

MARKETING FOR FOOD PRODUCTION AND TRADING IN ROMANIA IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN LEGISLATION.

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Abstract: *The regulation of the activities regarding the food production and trading, as well as the supervision of the food official control and the protection of consumers from unfair practices represent a pivotal area in defining the reference frame for the Romanian economic agents. Still, the food that is produced within individual farms for personal consumption, similarly with the food transiting or temporarily stored on the Romanian territory, do not fall into any prescriptions. Therefore, the paper aims to present the evolution of Romania in this area, in the light of EU requirements.*

Key words: *marketing, safety, goods, development*

1. INTRODUCTION

Food production involves compliance with certain terms, as follows: locating the food-producing units in such a way that they will provide the conditions claimed by the relevant departments (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development); the food manufacturing, storage and transport will observe the technological, hygiene sanitary and sanitary-veterinary norms, which will meet the requirements of food public health, food hygiene and quality; the staff used during these activities has to obey certain health criteria, decreed by the health minister, and they also must have the required training for their position; the food needs to have a content that will provide for both its quality and the consumers' health and has to meet all the hygiene norms stipulated in the current legislation from Romania and the European Union.

A special category includes the food that is meant for certain nutritional special requirements (the nutritional supplements, the fortified food) that are not harmful for the public health. The consumers are given detailed information about their properties and characteristics, as well as the trading terms for such products.

2. PAPER DATA

Food producers are bound to comply with the parameters concerning the organoleptic, physical, chemical, microbiological and toxicological properties, to plan and implement the quality control for the food manufactured or handled in private or authorized labs (Boboc, 2005).

The food labeling has to provide the consumer with necessary, satisfying, easy to be checked and compared information, which will allow them to select the product that meets their exigencies and financial possibilities, to be aware of the risks they might be exposed to, so that they are not misled.

The information on the food labels should be written in Romanian, irrespective of the producing country, but it is not excluded to have it written in other languages (Anastase & Anastase, 2004). The print has to be visible, legible and marked in such a way that their removing by wiping is excluded.

Food may be traded only in spaces that are distinctively equipped and intended for this purpose, in proper hygiene conditions (Chiran, A. et al., 2002). The food to be traded needs to meet the below criteria:

- a) to hold itself in the approved maximum levels of physical, chemical, microbiological, toxicological and radioactive contamination, set up by special regulations of Romania and the European Union;
- b) to be produced in conformity with the legal stipulations, in order to protect the public health, the food hygiene and the product quality;
- c) to be packaged, labeled and marked in line with the specific regulations, and the labels marking should be visible, legible and accurate.

It is forbidden the trading of food that: is not accompanied by supporting documents that attest the origin, provenance and safety; affects the consumers' health by selling certain products or elements and pretending they are foodstuffs; is handled and traded in improper hygiene conditions, which jeopardize the consumers' health.

For the purpose of protecting the consumers from the unfair practices and to correctly inform them, the competent bodies track down and pay a great attention to the following:

- a) information on the food nature, content, origin, producer or the retailer;
- b) the circumstances regarding the food packaging, labeling, marking and storage up to the end consumer;
- c) sanctioning the sale of food under certain names, as well as forbidding the advertising for products that use confusing, deceptive graphical presentations or messages;
- d) interdicting the sale of food that contains non-alimentary ingredients or objects, unless they are really necessary for the food processing, handling or consumption;
- e) forbidding the sale of certain food products as prescription medicines.

Between 2005 and 2008, a financial aid of 121.8 mil lei was granted to the agriculture producers in the vegetal sector, so that they get support for purchasing seeds and sapling – officially certified and from the internal production – in order to help increase the competitiveness of the agriculture producers and production to match the European criteria (for rice, linen, hempseed for fiber, fodder plants, tree sapling, potatoes).

The farmers' stockyards have also been financially assisted by subventions offered for the enhanced genetics material. The program of financial aid for frozen seminal material and liquid nitrogen has helped a number of 137 beneficiaries with an amount of 9 mil lei (<http://www.anpc.gov.ro>).

The competent organisms have taken the appropriate measures to grant subventions to the agriculture producers in the animal and fish breeding sectors and subsidies for the programs of preserving and using the animal genetics resources in a critical condition, as extinct species and vulnerable (Stanciu, I., 2003). During the 2005-2007 windows, the amount of 7.7 mil lei has been offered for financing the above.

In 2008, the actions concerning the animal population enhancement, improvement of products quality (meat, milk, eggs, honey) were substantiated, steps were made for producing and trading the honey-based products and community aid was offered to the silk worms' breeders in the fall of 2007.

The assortment of processed products branched out in 2007 and, in comparison to the preceding years, the following

products were obtained: soy-based products (milk and tofu), varied assortments of bread, pasta, rice-based products, cereal flakes, teas from forest plants and flowers, apple juice, honey-based products (wax, propolis, pollen). Similarly, an increase of the milk-based processed products was noticed (1.68% in 2006 compared to 2005), as well as the doubling of the ecological honey production, namely 1,242 tons in 2006 versus 610 in the year of 2005.

The market standards in the fruits and vegetables sector have targeted the drafting and publication of an order regarding the certification of the producers' organizations and groups, previously acknowledged in this sector. The economic and social impact of this form of financial assistance has aimed the granting of a percentage aid of the traded production to the already certified groups or organization of producers, upon their presentation of approved operational development plans (Oprean, Kifor & Suci, 2005). As for the market norms in the sector of pork meat, of bovine, sheep-goat, many meetings with the economic agents have occurred, when they were informed about how to access such norms.

The amount increase of subventions and their distribution in accordance with the European Union procedures has stimulated the use of the selected seeds; the use of enhanced genetic material, which benefit approximately 50% of the bovine breeders; the quality of the genetic material in the zootechnics has improved; the poor production cultures, ecological agriculture, national production meant for trading, have been encouraged. The state budget has supported the private forest arrangement – currently, there are 118 private structures, and authorized to manage an area of over 1,1 mil has of forest, private and local public property.

The guidelines set up in Romania for the 2009-2012 intervals are as follows (<http://www.gov.ro>):

1. The provision of the food safety in the country by means of agriculture production increase and diversification by:

- The stimulation of the voluntary merging for agriculture lands and their efficient exploitation.
- The specialization of the agriculture production and the implementation of differentiated policies in terms of farm types and favorable regions.
- The broadening of the support required for building modern commercial farms and competitive food industry units.
- The promotion of products that is greater in productivity and quality, as a result of biotechnologies.
- The progressive re-assessment of the zootechnics percentage in the total of agriculture production, fruit, vegetables breeding and viticulture – sectors that are still lagging behind the others.
- The stimulation of the integrated agricultural production for its superior capitalization.
- The farmers' preference towards the meat production, where no milk quota is distributed.
- The constant stimulation of the ecological production.
- The mandatory sanitary-veterinary and phyto-sanitary controls, in compliance with the regulations agreed upon by the corresponding authorities in the European Union.

2. The increase of the agro-alimentary products exports and the balance of the agricultural trade by:

- The maintenance of the financial aid to support and promote the Romanian brands.
- The extension of the support measures of marketing policies adopted by the local producers for the external markets.
- The development of computer-based systems regarding the international market, available to the Romanian producers.
- The permanent backing towards the association of the local entrepreneurs and their alliance with structures from outside the country.
- The support given for opening units of food processing.

3. The financial and fiscal support of agriculture by multi-annual programs and budgets, by means of:

- Promoting policies for production incentives for total or partial market.

- Offering subsidies for the selected seeds, of the sapling and of the enhanced seminal genetics material.
- The implementation of effective financing plans for agriculture, in order to have a complete absorption of the available European funds.
- Granting free consultancy with the purpose of association into competitive commercial farms and projects accomplishment.
- Granting financial aid for the improvement of the genetic material quality that is used for reproduction in zootechnics.
- Planning an effective system of reimbursement in agriculture.

4. Turning the agricultural and food processing structures more efficient by means of:

- Supporting certain programs like life annuity and the doubling of the current quantum for the people leasing the lands or transfer of title and possession of real property.
- Consolidating the agricultural and food processing markets and eliminating their disparities by:
 - measures for stimulating the markets organization;
 - trade stimulation by the grain stock market and the regulation in the area of storage certification.
- Defining and approving the measures aiming to consolidate the land market and changing the land into a value-attached commodity by:
 - the introduction of the unitary cadastre, state-funded;
 - the registration of all the agricultural and forest areas, including the ones derived from severalty.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The accession to the European Union has meant the shift to a new stage in the evolution of consumers' protection, defined by the progressive adoption of a novel vision upon the consumer-market relation, within the context of the local market. To this purpose, Romania has, since 2007, made a move from the stage of adopting the community acquis to the ones of its production. Therefore, the representatives of the National Agency for Consumer Protection (ANPC) are actively involved in the work groups on consumer protection issues of the European Commission and European Council.

Likewise, ANPC has initiated actions of regular and unexpected control. It gives penalties for breaking the rules, it actively takes part in finding and notifying (through a computer-based system) about the life-threatening products on the Romanian products, it performs a permanent activity of informing the consumers, including the annual national campaigns seeking the consumers information and education.

A new point in achieving a better protection of the consumers targets the strengthening the partnership with the civil society and the business environment, by actions of tripartite public-private partnership (County Offices for Consumer Protection, the consumers – business environment associations), for a better understanding and knowledge of the issues that the consumers have to stand up to and, implicitly, to achieve a more valid protection for them.

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