination crops. Two-row barley-cultivated area has known an increase due to the development of brewery industry, i.e. malt industry.

Rice-cultivated area decreased and practically disappeared from the group of cereal crops in Romanian agriculture, though it was cultivated in 1989 on about 50000 ha in lowland rice fields.

Maize is the cereal that used to dominate and that still dominates Romanian agriculture. In 2001, maize was cultivated on over 33.39% of the cereal-cultivated area, while wheat was cultivated on 28.59% of the cereal-cultivated area. In the 2006 statistical data show that the share of maize decreased to 31.96%, while the share of wheat decreased to 25.52% (*figure 3*).

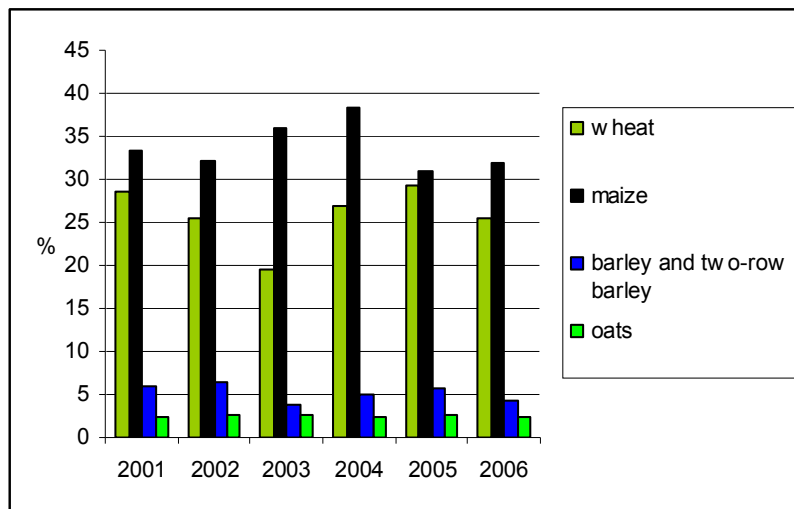


Figure 3 Share of the main cereals of the total cultivated area

The ratio between the two crops – wheat and maize – per property forms and per types of exploitations shows that maize tends to rank first

both economically and socially, though its cultivation technology is more intensive than that of cereals.

Cereals are “effective” in Romania as national food safety, a major necessity in the population’s existence, cannot exist without wheat, maize, barley or other cereals.

Unfortunately, the fragmentation of areas cultivated with these crops, with all the bad technological consequences is resulted in, is the main cause for average yields much below the potential of the cultivars and hybrids cultivated (*figures 4 and 5*).

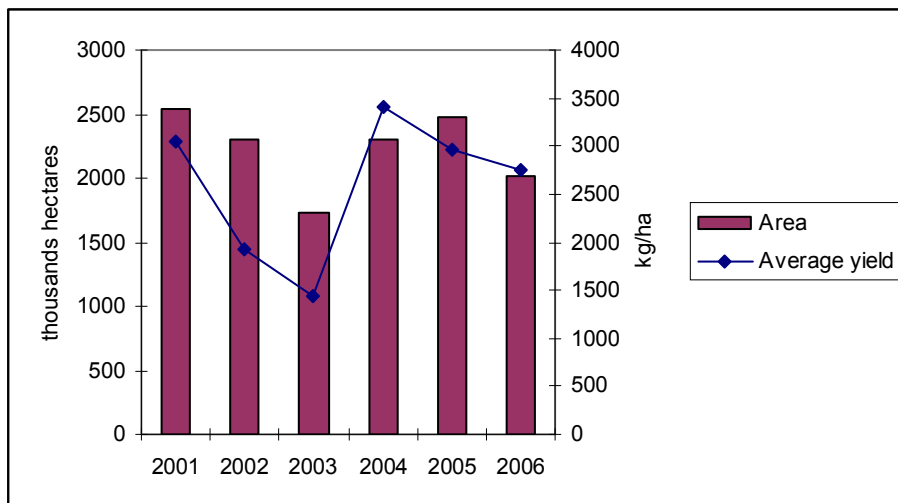


Figure 4 Dynamics of areas and of average yields in wheat and rye

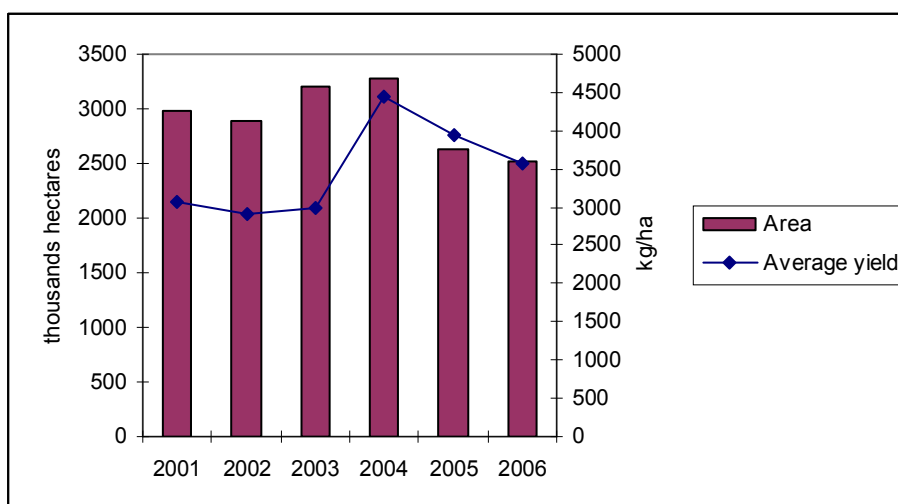


Figure 5 Dynamics of areas and of average yields in grain-maize

In our country, from the total grain cultivated surfaces, 25.52% is represented by wheat and rye. (2006)

Wheat average production was between 1429 kg/ha (registered in 2003) and 3403 kg/ha in 2004.

Maize average production was between 2902 kg/ha (registered in 2002) and 4441 kg/ha in 2004.

In Romania, grain total productions have significant fluctuation, registering in 2004 a record production, followed in the next years by dramatic decreases.

Dynamics of total cereal production is presented in *figure 6*.

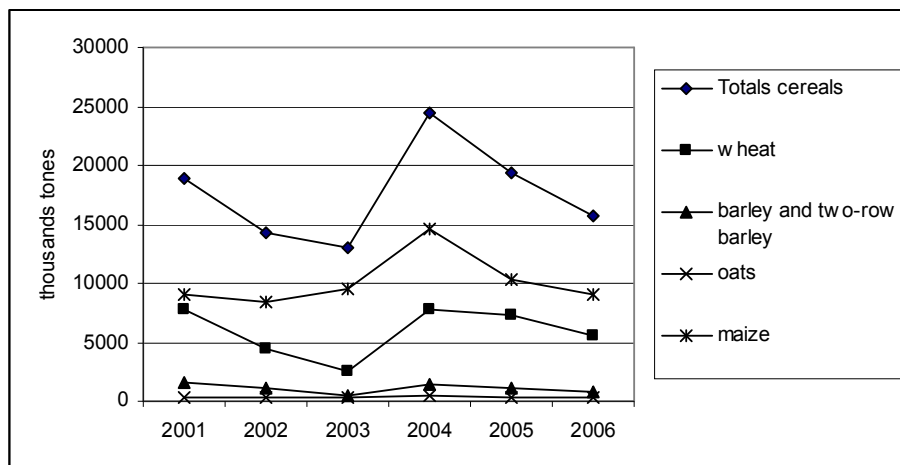


Figure 6 Dynamics of total cereal production

This lack of quantitative and structural uniformity of cereal offer is determined mainly by a lack of correlation of structural factor action (size of exploitation, production management, economic policy decisions, etc.) with technological factor action, lack of correlation that resulted in numerous and serious discrepancies that contradict market economy managerial and functional norms.

CONCLUSIONS

Present cereal offer is variable; and as it is dispersed between millions of agricultural exploitations of the associative and individual types.

Most agricultural exploitations grow crops on small areas, have a high self-consumption and a low marketing index determined by the necessity of overcoming a financial impasse.

Romanian agriculture direction towards cereal growing – cereals are cultivated almost everywhere in Romania – is determined not only by the need for self-supplying population, but also by the ecological offer, relief, climate, and soil conditions – relatively good ones for such crops.

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