TRENDS & CONSTRAINTS IN VEGETABLE PRODUCTION IN ALBANIA

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30 thousand Ha of vegetable crops grown annually, around 700 thousand tones of fresh vegetables.

800 ha of greenhouse, mostly non-heated, simple structures.
Dry and hot summers, mean temperature of 26 °C and mean humidity of 60% in July and August.

Cool and wet winters with mean temperatures in December and January of 11.8°C and 9.8°C.

900-1400 mm average annual rainfall.

900-1000 sunshine hours during the October-March period.
OPEN FIELD VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

• Trends;
  • Extensive use of hybrid seeds and plugged seedlings.
  • Increased use of drip irrigation and fertigation.

• Concerns;
  • Variable quality and unsafe supply to fresh market.
  • Short in time and limited supply, high production cost to processing industry.
LOW COST GREENHOUSES

- **Trends;**
  - Improvement of construction parameters (gutter height up to 2.5 m and span length up to 5 m).
  - Two and even three plantings per year. The average yield of the first season is 80–100 ton/ha tomatoes and 80–120 ton/ha in cucumber. Less yield is usually harvested from the second season.

- **Constraints;**
  - Pest control based on high frequency of chemical applications.
  - Misbalanced fertilizer practices.
HIGH COST GREENHOUSES

- Well equipped with computerized microclimate control systems. The current yields are 140-160 ton/ha in the first season and 100-120 ton/ha in the second season.

- The absence of adequate light intensity is the most restrictive factor for winter cultivation, while high air temperatures of summer's time negatively affects plant life's length and productivity.
OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

- growing vegetable consumption as part of the Albanian menu;
- despite the increase of domestic production, there is still a deficit on market demands;
- local products are preferred compared to imported ones;
- profit margins are relatively high;
- improved road structure and enlarged storage and cooling capacities.
PRODUCTION TRENDS (FRESH VEGETABLES)

• Albania will continue to import fresh vegetables in early spring and winter months.

• Albania will be able to stop the (limited) imports in other months in the near future.

• As local markets get saturated, export to Balkan countries is an opportunity, mostly in early spring and late autumn.
MAIN GOALS OF VEGETABLE INDUSTRY

• The continuous supply of local market demands with good quality fresh vegetable products, parallel with the reduction of cost production.

• The enhance of Albanian agricultural presence in regional markets, through empowering agriculture’s competitiveness.
MAIN OBJECTIVES OF VEGETABLE INDUSTRY

a. Increase crop yield.

- Increasing production rate.
- Improving the coefficient's of greenhouse use.
- Extending the area grown in simple small tunnels.
MAIN OBJECTIVES OF VEGETABLE INDUSTRY

b. Prolong the harvest season.

- Better use of geographical and (micro) climatic variation.
- Improving the microclimate control in greenhouses.
- Improving the earliness.
c. Improve crop management practices.

• Improving fruit setting practices.
• Expanding grafted seedling use.
• Promoting soil less growing techniques.
COMMON TRENDS IN VEGETABLE FERTILIZATION

- Fertilization through irrigation.
- High frequency of fertigations.
- Compounded, highly soluble fertilizers.
- Fertilizer’s choice and standard dosage based on crop phenological stage.
- Increasing use of additive elements (amino acids, humic acids, plant growth regulators, etc.)
COMMON CONCERNS IN VEGETABLE FERTILIZATION

• Still an “unknown” space, non appropriate/mostly empirical farmer’s know how’s on plant nutrition.

• Non appropriate supporting services (research, extension service, etc.)

• Nutrient misbalances and (frequently) fertilizer’s overdoses.

• Low efficiency of fertilizer’s use.

• Quick increase of soil salinity.
COMMON NEEDS IN VEGETABLE FERTILIZATION

• Appropriate determination of plant' demands under specific country climatic conditions and current growing practices.

• “Personalized” guides for plant nutrition, according to specific crop and growing conditions.

• Introduction/adoption of quick tests/methods for soil fertility and plant nutrient status determination (leaf analyses).
Welcome

We are proud to announce the organization of Vth Balkan Symposium on Vegetables and Potatoes, an international Symposium on horticultural sciences under the patronage of the ISHS and Agricultural University of Tirana.

The aims of the symposium are the transfer of knowledge and the discussion of the main aspects of vegetable and potatoes production on a regional and European scale, and the highlight of current research work that targets increased productivity in harmony with agronomic, environmental and socio-economic sustainability.

The scientific program will be rich and diverse and we hope that it will enjoy the specific interests of a large number of participants. The symposium will be an opportunity to discuss about the dynamic and innovative horticultural developments in Balkan region and worldwide. It will also be a good opportunity for building beneficial relations among scientists, technicians,

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