

EVOLUTION OF ROMANIAN ECOLOGICAL PRODUCTS COMMERCE

Gabriela BOLDUREANU¹

¹Petre Andrei” University, Iasi
e-mail:gabrivaleanu@yahoo.com

The world market for ecological products grew by 11 % in 2008 year compared to 2007 year due to increased interest in consumer health and environmental protection in development country. In Romania, the ecological products cover only 0.1 % of the food market, although in the developed country market share reached 5%. However, the specialists in the field believe that this sector can increase in the coming years, subject to proper promotion campaigns. In this paper we present a statistical analysis of trade developments with Romanian ecological products in order to identify the behavior of consumers, producers, and not least, the state on the application of ecological goods and services.

Key words: ecological products, trade, market, consumer, producer.

Ecological (or organic) products according to the European Union legislation [4] are products produced within the system of organic farming, without using synthetic chemicals (such as fertilizers, soil enhancers, feed ingredients for the preparation or ingredients for food preparation). Genetically modified organisms and their derivatives are banned entirely.

Demand for environmental goods and service is increasing in the present period, demand which conditions the behavior of consumers, producers and even the entire country [1].

The Romanian legislation in this area is fully harmonized with European Union legislation, namely Council Regulation (EEC) no. 2092/91 (amended and consolidated) regarding the manner of production and labeling of organic products.

In the National Export Strategy 2005-2009 it is states: "organic farming is a new sector. Romania benefit for appropriate conditions to promote organic farming, such as:

- soil, fertile and productive;
- intensive use of chemicals and related technologies do not create a negative impact as that of developed countries;
- Romanian traditional agriculture is based on approach that does not harm the environment and there are many opportunities to identify areas where unpolluted organic farming could be developed.

Also, in the National Development Strategy and Diversification of Organic Products are inserting the organic farming objectives namely:

- avoiding all forms of pollution, both at the level of the products and environment;

- maintaining the natural fertility of soils through it can ensure a sustainable food security of the population;
- the opportunity to allow farmers a decent living;
- the production of food or food products in sufficient quantities and at an appropriate level of quality that depends the consumer health.

Starting from these considerations, in Romania, especially in Europe and worldwide, has outlined a trend new, quite strong, which has turned into a real movement to obtain food products through clean technologies, non-polluted, free of chemical substances.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This study is the result of a process of induction and deduction, investigation and critical interpretation and comparative studies of many developed nationally and internationally on the topic researched. In the analysis of trade whit organic products have been used studies, databases national and international.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

According to some international studies [3] in the field made by the Foundation for Ecology and Agriculture from Germany, organic farming is practiced in over 120 countries and areas in the ecological system are continuing growing, worldwide there are approximately 31 million hectares with 633,891 registered organic farms.

Table 1

The agricultural area and the number of organic farms by continent

Continent	Continental areas organic farming (ha)	Proportion of ecological areas (of total agricultural areas)	Organic farms (units)
Africa	890,504	0.11	124,805
Asia	2,893,572	0.21	129,927
Europe	6,920,462	1.38	187,697
South America	5,809,320	0.93	176,710
North America	2,199,225	0.56	12,063
Australia	11,845,100	2.59	2,689
Total	30,558,183	0.74	633,891

Source: SOEL-FIBL, 2007

In 2007 year, the countries with the largest areas were: Australia (approximately 11.8 million hectares), Argentina (3.1 million hectares), China (2.3 million hectares), and U.S.A. with approximately 1.6 million hectares [6].

In our country, according to the Ministry of Agriculture, in 2008 [7], organic cultivated area was with 15% higher than in 2007, reaching 220,000 hectares and a total of 4,168 operators bio. In Romania, organic farming sector is dynamic, which

in recent years experienced an upward trend both in the vegetal and in the animal sector [2].

In line with the Strategy of development of ecological agriculture in Romania, the area cultivated organic will reach at the end of 2009 year, 300,000 hectares, which represent 2 % of the agricultural area of the country. Ministry of Agriculture estimates a growth ratio in this year, so that the area cultivated in the system will exceed 1.31 % from total and until 2013 year will reach 754,000 hectares, approximately 5% of total agricultural area.

Thus, in terms of area cultivated in the ecological system, our country is on the 44th position in the world from a total of 122 countries. At European Union level, Austria has a share of 13 % of the total agricultural area cultivated in ecological system, Italy 9 %, France 2%, Belgium 2.1%, Hungary 2.9% or Spain 3.7 %.

Trade inside and outside with Romanian organic products

Even if organic farming is currently present in most countries, applications for green products remains concentrated in Europe and North America [3]. Although production of organic crops is increasing, sales are concentrated in the industrialized world, this is due to income support from governments and different organizations.

Based on estimates [8], the global sales of 23 European countries, USA, Canada, Japan and Australia have increased by 45 %, from 23-25 billion U.S. dollars (or 17.8 billion euro) in 2002 year to 33 billion U.S. dollars (25.5 billion euro) in 2005 year and 40 billion dollars (30.9 billion euro) for 2006 year.

As regards our country, increasing demand for organic products on the Romanian market in the European Union has led to a spectacular export profile. Thus, if in 2006 year the *value of export* [5] of this type was 75 million euro at end of 2007 year was 100 million euro, about 80 % of products being supplied basic materials.

The statistical data show that over 50% of exports of organic products are the production of nuts, berries, mushrooms and cereals. Also, from a total of 166,000 tons of organic products in 2007 year, vegetables were 8,700 tones.

Bio products obtained in 2008 year was 260,000 tones, with over 50% greater than 2007 year. In the animal sector of organic products, in 2006 year were produced 11.2 million liters of organic whole milk, compared to 10 million liters in 2005 year. An important increase in the last year recorded the organic honey, the amount being produced by 1,243 tones, about twice as much from 2005 year.

The *value of imports bio* [5] in 2008 year was 10 million euro, up by four million euros compared to 2007 year. In the category of imports fall: brown sugar from sugar cane, coffee, chocolate, soybean products and fruit juices.

Regarding the *domestic market of organic products*, this will increase this year by about 30 %. Thus, sales of organic products can reach 20 million euro in 2009 year, in the context of demand increasingly high population. In 2008 year, the internal market of organic products was estimated at 15 million euro and in 2007 year was only 5 million euro.

CONCLUSIONS

From the analysis effectuated is found that, although exports of organic products is growing year by year, the consumption of such products remains low in Romania compared with other European Union member countries. Only 0.5% of food sold is organic, because organic products it is more expensive on average by 10 % - 40 % compared to conventional products.

However, the specialists in the field believe that this sector can increase their growing ratio in the coming years, with the condition of good and adequate marketing campaigns.

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