

## CONSUMPTION OF VEGETABLES IN ROMANIA<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** In the present paper it is presented a detailed analyse of the consumption of vegetables, in Romania. The consumption is analysed in time, for different species of fruits and for different categories of households.

The results show that the consumption of fruits increased in 2005 and decreased from this point forward. It is higher than the level of consumption recommended by the World Health Organisation, but less than the average of the European Union level. Romania is not one of the larger consumers of fruits among European Union countries.

Another conclusion is that differences result between the quantities purchased, which are lower, and the quantities effectively consumed, which are higher, meaning that not all the amount of fruits is ensured from the market, but by self production in family farms.

**Key words:** fruits, consumption

### Introduction

Vegetables and fruits account for an important place in people food consumption, because they ensure the needed vitamins and minerals of the daily diet. The recommendation of World Health Organisation<sup>3</sup> is 400 g of vegetables and fruits per day, per person, meaning 146 kg per year.

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<sup>1</sup> The paper represents the results of the research program 6.1.3.: Solutions for increasing the competitiveness on the chain, financed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Romania

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In the present paper the consumption of fruits in Romania is detailed analysed in time, for different species of fruits and for different categories of households.

The sources of domestic data were the reports of the National Institute of Statistics of Romania, and the sources of data referring to the European Union come from the data base of Food and Agricultural Organisation.

### Material and methods

The consumption is an expression of demand on the market of agricultural products. In Romania, statistical data show that the average yearly consumption of fruits is 32.46 kg per person, increasing in 2006 compared to 2005, when it was 30.72 kg. Apples and pears are the most consumed fruits, accounting for half of the fruits' consumption. Then, plums, apricots, peaches and nuts come with small quantities consumed.

Table 1 The average yearly consumption of fresh and processed fruits, in Romania, 2005- 2006

- Kg/person/year -

| Specification           | 2005   | 2006   |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|
| Total fruits, of which: | 30.72  | 32.46  |
| Apples and pears        | 15.672 | 14.568 |
| Apricots and peaches    | 1.056  | 1.296  |
| Plums                   | 1.152  | 1.32   |
| Nuts                    | 0.804  | 0.732  |

Source: calculation based on data from « Coordonate ale nivelului de trai în România. Veniturile și consumul populației în anul 2006 », National Institute of Statistics, 2007

The consumption of fruits varies on the professional statute. The employees consume larger quantities of fruits, 29 kg, compared to farmers, who consume 9 kg of fruits. But, statistics don't measure the self consumption, but the consumption expressed as demand on the market. This is the reason why the farmers' real consumption of fruits is not the lowest of all professional statute, as long as there are no data about self consumption. Apples and pears are bought in large quantities by all professionals. Thus, employees buy 10.4 kg, farmers buy 2.8 kg, unemployed persons buy 6.1 kg, retire men buy 9 kg, and company owners buy 6.2 kg of apples and pears.

Table 2 Purchased quantities of fresh and processed fruits, on professional statute, in 2006

- Kg/year/person -

| Specification        | Total  | Employee | Farmers | Unemployed | Retire men | Company owners |
|----------------------|--------|----------|---------|------------|------------|----------------|
| Total fruits, o.w.:  | 21.924 | 29.184   | 9.072   | 14.604     | 21.12      | 16.44          |
| Apples and pears     | 8.616  | 10.488   | 2.856   | 6.12       | 9.096      | 6.288          |
| Apricots and peaches | 0.972  | 1.428    | 0.12    | 0.468      | 0.852      | 0.648          |
| Plums                | 0.756  | 0.828    | 0.312   | 0.588      | 0.912      | 0.456          |
| Nuts                 | 0.192  | 0.216    | 0.024   | 0.048      | 0.252      | 0.096          |

Source: calculation based on data from « Coordonate ale nivelului de trai în România. Veniturile și consumul populației în anul 2006 », National Institute of Statistics, 2007

Figure 1 Average consumption of fruits by categories of households, year 2007 (kg/month/person)



Source: Veniturile și consumul populației în anul 2007, National Institute of Statistics, 2008

In 2007, the fruits were bought mostly in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> trimesters of the year, when they are available fresh as an output of the local production. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimesters, fruits on the market are usually imported, and the quantities purchased decrease in this period, because the prices of imported fruits are higher than domestic ones.

In those regarding the quantities consumed, employees buy less than they consume – 14 kg compared to 11 kg. Farmers buy less than they consume – 4.5 kg compared to 9 kg. Unemployed persons buy 6 kg, less than they consume – 9 kg. Retire men buy less than 9 kg, compared to 12 kg that they consume.

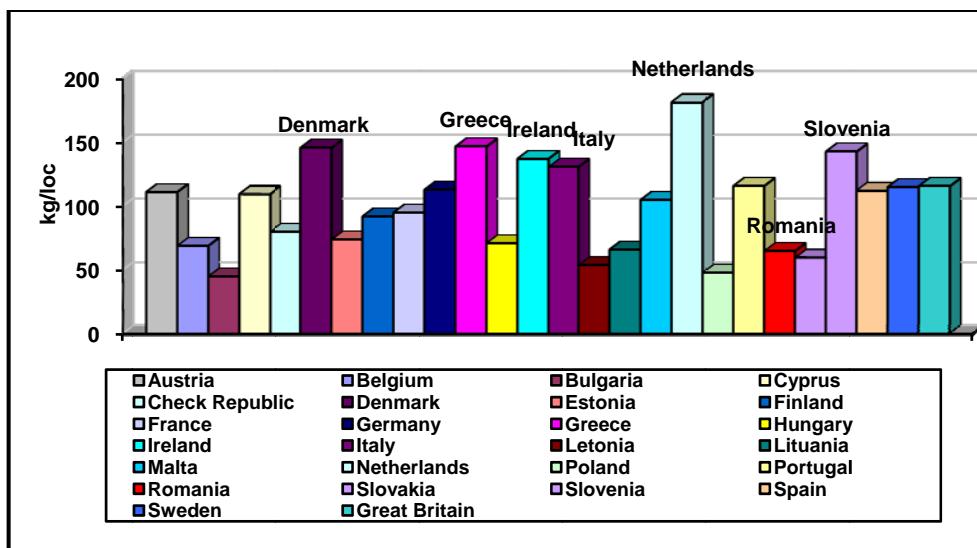
Figure 2 Purchased quantities of fresh and processed fruits, by categories of households (Kg/month/prs.)



Source: Veniturile și consumul populației în anul 2007, National Institute of Statistics, 2008

In the European Union, the countries with highest consumption of fruits are the Netherlands (182 kg), Denmark (149 kg), Greece (148 kg), Slovenia (147 kg), Ireland (146 kg), and Italy (145 kg).

Figure 3 Consumption of fruits per person, in EU, in 2006 (kg/person)



Source: Food and Agriculture Organisation

### Results and discussions

On average, Romanians buy 22 kg of fruits per year, of which: 8.616 kg of apples and pears, 0.972 kg of peaches and apricots, 0.756 kg of plums, and 0.192 kg of nuts. The employees buy the largest quantities of fruits, among all the other categories of professionals. Farmers buy low quantities, because they consume fruits from their own household. Unemployed people buy low quantities as well because they have small income and prices for fruits are high (Table 2).

As can be noticed, the purchasing of fruits depends on professional statute. The employees, pensioners, and owners of companies buy larger quantities of fruits than farmers, because the latter consume part of their own production of fruits. Self consumption is a particularity of family farms and data about it are not provided by statistics. Generally, the main destination of the output of farms is self consumption within the household and only after this consumption is assured, the surplus is marketed.

The consumption of fruits was highest for employees, in 2007, with an average of 14 kg/month. Then, pensioners consume 12.4 kg and unemployed people and farmers consume almost 9 kg/month (Figure 1). There are differences between the consumption of fruits (Figure 1) and the quantities of fruits purchased (Figure 2).

In European Union countries, the consumption of fruits increased from 109.7 kg/capita in 2001 to 117.3 kg/capita in 2006. The largest consumers of fruits are in Netherlands with 182 kg/capita and the smallest are in Bulgaria with 45 kg/capita. In Romania, the consumption of fruits was 83.2 kg/capita, as seen in Figure 3.

### Conclusions

The results show that the consumption of fruits decreased in the last years. Romania is not one of the larger consumers of **vegetables** among European Union countries.

Another conclusion is that differences result between the quantities purchased, which are lower, and the quantities effectively consumed, which are higher. The gaps are even larger in the case of farmers. The explanation is that not all the amount of fruits is ensured from the market, but by self production in family farms, in the case of farmers and by relatives from country side, in the case of other professional categories.

Employees and pensioners buy larger quantities of fruits than farmers and company owners. The first reason is that farmers produce part of the products in

their own farms. The second reason is that company owners, who have higher income, have a pattern of consumption based on products with high added value - meat and meat products, dairies, etc. and less on products with lower prices, like fruits.

This situation in which agriculture is based mostly on self consumption creates difficulties in designing profitable chains, because the quantities of output marketable are very low. The solution is to change the destination of the production from self consumption to the market and to create, like this, the premises of increasing the quantities of products on the market and of increasing the competition.

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Примљено: 21.02.2009.

Одобрено: 26.06.2009.

УДК: 635.1/8+634.1:330.567.2(498)

## **ПОТРОШЊА ВОЋА У РУМУНИЈИ**

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### **Резиме**

У овом раду приказана је детаљна анализа потрошње воћа у Румунији. Анализирана је потрошња за различите врсте воћа и различите категорије домаћинства.

Резултати показују да је потрошња воћа повећана у 2005. години, а од тада опада. Потрошња је већа од нивоа потрошње препоручене од стране Светске здравствене организације, али је мања у односу на просек на нивоу Европске уније. Румунија је један од највећих потрошача воћа међу земљама ЕУ.

Такође, постоје разлике у набављеним количинама, које су мање, и количинама које се ефективно користе, које су веће, што значи да нису све количине воћа осигуране са тржишта већ самосталном производњом на породичним газдинствима.

**Кључне речи:** воће, потрошња

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