

AGRICULTURE IN THE POST-COMMUNIST PERIOD-BETWEEN SUSTENANCE AND MODERNIZATION. CASE STUDY: BOTOSANI COUNTY

Maria-Simona CUCIUREANU¹

e-mail: cuciureanu.simona@yahoo.com

Abstract

The reforms after 1989 has led to fragmentation of agriculture and lower the average production per hectare, which led to the do not acover of consumer products. The situation caused a crisis after 1989 highlights of the Romanian agriculture, which causes the appearance of new laws that would stabilize the agricultural sector: the law on cadastre and real estate advertising, agricultural chambers Law, law on agricultural credit and creates such a premise a legislative assistance for agricultural development. Botosani County underwent major changes by applying laws after 1989, because of low production per hectare, the process of modernization has been reduced and it was switched to practicing subsistence agriculture, which has led to the loss of use of the land. After the land reform, which installs since 1990, shall encourage the development of agriculture based on individual agricultural enterprises, but the process has been difficult, therefore appeared practicing subsistence agriculture. Integration in the European Union offers numerous opportunities to develop agriculture and subsistence farming influence replacement with one performance, competitive. Agricultural modernization, supporting small farmers and offering subsidies for the purchase of modern agricultural equipment represents a major support for the creation of agriculture as an activity that sustains economic competitiveness.

Key words: agriculture, farmers, agricultural exploitations, subsidies and european funds

Agriculture is an ancient economic sector, which has passed through many stages to develop. Material and technical base serves to highlight the state of agriculture and the practice, modern or subsistence. Agriculture was the economic basis for rural areas, so that during the communist regime were held systematization of the territory and settlements to expand the work of evaluation of agricultural land and enhance agricultural productivity level.

Agriculture was the economic basis for rural areas, so that during the communist regime were held systematization of the territory and settlements to expand the work of evaluation of agricultural land and enhance agricultural productivity level. Agriculture, after 1966, was based on irrigation and mechanization to increase the number of productions. It was developed to have agricultural education specialists in agriculture, from 11152 in 1960 to 51,927 in 1982. A significant workforce working in agriculture, employment declines and increases worker staff and cooperative members, as they were called people involved to provide agricultural activities.

A negative aspect of the period 1945-1989 was created by "obsession" quantity of agricultural products, paying minimal attention to quality. The

revolution of 1989 had major consequences on the Romanian countryside. Since 1990 abolishing agricultural cooperatives focused on production and based on the statements of 22 December 1989 it was for each member cooperator 0.5 ha of land in use. Missing and socialist agricultural units, replaced with holdings (individual households, family associations, agricultural societies etc.).

Land Law (Law 18/1991) returned estates, the property (land reform being considered) and abolishing agricultural production cooperatives, these changes leading to the replacement of socialist state property and private property of the cooperative. This reform aimed transition to market economy, representing privatization and agriculture was first applied this economic branch reform.

The application of the Land Law entailed the division of property (over 4.7 million farms) and excessive fragmentation of land (parcels resulting total is estimated at about 18-20 million).

Land Law, through the restoration and establishment of 50-55% of the agricultural area population of elderly and people who work in agriculture, by Law 16/1994 was enacted, called lease Law. The new owner of land is usually older, starved of funds and materials necessary for the

¹ Faculty of Geography and Geology, „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University Iași

production process and impoverished after the long communist period.

With the integration into the European Union on 1 January 2007, the main funding programs to support sustainable rural development and the implementation of local development strategy of a community, have become European funds. In Art. 158 of the Treaty establishing the European Community (1957) refers to "reducing disparities in levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least favored regions or islands, including rural areas" and Art. 159 of the same Treaty requires this action to be supported by the Structural Funds, the European Investment Bank's investments and other financial instruments.

In the EU context, accessing grants for agriculture and rural development is considered a priority to reduce disparities in development between different regions of Romania and other EU countries.

According to the Council Regulation Europe no. 1290/2005 on the financing of the common agricultural policy, have created two European agricultural funds Program under the EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) (EAGF - European Agricultural Guarantee Fund - to finance measures marketing and EAFRD - European Agricultural Fund Rural Development - to finance rural development programs). This program aims to create a competitive agriculture in line with the Principles PAC, increasing productivity, ensuring a fair standard of living for the agricultural population, stabilizing markets, to ensure security of supply, providing consumers with supplies at reasonable prices. Thus, specific indicators of agriculture will have a positive development since 2007, thanks to the numerous opportunities offered by the European Union.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The study used data from the National Institute of Statistics for Botosani County, 1990-2012. The analyzed indicators are: agricultural land, arable land, land occupied by vineyards and vine nurseries, orchards and nurseries, pastures, meadows, farms individual average production of cereals, corn, oilseeds, potatoes, vegetables, beet Sugar and effective cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, horses, rabbits and beehives.

The analysis aims to highlight the indicators mentioned above and identify the causes of positive developments / negative and how farming developed in post-revolutionary period.

An important part of this study is observation INA evolution of indicators in the post-accession to the European Union during 2007-2012 as the

European Union attaches great importance to development of agriculture and provides many grants to encourage specialized farming, modern.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Botosani County suffered major changes by law enforcement after 1989 because of low production per hectare, so the process of modernization was reduced and it was practicing a subsistence agriculture that decreased land use.

The agricultural area has increased for the period 1990-2012, a period which has led its growth is 1999-2000. The period 1990-1997, subject to the laws of post-revolutionary period, experienced a stagnation of the agricultural area. The evolution of agricultural land is in parallel with the arable land being similar situations. The period of 1999-2000 is of increasing agricultural areas, arable default. Regarding land use, arable land prevails, the fertile soil for grain crops and oilseeds, sugar beet and vegetables. Profile of county Botosani county is agriculture, which determines a predominant use of arable land.

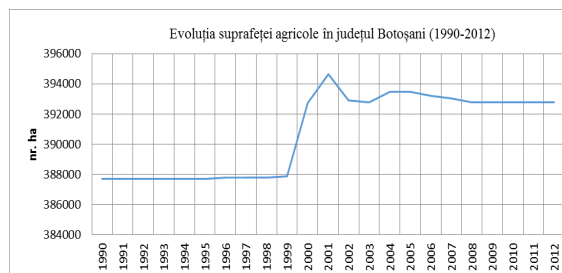


Figure 1 The evolution of agricultural land in Botosani County (1990-2012);

Data source: The National Institute of Statistics

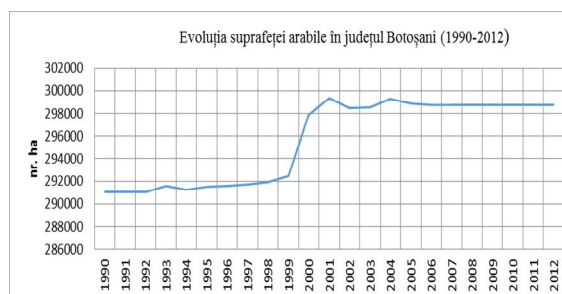


Figure 2 Evolution of arable land in Botosani County (1990-2012);

Data source: The National Institute of Statistics

It may be noted that since 2000 decrease land occupied by vineyards and vine nurseries and orchards and vine nurseries, this situation is inconsistent with the evolution of agricultural land, which is highlighted by increasing the area. Decreasing land occupied by vineyards and orchards are due to the soil characteristics and the economic level of the area of investment to invest

in vineyards and orchards. Significantly for this type of surface it is the market for the production and investment as possible.

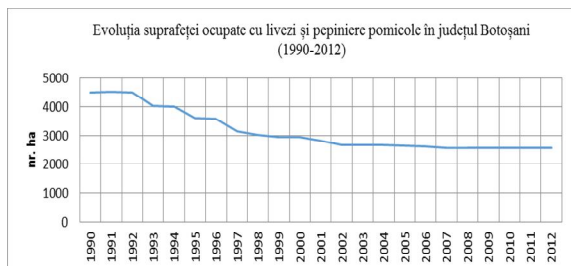


Figure 3 The evolution of the area occupied by orchards and nurseries in Botosani County (1990-2012); Data source: The National Institute of Statistics

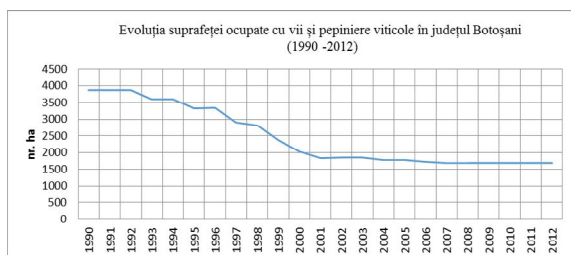


Figure 4 The evolution of the area cultivated with vineyards and vine nurseries in Botosani County (1990-2012); Data source: The National Institute of Statistics

Areas of pastures and hayfields have increased in the period 1990-2012, particularly after 2000, which is the consequence of increased livestock and guiding residents to practice a type of modern agriculture, which have profit by selling both products fodder or livestock. This is one stage early agricultural development at the county level, because the area was noted between subsistence agriculture, which highlights the low economic level and low utilization of agricultural land.

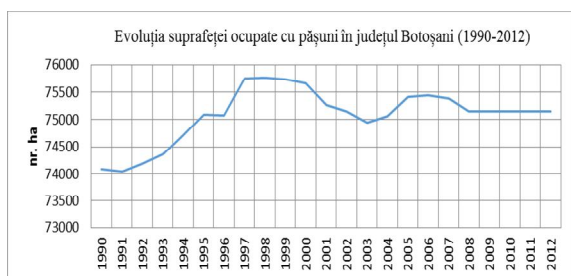


Figure 5 The evolution of the area occupied by pastures in Botosani County (1990-2012); Data source: The National Institute of Statistics

Residents have turned to farming practices that do not represent major costs, because farming involves major investments so predominant arable land and areas with pasture and meadow, confirming the profile of agriculture Botosani county, while areas with vineyards and orchards

fall even disappear in some administrative units due to the impossibility of creating an effective system focused on these productions.

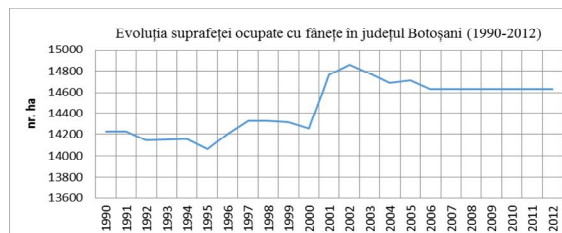


Figure 6 Evolution occupied area with meadows in Botosani County (1990-2012); Data source: The National Institute of Statistics

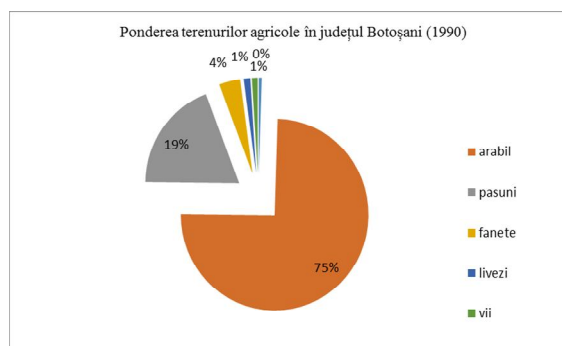


Figure 7 The share of agricultural land in Botosani County (1990); Data source: The National Institute of Statistics

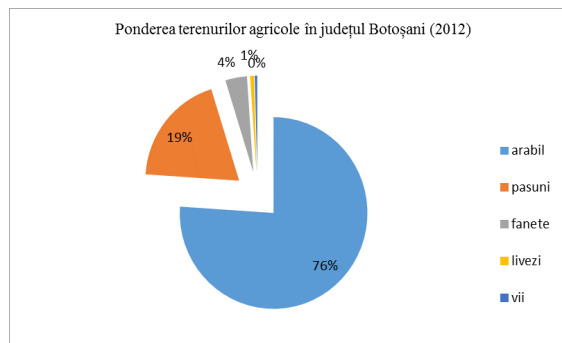


Figure 8 The share of agricultural land in Botosani County (2012); Data source: The National Institute of Statistics

A comparison of weighted farmland between 1990 and 2012 highlights preserving the largest share of arable land, with an increasing trend from 75% to 76%, which means use "excessive" amounts of arable land, followed by the share of occupied land grassland 19%. Share farmland confirms the situation observed in the graphs above, while lowering the land occupied by vineyards and orchards have not noticed significant share of total agricultural land because they charge 1% (orchards) and about 1% (vii) both in 1990 and 2012.

Because arable land occupies a majority share, an analysis of the contributions of the main crops show a major share occupied by wheat,

barley and oats in 1990, with 59%, maintaining the preponderance in 2012, but with a smaller share, 44%; maize occupies 28% in 1990 and 32% in 2012; these crops (wheat, barley, oats, corn) totaling 81% in 1990 and 76% in 2012, which highlights that the production is local. In 2012 appear crops that occupy a significant share compared to 1990, soybeans by 10% in 2012, compared to 3% in 1990 and sunflower by 8% in 2012 compared to 2% in 1990. The growth areas with oilseeds is due to soil characteristics, offering high productivity and the emergence of processing factories at these productions. Large areas occupied by oil plants have been bought or leased by foreign individuals who have established agricultural companies and were aimed at the marketing of products abroad (the eastern county of Botosani). Crops of sugar beet face a significant drop in 1990, 3%, by 2012, about 1%, which is primarily due to the abolition of sugar factories since 1996. The areas with the potato falls to 4 % in 1990 to 2% in 2012, while vegetable growing areas from 1% to 3%. The increase areas under vegetable greenhouses and motivating appearance is owed to a market producer residents.

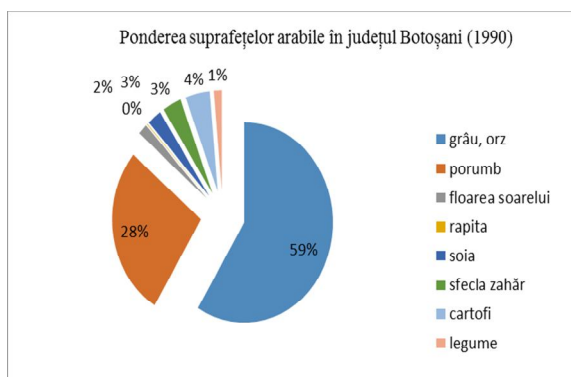


Figure 9 The share of arable land in Botosani County (1990);

Data source: Institutul Național de Statistică

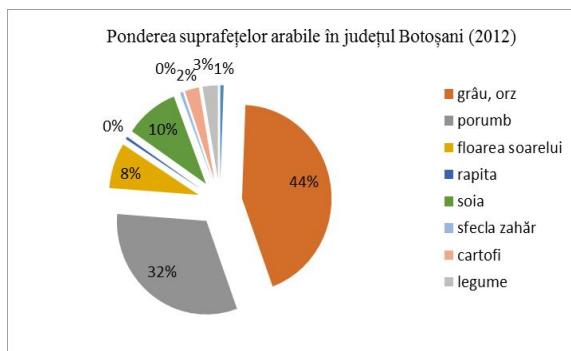


Figure 1 The share of arable land in Botosani County (2012);

Data source: The National Institute of Statistics

After the agrarian reform, which installs since 1990, to encourage agricultural development

based on individual farms. Thus we can see that since 1991, when the law of the land, increase the number of individual holdings, with continuous growth until 2005, when a decrease them. Individual farms pose a risk to agriculture so that they can be the consequence of a disorganized and subsistence agriculture in Botosani County. Their occurrence did not develop modern agriculture, but 'developed' subsistence agriculture, the majority of persons with such holdings being older. The transition from socialist agriculture based on quantity to a modern type production based on quality, had negative repercussions on agriculture practiced in Botosani County.

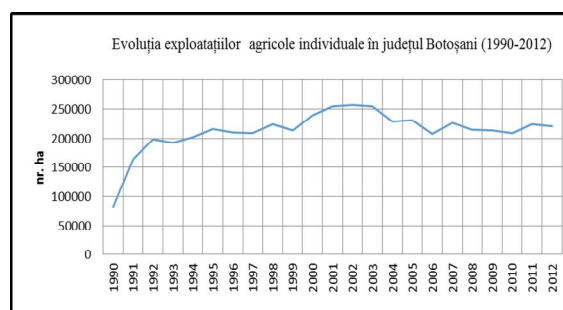


Figure 2 The evolution of individual holdings in Botosani County (1990-2012);

Data source: The National Institute of Statistics

Analysis of average yields of major crops for Botosani county, in the period 1990-2012, aims to highlight the production line, increasing or decreasing, indicating the factors which led to this situation and location at the county level yields higher. The evolution of the average output of the culture of wheat, oats, barley is oscillating, is a significant decrease in 1991-1992, about 3 tons / ha to about 2 tons / ha, followed by oscillation of production (in 1993, 1997 199, 2011 were high yields, while in 1996, 2000, 2007, 2012 were smaller productions, the lowest in the analyzed period). The predominance of land occupied by these crops causes and high yields compared to other crops. The decrease in production is due to the fact that the land occupied by wheat are continuously decreasing after 1990, promulgated various laws affecting land use, implicit yields.

A joint analysis of the average yields of major crops highlights the crops of sugar beet, potatoes and vegetables that although occupy small areas have high yields in the distribution areas, while oilseeds and cereals have small productions, although occupies the largest surfaces. Low production agriculture shows a weak, low fertility of the land, practicing monoculture and lack their rotation. In 2012 it recorded major decreases in average yields of all crops, climate is an important factor that determines their sharp decline.

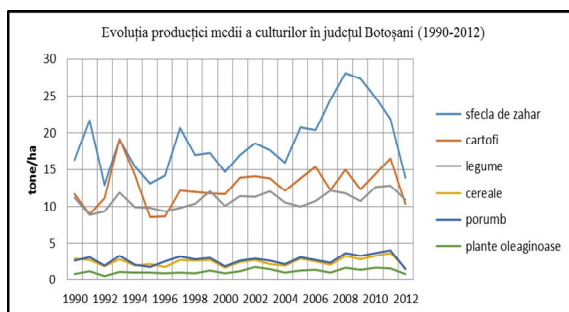


Figure 12 Evolution of the average crop production in Botosani County (1990-2012);
Data source: The National Institute of Statistics

Although Botosani county has land properties soil conducive to practicing modern agriculture climate is specific to Romania, temperate continental, which does not restrict the crops, the economic and demographic prevent the practice of modern agriculture, highlighting the high yields and a rising trend in revenues local agriculture.

Livestock farming is an occupation of the inhabitants of Botosani county, but at a subsistence level. As of 2007 there is an increasing trend of livestock because of subsidies provided by the EU, forming small farmers and young people being motivated to practice modern agriculture, specializing in livestock. They will analyze developments in the main livestock 1990-2012.

Joint analysis of livestock, except number of birds, aims to highlight the preponderance category at county level. A significant number of sheep flocks with other similar values. Raising livestock since 2007 is due to subsidies provided by the EU for livestock, dairy, croplands, etc., while the diminishing of 2010 due to restrictions imposed by the EU for granting these subsidies, which led to decreased livestock. The opportunity of accessing funds has led people to create small farms, livestock farms, which have multiple role: the marketing of products, livestock, raising living standards by increasing farm income, a specialized agricultural practice and receipt of related grants.

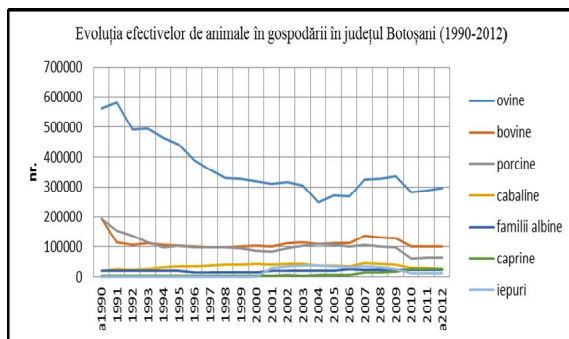


Figure 13 Evolution of livestock in households in Botosani County (1990-2012);
Data source: The National Institute of Statistics

Livestock farming is closely related to the use of agricultural land, especially land occupied by pastures, highlighting a significant number of animals.

CONCLUSIONS

Economic level of the population and lack of strategic vision that agriculture development and increase land use, determined the existence of an oscillating average yields of subsistence farming of the land in Botosani County in 1990-2012.

Thus poscomuniste agriculture reforms had negative effects in the first 10 to 11 years, when the analyzed indicators have suffered significant declines, which emphasizes that the agricultural potential was unable to be sold.

Integration into the European Union offered Romania in general and Botosani county, particularly the opportunity to revitalize agriculture and help realize its potential in this area to contribute to the local economy and hence to economic.

For example SAPARD program many grants were accessed in the county of Botosani the projects in the areas: food; farms; diversification of economic activities. SAPARD Programme Implementation in the period 2000--2006 was a significant opportunity in the studied area, absorbing the European funds in this period amounting to 48,248,300 Euro, showing a total of 132 projects. Most of the projects were aimed utilijae purchases of agriculture and the establishment of dairy farms (95 projects for these two categories). Thus the priority is to develop and practice modern agriculture, modern and specialized product Standards conform to abandon subsistence farming.

After studies, it found that agriculture Botosani County is a positive development since 2000, but considerabil in 2007, which demonstrates that EU integration was the necessary opportunity to develop agriculture and the potential of agriculture.

REFERENCES

- Bold I., Buciuman E., Drăghici M. 2003 - *Spațiul rural. Definire, organizare, dezvoltare*, Editura Mitriton, Timișoara.
- Cuciureanu S., 2012 - *The influence of rural development policies of the European Union. Case Study Botosani county*, Revista CES Working Papers, Volume IV, ISSUE 4/2012, ISSN: 2067-7693, ediție online.
- Oțiman I.P., 2006 - *Dezvoltarea rurală în România*, Editura Academiei Române, București;
- Schneider B., 1999 - *Fluxurile internaționale de capital și economia globală*, Editura Curentul.

Socol G., Rădulescu D. C., 2006 – *Civilizația rurală din România în perspectiva Integrării în Uniunea Europeană*, Editura Centrul de informare și Documentare Economică, București.

Voicu M., Voicu B., 2006 - *Satul Românesc pe drumul Către Europa*, Editura Polirom;

*** - http://www.mie.ro/_documente/atlas/atlas.htm.

*** - Institutul Național de Statistică;