

THE PRESENCE OF HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN THE ROMANIAN SUPERMARKETS

PREZENȚA PRODUSELOR HORTICOLE ÎN SUPERMAKETURILE DIN ROMÂNIA

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Abstract. *This paper radiographies the presence of the horticultural products in the big stores chains, which entered in the last years on the Romanian market. Especially it is observed the victualling and the commercialization.*

In Romania, after the liquidation of the state firms and specialized fruit and vegetables stores called "aprozar", the fruits and vegetables commerce is almost entirely a street commerce. Exception was made by the big supermarket chains, which import the majority of fruits and vegetables.

Actually, the agricultural fields are challenged by the supremacy of the supermarkets stores, which own a share of 70-90% from the retail market in United Kingdom, France, Germany, Netherlands and the Nordic countries. On the fruits and vegetables market, this influence is felt in a bigger measure and it has some consequences analyzed in this paper.

Rezumat. *Lucrarea face o radiografie a prezenței produselor horticole în marile lanțuri de magazine, care au intrat în ultimi ani pe piața românească, fiind tratat în special modul de aprovizionare și de comercializare.*

În România comerțul organizat de legume și fructe după desființarea întreprinderilor de stat și a magazinelor aprozar, a rămas aproape în totalitate la forma de tarabă. Excepție fac doar raioanele din supermarketuri, care se aprovizionează, de regulă, din import.

În prezent, sectoarele agricole sunt provocate de dominația lanțurilor de supermarketuri, care dețin 70-90% din piața de retail din Marea Britanie, Franța, Germania, Olanda și țările nordice. Pe piața de legume și fructe, această influență se face simțită într-o mai mare măsură cu o serie de consecințe ce sunt analizate în lucrare.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Before 1989, when all was in the state propriety, the fruits and vegetables were sold, principally, in some stores called "aprozar". The name "aprozar" comes from the combination of the words of the expression "to supply with green goods". Here were sold only season fruits and vegetables and the exotic fruits and vegetables lacked. After 1989, almost all "aprozar" stores disappeared, making place to small groceries.

Nowadays, in every small grocery or big store, it can be found any kind of fruits and vegetables, fresh or canned, from any corners of the world, but the biggest variety is found in the new big wholesale and retail chain of stores which entered on the Romanian market after 1990. Now these big stores, with their variety, are a strong threat for the small groceries.

Now, we have the possibility to try and to choose among a big variety of horticultural products. It is interesting to see exactly what kind of vegetables, with what origin are sold in the Romanian supermarkets and which is the presentation of our local vegetables productions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the last seven years, the Romanian consumption market was “invaded” by many retail stores, mainly international brands. These stores are characterized by the fact that they have big surfaces, hundred and thousands of articles, of course horticultural products too; almost all you need is in one place.

But, the agricultural fields are challenged by the supremacy of these supermarket stores, which own a share of 70-90% from the retail market from United Kingdom, France, Germany, Netherlands and the Nordic countries. On the fruits and vegetables market, this influence is felt in a bigger measure. In these countries, the chains of stores have monopoly on prices.

Regarding on the Romanian retail market, the trend is the same, the supermarket stores own every year a bigger market share, estimating that in the year 2010, this stores will own more than 80% from the retail market.

In Romania approximately 95 percent of all fruits and vegetables are produced by private households and only 5 percent by commercial farmers and companies. Not only are the yields of these products far below the EU average (20 percent to 50 percent less), the quality itself does not meet international standards. This is one of the reasons why in any big retail store with a fruits and vegetables department, the number of Romanian products is still small.

Other minus on the Romanian horticultural products market is that the processing or canned industry disappears. If in 1989 were 15 state big processing plants and 40 middle ones, plus other 50 cans departments of the cooperatives, which were processing more than 360,000 tones of vegetables, in 2004, were just 40 this kind of units, only 15 important with a production of 14,391 tones, which covered only 40% from the market.

After 1989 the plants from the can industry sector were the first sold to the private investors, but, in majority, they abandoned quickly.

The can industry is tied up by the fruits and vegetables production. In the conditions where we have subsistence agriculture with significant smaller yields than in other European countries, it is normal that this industry is in dissolution.

Also, a problem is the lack of financing possibilities, to change the technology lines and the marketing. Even if the import cans are much more expensive, more than double, the Romanians prefer to buy them, instead of the Romanian ones, which are tastier, but with a less sophisticated design.

The solution, from this year, for the Romanian can industry is the possibility to attract European structural funds which could revitalize this sector, but in correlation with the agriculture reorganization.

Another reason why the Romanian fruits and vegetables are not well represented in the big retailers chain from the Romanian market, is that, usually,

these chains keep the same suppliers in the countries where open new big stores as in the other countries where they have stores.

As result, in the international stores chains, the imported fruits and vegetables, fresh or canned, are dominant. For example, in Cluj Napoca, if we enter in two well known stores Plus and Cora, at a simple observation on the fresh fruits and vegetables sector, it can be observed the followings:

Table 1

The Origin Of The Fresh Fruits And Vegetables From Cluj Napoca

Store	Type	Product	The Origin
<i>Plus</i>	<i>Discount store</i>	<i>Peas</i>	<i>Hungary</i>
		<i>Apples</i>	<i>Hungary</i>
		<i>Bean</i>	<i>Italy</i>
		<i>Onion</i>	<i>Austria</i>
		<i>Green salad</i>	<i>Turkey</i>
		<i>Garlic</i>	<i>Turkey</i>
		<i>Egg plants</i>	<i>Spain</i>
		<i>Carrots</i>	<i>Poland</i>
		<i>Green onion</i>	<i>Romania</i>
		<i>Potatoes</i>	<i>Romania</i>
		<i>Parsley</i>	<i>Romania</i>
		<i>Onion</i>	<i>Romania</i>
		<i>Marrow</i>	<i>Romania</i>
		<i>Cora</i>	<i>Hypermarket</i>
<i>Kohlrabi</i>	<i>Romania</i>		
<i>Potatoes</i>	<i>Romania</i>		
<i>Mushrooms</i>	<i>Romania</i>		
<i>Onion</i>	<i>Poland, Italy, Romania</i>		
<i>Radish</i>	<i>Romania, Italy</i>		
<i>Celery</i>	<i>Netherlands</i>		
<i>Carrots</i>	<i>Netherlands</i>		
<i>Marrow</i>	<i>Turkey</i>		
<i>Plums</i>	<i>China</i>		
<i>Garlic</i>	<i>China</i>		
<i>Pears</i>	<i>Italy, China</i>		
<i>Green salad</i>	<i>Spain</i>		
<i>Egg plants</i>	<i>Spain</i>		
<i>Pepper</i>	<i>Spain, Turkey</i>		
<i>Cucumbers</i>	<i>Turkey</i>		
<i>Tomatoes</i>	<i>Turkey</i>		

In the stores taken into observation, in the first place the variety of the horticultural products is different, because the type of store is different: Plus is a discount store and Cora is a hypermarket with a bigger surface. But, in both stores the number of Romanian products is much smaller than the number of imported ones. Only a few seasonal products, which do not need special conditions, as green onion, celery and parsley, can be found on the shelves.

CONCLUSIONS

In any store you go in Romania, the fruits and vegetables from the shelves are in big proportion imported from other countries, and we do not refer here at the exotic fruits and vegetables, which are not taken into consideration.

If in some European countries, the big chains of supermarkets are a threat for the farmers because their power on the market; in Romania, the national horticultural products are ignored for many reasons: the low quality and the small quantities of the products.

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