

## THE EVOLUTION OF ROMANIAN PORK MEAT CONSUMPTION IN THE GLOBALISATION CONTEXT

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### Abstract

*Characterized by the grow of food diversity and globalization, the last decade brings considerable increases in the consumption of imported meat, especially pork, while the Romanian herd of swine records losses due to excessive price volatility and insufficient financial support of producers. The last few years brings to this sector, not at all attractive to foreign investors on the brink of collapse, due to huge differences between import and export. The present paper aims to analyze the latest trends related to the consumption of swine meat that has been manifested in Romania during the last years marked by major imbalances found in the country regarding the commercial balance. The statistical data provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization will be used to disseminate information through quantitative methods such as data analysis. The growing trend that still manifests the consumption of pork meat makes it to remain a basic food, which can provide a sufficient level of nutrients for a diet rich in protein.*

**Keywords:** Consumption, Swine Production, Commercial Balance

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### Introduction

Livestock raising on the Romanian territory has been and will be a first-rate activity in providing the agri-food commodities needed for the food of the population, the food processing industry, as well as for participating in international trade. Particularly favorable natural conditions, soil and climate, long tradition in swine sector, as well as the quality of scientific research and zootechnical education, are important factors that underpin the development of zootechnics, increasing performance and competitiveness. Obviously, due to the changes and deficiencies of unwanted events, such as wars, economic crises, some natural calamities or even some errors, during certain periods of the strategy of economic development, this sector could not escape either.

As a result, there have been periods, shorter or longer, when there have been decreases in the number of animals and decreases in the agricultural production. However, each time, there were periods of recovery, which is proof that Romania is a country of raising animals by family farms.

In Romania, almost all species of farm animals have grown and grown, with the possibility of ensuring the whole assortment of agri-food products of animal origin.

At the same time, large areas of natural and cultivated meadows, as well as the great potential in terms of cereals and vegetables production, can create significant availability of products of animal origin for export, obtained under ecological conditions.

The fundamental transformations that took place after 1989, with all the drastic decrease of the animal herds and, consequently, of the obtained productions, phenomena encountered in all the former socialist countries, created the premises of new orientations in the practice of animal breeding, which will materialize in shows. quantitative and qualitative techniques, as well as economic efficiency within the European and global community.

Animal breeding technology and obtaining animal products is the scientific field that deals with researching the biological and productive particularities of domestic animals, birds, bees and fish to efficiently use them to obtain animal products, elaborated breeding methods. The importance of the scientific and technological problems of the specialty nominated for the national economy is in increasing the production of animal products, improving the quality, reducing the costs per unit of production obtained.

The present paper is used a data analysis as the research method to reach the final objective regarding the analysis of the tendency of pork consumption in Romania in the last decade. Swine growth sector in Romania pork meat.

#### *Importance*

Breeding pigs is a traditional activity and product of great importance for the consumption of the entire population. The level of consumption of pork/inhabitant is in direct correlation with meat production and the purchasing power of the consumer.

The objectives are:

- Promote the activity of improving the pig herds in the direction of the qualitative improvement of the pig carcass.
- Stimulating the organization of the operations in the associations, to represent the interests of the input suppliers and the beneficiaries of the finished products.
- Ensure own revenues by capitalizing on the production of goods for export.

#### *Program for supporting pork:*

- Improvement of the pig herds for the qualitative improvements of the pig carcass.
- Stimulating the organization of competitive and efficient farms in the rural area.
- Improvement of the dimensional structure of the livestock farms.
- Increase their incomes of pig farmers.
- Switching from production for self-consumption to commercial production.

Objectives for rehabilitation and recovery in the medium and long term

- Aligning with the EU standards regarding the way of granting the subsidies to balance the price of valorisation at the producer with the expenses incurred on the product.
- The pork sector is regulated in the EU by the EEC Regulation no. 2759/1975 regarding the common organization of the market in the pork sector.

#### *Presentation of the sector*

The natural, economic-social conditions and last but not least the tradition, are favourable for the development of the pig breeding sector on the breeding, slaughtering and meat processing sector, which will ensure at optimum levels, both the consumption needs of the population and the creation of availability. for international trade.

Respecting the quality standards and the sanitary regulations is another important direction in the process of harmonization with the Community norms. The knowledge and application

of such provisions by farmers are vital for at least two reasons. On the one hand, they constitute a condition for access to community support mechanisms (the principle of conditionality). On the other hand, the non-observance of the standards by the producers leads to the impossibility of marketing agricultural products on the Community market. In recent years there has been an accelerated transposition of the *acquis* in the qualitative, sanitary and phytosanitary field. However, this pace raises several problems for both farmers and processors.

Most of the vital measures for the restructuring of the agricultural sector fall within the framework of the Community policy, within the rural development component. This important component of the CAP policy also implies a national contribution to supplement the Community budget. Initially, this national contribution was 50% of the total value of the project to be financed.

### The main economic indicators on the evolution of the growth of pigs in Romania

**Table 1. Pig heads and production in Romania**

Element	UNIT	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Total pig heads</b>	thousand head	5041788	4926928	4707719	4406014	3925283
<b>Total production of live meat</b>	tons	459756	470055	500777	451940	0

*Source: <http://www.fao.org/statistics/databases/en/>*

Simply analyzing this table shows a significant decrease in herds, live meat production and average weight at slaughter. There were some periods of increase in numbers until 2007 followed by a continuous decrease.

Meat consumption in Romania increased in 2013-2017, as this is an important element in the human diet due to its high content in protein and mineral substances beneficial for the proper functioning of the human body. This is necessary to ensure the proper safety of the quality of meat on the market in order to meet consumer requirements. For pig meat and poultry, quality is an important factor in the consumer's purchase decision.

**Table 2. Average annual consumption (kilograms / per inhabitant)**

Main food products	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Meat and meat products in fresh meat equivalent	29	31,3	32,9	36,1	38,3

*Source: [www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro)*

From the analysis of the table above, we can see that pork takes the first position in consumer preferences towards meat, followed by poultry meat. The highest value in pig meat was recorded in 2018, amounting to 38.3 kilograms per capita. The value increased by 24% compared to 2014 in which the value was 29 kilograms.

Sheep and goat meat recorded the lowest values in 2013, which was 2.4 kilograms in 2013, and in 2017, it was to decrease to 2.3 kilograms.

**Table 3. Average monthly consumption by social category (kilograms)**

Main foods of human consumption	Main social categories	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Meat preparations	Employees	1,101	1,101	1,134	1,139	1,205
-	Farmers	0,896	0,902	0,988	1,005	1,099
-	Unemployed	0,828	0,915	0,924	1	1,017
-	Pensioners	1,033	1,037	1,13	1,153	1,248

Source: [www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro)

The analysis of the above table shows that mainly pork is consumed more than by employees, which in 2013 the value was 1,114 kilograms, and in 2017 it will increase by 17% to 1,304 kilograms. The following pork consumed are pensioners, who recorded 0.974 kilograms in 2013, and in 2017 recorded 1,312 kilograms, respectively this value increased by about 35% from 2013 to 2017.

Poultry meat is consumed by all social categories in approximately equal quantities. Pensioners are the most who consume poultry meat, who recorded 1,685 kilograms in 2013, and in 2017 they will increase by 4% to 1.76 kilograms.

After pensioners poultry meat is consumed by employees, who recorded 1,517 in 2013, and in 2017 will decrease by 3% to 1,519 kilograms.

#### Commercial balance

**Table 4. Quantity of imported meat**

Partner Countries	2014	2015	2016	2017
Austria	3379	3110	3115	2685
Belgium	6985	7724	4461	6133
Bulgaria	386	23	99	29
China, mainland	0	0	0	108
Croatia	0	20	0	0
Cyprus	181	360	497	729
Czech Republic	0	0	15	42
Denmark	1839	2791	885	1061
Estonia	404	949	887	1144
Finland	0	63	21	0
France	4733	2725	1524	2330
Germany	28248	26688	21820	20045
Greece	40	44	56	90
Hungary	13084	10472	8567	14094
Ireland	184	78	268	254
Italy	2272	2364	3593	3074
Latvia	0	0	11	0
Lithuania	0	78	0	0
Netherlands	11528	11416	7019	11282
Poland	6770	9482	7649	12758
Portugal	1	1	64	2
Spain	8403	9885	16481	16927
United Kingdom	486	619	660	601
<b>Total</b>	<b>88923</b>	<b>88892</b>	<b>77692</b>	<b>93388</b>

Source: <http://www.fao.org/statistics/databases/en/>

**Table 5. Quantity of exported meat**

Partner Countries	2014	2015	2016	2017
Austria	51	13	22	0
Belgium	61	1	308	777
Bosnia and Herzegovina	432	429	2231	206
Bulgaria	2992	1116	180	3777
China, Hong Kong SAR	237	78	9378	653
China, mainland	676	1100	61	8491
Croatia	22	8	79	131
Cyprus	5	104	19	297
Czechia	15	72	38	40
Denmark	13	23	227	27
Estonia	2	6	0	0
France	285	236	233	77
Germany	247	491	755	72
Greece	1108	1019	2712	2178
Hungary	1562	1315	219	1960
Ireland	689	408	214	60
Italy	662	139	448	464
Montenegro	316	396	36	646
Netherlands	39	493	10	6
Poland	63	32	156	20
Republic of Moldova	89	2	38	1096
Serbia	182	18	21	0
Slovakia	23	41	1391	21
Spain	151	657	11	1067
United Kingdom	22	133	436	567
<b>Total</b>	9944	8330	19223	22633

Source: <http://www.fao.org/statistics/databases/en/>

**Table 6. Trade balance**

Partner Countries	2014	2015	2016	2017
Austria	-3328	-3097	-3093	-2685
Belgium	-6924	-7723	-4153	-5356
Bosnia and Herzegovina	432	429	2231	206
Bulgaria	2606	1093	81	3748

China, Hong Kong SAR	237	78	9378	653
China, mainland	676	1100	61	8383
Croatia	22	-12	79	131
Cyprus	-176	-256	-478	-432
Czechia	15	72	23	-2
Denmark	-1826	-2768	-658	-1034
Estonia	-402	-943	-887	-1144
Finland	0	-63	-21	0
France	-4448	-2489	-1291	-2253
Germany	-28001	-26197	-21065	-19973
Greece	1068	975	2656	2088
Hungary	-11522	-9157	-8348	-12134
Ireland	505	330	-54	-194
Italy	-1610	-2225	-3145	-2610
Latvia	0	0	-11	0
Lithuania	0	-78	0	0
Montenegro	316	396	36	646
Netherlands	-11489	-10923	-7009	-11276
Poland	-6707	-9450	-7493	-12738
Portugal	-1	-1	-64	-2
Republic of Moldova	89	2	38	1096
Serbia	182	18	21	0
Slovakia	23	41	1391	21
Spain	-8252	-9228	-16470	-15860
United Kingdom	-464	-486	-224	-34
<b>Total</b>	<b>-78979</b>	<b>-80562</b>	<b>-58469</b>	<b>-70755</b>

Source: <http://www.fao.org/statistics/databases/en/>

### SWOT analysis of the pork sector

Swot analysis helps us define the requirements and directions for the future development of the pig meat sector, in order to cope with the problems already in place. Meat production in our country faces a number of negative herds generated by the macroeconomic environment in Romania. Consumer incomes are relatively low, leading to a low purchasing power of buyers. Therefore, a significant part of the consumer audience, therefore, very low expectations regarding the products.

### **Strengths**

- strong tradition for eating meat;
- integrated manufacturers of large scale;
- availability of high quality genetic material for large-scale manufacturers;
- retail outlets are represented by a large network of small stores that provide good access to consumers;
- integrated form of processors with manufacturers;
- large carlet production/processing units that provide the largest amount of market supply.

### **Weaknesses**

- low quality level of genetic material produced in the country for small manufacturers;
- low level of workers' training in agriculture, a lack of available capital, but also a distrust that has manifested itself in certain offers of funds;
- lack of alternative markets;
- disposal in supermarkets for which the required terms and conditions are still very difficult;
- street markets in which the quantity and quality of products from the production households is uncertain.

### **Opportunities**

- the development of retail markets through which meat markets can expand;
- market development for alternative meat products;
- developing the market for chilled products;
- increasing technical performance through training.

### **Threats**

- the development of retail markets reduces the price;
- the introduction of EU standards required major investments;
- bio-security compromised among household numbers that threaten national numbers;
- still high volume of low-priced imports that threaten the sustainability of livestock farmers and integrated processors.

### **Conclusions**

From a food point of view, the pig offers the most consumed meat in the world. Historians believe that people in southern China were the first to domesticate wild pigs 10,000 years ago. Today, China is the largest producer, consumer and importer of pork in the world. The Spaniards, along with the Poles, Germans and Austrians, are Europe's gourmets in terms of pork consumption.

Pork preparations registered an increase in market value throughout the European Union in 2017, and sales of fresh pork also showed signs of improvement, but only in Southern Europe, according to the latest analysis of the Agriculture Council. and Horticultural Development (AHDB).

AHDB analyst Bethan Wilkins says fresh pork markets in Spain and Italy have increased in value last year. In Spain, sales volumes were largely stable, and the increase in value was based on a 3% increase in average retail prices. In Italy, the increase of the market value was influenced both by the increase of the prices, as well as by the increase of the volume of sales, is shown in the analysis taken by euomeatnews.com.

In Germany and France, sales of fresh pork have decreased both in volume and in value. In Germany, as the AHDB analyst explained, the volume of sales was particularly high, increasing by 6% from year to year. AHDB analyst says the decline may be due to increasing popularity among German beef consumers. In beef was reported a 10% increase in sales volumes in 2017 compared to the previous year. However, "unlike pork, beef prices were slightly lower in 2017, and improving the relative competitiveness of beef prices could have contributed to sales," concluded Bethan Wilkins.

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