

## Limiting Factors of Fruit Export of the Republic of Serbia

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### Abstract

*Fruit and fruit products have a predominant place in the structure of agricultural and food products export in Serbia. This paper analyzes the main limiting factors and the main obstacles for more dynamic export of Serbian fruit and fruit products. The following factors appear to be the leading ones: inadequate varieties and quality of planting material, insufficient knowledge about foreign markets and lack of knowledge about new production technologies aimed at prolonging the production season. There's an absence of stable and long-term relationships with export customers due to lack of export association that would establish these relationships and create demand for Serbian products. The strategic goal of Republic of Serbia should be a high-quality fresh fruit production and increasing the competitiveness in the international market. The marketing concept of business undertakings should be given prominent place in the creating of concept of production, processing and export, as to meet the needs of foreign markets and achieve an appropriate profit.*

**Keywords:** *export, fruit, fruit products, Republic of Serbia*

**JEL Classification:** *Q13, Q17*

### Introduction. The Aim of the Research

Export of fruit and fruit products represents an important basis for an increase in total domestic production and intensifying of this agricultural branch. Fruit and fruit products have the largest share in the structure of total exports of agricultural products. The research aim of this paper is to review the main limiting factors affecting the fruit and fruit products export in the Republic of Serbia. The research period encompasses 2001 to 2009. This paper aims to point out the basic problems that accompany fruit and fruit products export, which are associated with the production and processing of fruit. And based on the analysis of factual conditions, to give suggestions of necessary measures that will influence the increase of fruit export volume, and thus the possible directions of development of this important branch of agriculture in the Republic of Serbia.

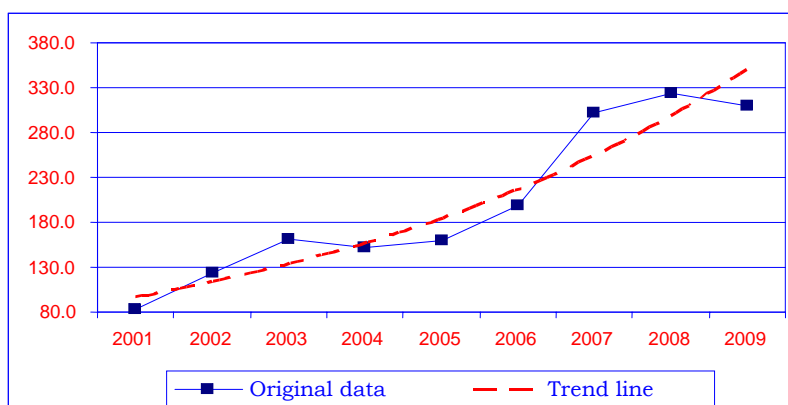
## Data Sources and Research Methodology

Basic data were taken from the Republic Institute for Statistics, Belgrade. For the empirical part the survey method was chosen. In marketing research, the basic goal of any survey is to provide the needed information with the required reliability at minimum cost. The research sample was defined in accordance with the specific research problems and defined research objective. 53 business entities were included by our survey method. The total number of respondents was divided into three sub-samples related to; 20 producers (whose main activity is fruit production), 20 entities for industrial fruit processing and 13 business subjects engaged in fruit and fruit products export. The research was conducted during 2011. The survey lasted 30 days and was carried out by the authors of this paper. The research is based on the so-called “*field research*”, with the use of standard statistical and mathematical methods. The intensity of movement of changes was quantified by calculating the change rate by applying the functions with the trend lines most fitted to the original data. The export stability was calculated using the coefficient of variation.

## The Research Results

### Fruit and Fruit Products Export

Fruit and fruit products export from the Republic of Serbia for the studied period, in average amounts over \$200 million and it significantly increases per year at the rate of 17.46%. Variation is significant and is equal to 43.78% per year, which indicates the instability of exports (Figure 1). The favorable results of Serbia's foreign trade of fruit and fruit products have been achieved thanks to preferential status on the markets of European Union countries, achieved liberalization in trade with the Western Balkans countries (CEFTA) and favorable market conditions that are taking place in the world market<sup>1</sup>.



**Fig. 1.** Trends of fruit and fruit products export of the Republic of Serbia (2001-2009), millions of dollars

In the structure of realized fruit and fruit products export value, fruit products have far more significant share (85%) compared to the value of fresh fruit export (15%). The amount of 111 thousand tons of fruit is exported from the Republic of Serbia, with a tendency of moderate growth rate of 2.66% per year, with the variation of 13.1%. The largest share in the structure of export has frozen raspberry with over 75 thousand tons (66%). However, raspberry export records a slight decline at a rate of 0.65% per year. Second place belongs to frozen cherry with a

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.akter.co.rs/ekonomijaprint/3286-izvoznik-hrane-postaje-zavisano-od-uvoza.html>

share of 19.5%. Important export products are also an apple juice, prune, jam and frozen strawberry. Small share of export goes on frozen apricot and peach, sweet cherry, temporary preserved raspberry, temporary preserved and dried apple, canned pear, preserved strawberry, dried apricots and the like.

Fresh fruit export is characterized by pronounced variation ( $CV = 63\%$ ). It points to the significant influence of climatic factors on the amount of realized yield and total production. This translates to the amount of fruit available for export and generating the revenue on that basis. Apple is the leading fruit species in fresh fruit export from the Republic of Serbia. Its share in the structure of total export amounts nearly 40%, or approximately 25 thousand tons per year with a significant trend of export growth rate of 62.65% per year. Second place holds a plum (23%), followed by sweet and sour cherry with 13%, raspberry (12%), peaches and nectarines (10%), while apricot, pear and quince, strawberry and walnut account for just over 3% in total fresh fruit export. One of the main problems is that in our country there are relatively few "real" market producers with significant production. It is mainly the companies that produce relatively small amounts of fruit for their own use and retail (market). Without major manufacturers, with a larger and continuous production, with emphasis on high quality, one cannot expect serious fresh fruit export.

The realized export performance was influenced by indigenous factors: the extent and quality of production, chronic lack of funds, undefined relations in the reproduction chain, a numerous problems associated with the purchase of fruit and the like. In addition to the above mentioned, there was also a influence of external factors, primarily, measures of agrarian protectionism, which include economic policy and regime with numerous tools (customs tariffs, bans, quotas, subventions and other measures) for protecting the market of developed countries<sup>2</sup>.

In 2007 the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) was signed and also an Interim Trade Agreement (ITA) as part of the SAA, which regulates issues of mutual trade. Agreements have been signed in 2008 in Brussels. National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia in 2008 ratified both of the agreements. As of February 1st 2009 Serbia has unilaterally enforced the interim trade agreement. In 2009, The Council of the European Union made a decision that European Union on a temporary basis will start with bidirectional enforcement of the ITA, and ITA has officially entered into force on February 1st 2010, while the ratification of the Stabilization and Association Agreement in the EU Member States began by the half of 2010. The two most important obligations which Republic of Serbia agreed with by the signing the SAA and the ITA is to establish a zone of free trade and the harmonization of Serbian legislation with EU law. The agreement creates a free trade zone between Serbia and the EU in the interim period of six years. Serbia's obligation consists of gradual abolition of customs duties on imports of goods originating in the European Union in the interim period. On the other hand, the European Union with this agreement confirms free access to goods from Serbia to the EU market<sup>3</sup>.

Considering Article 11 in ITA, for fruit, for which the ad valorem and specific customs duties are defined by the EU's Common Customs Tariff, for the export from Serbia, from the day the Agreement went into force, specific customs tariff is applied, while the import on other tariff positions is available, with obeying the rigorous standards in the field of health security, traceability and quality. Serbia can offer a product that does not carry health risks, but the production is uncompetitive regarding price and quality. To make this change, it is essential that manufacturers raise yields, reduce costs and improve the quality and packaging of products. Serbian agricultural export potential for many years was based on fruit, more precisely on berrylike fruit, or even more precisely, on one product - raspberries. Berrylike fruit accounted

<sup>2</sup> Vlahović, B., Tomić, D. (2003): Raspberry Export from Serbia and Montenegro - Prospects for the Future, *Agricultural Economics*, No. 3, Belgrade (Izvoz maline iz Srbije i Crne Gore – izgledi za budućnost, *Ekonomika poljoprivrede*, broj 3, Beograd).

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.merr.gov.rs/sr/c/eu-efta/eu-efta/171>

for 63.7% in export, and only raspberry accounted for 57.8% of export value of this commodity group. Viewed by tariff positions, in addition to raspberry species Rolend, Griz and Bruh, bigger export was also noted for pitted Rolend cherry, and Rolend blackberry<sup>4</sup>.

As fruit production in Serbia is focused on the export, its liberalization will unambiguously have positive effect because it will initiate significant changes in the sector which will be reflected by increased competitiveness i.e. retention or conquering the new markets. Thus, liberalization could potentially improve fruit growing sector in Serbia. Such a scenario depends on the reform of the sectors which should be included: the advancement of knowledge, acceptance of new technologies, establishing a more efficient system of protection of intellectual property rights in order to facilitate the implementation of new varieties, organizing of producer groups (clusters) and uniting the offer, creating the conditions for the implementation of standards, investing in warehouses, cold storages and getting familiarized with the technology of fruit storing. Investments in processing capacities. Many manufacturers, which have not changed the fruit growing approach, will have to adapt to changes or move to another sector. The prices of fruit in Serbia are lower than prices in the EU, but are higher than prices in neighboring countries. Liberalization will not significantly affect prices, but consumers will get significantly better quality and more balanced supply for the same price<sup>5</sup>.

Engaging on the international market and sales of fruit from the Republic of Serbia are conditioned by many factors, such as quality, price, selection, competition, foreign exchange regime, as well as some quantitative and qualitative restrictions, and signed contracts. Fruit export from our country is not limited by quality, namely quality of our fruit (e.g. raspberry, plums etc.) is highly appreciated in the demanding European market. In the strategy of agricultural and food products export from the Republic of Serbia, fruit should have a dominant position. In the next period, some significant *changes* will happen in fruit sector, and they will include in particular<sup>6</sup>:

- Borders opening, through signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement and WTO membership, which causes even greater competition in the fruit market and the need to increase the price competitiveness of products;
- Increased requesting and demand for products that are competitive in quality, but where that quality is proven by certificate - integrated production, organic production, the protection of appellations of origin, protection of indications of origin or the like;
- More and more demanding standards in production and sale of fruit especially related to export (both to European Union and to other countries), but also on the domestic market. The increase in demands for traceability in production (register, plant passports, standards etc.);
- The increasing need for adopting new technologies in production because of rapid changes of technology and therefore there is a need to adopt new knowledge;
- Increased investment in agriculture, rural areas, and thus the fruit sector both through various programs of the central government and through the use of EU structural funds - primarily IPARD fund.

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<sup>4</sup> Tomić, D., Popović, V., Vlahović, B., (2010.): Implications of Interim Trade Agreement Application on Serbian Agroecology, Agroecology Serbia and European Integrations, (non)Adaptation to Mutual Application of the Interim Trade Agreement, Thematic Collection, Belgrade (Implikacije primene prelaznog trgovinskog sporazuma na agroprivredu Srbije, Agroprivreda Srbije i evropske integracije, (ne)prilagođenost obostranoj primeni prelaznog trgovinskog sporazuma, Tematski zbornik, Beograd.)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.agrobiznis.net/documents/RS\\_Efekti%20liberalizacije%20na%20poljoprivredu%20Srbije%20VERZIJA%20ZA%20STAMPU.pdf](http://www.agrobiznis.net/documents/RS_Efekti%20liberalizacije%20na%20poljoprivredu%20Srbije%20VERZIJA%20ZA%20STAMPU.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.ledib.org/uploads/downloads/6\\_en.doc](http://www.ledib.org/uploads/downloads/6_en.doc)

Production and processing of fruits is accompanied by many *problems* that were noted by the survey, presented below:

*Manufacturers* - the most common problems surveyed fruit producers are faced with are: the lack of information on permitted (in countries which import fruit from Serbia) chemical preparations for protecting fruit plantations. In this regard, the Ministry of Agriculture was sent an objection because of neglecting of field expertise services able to help resolve the production problems (selection of protective remedies etc).

There is a lack of significant financial support by the State aimed at providing protection against hail and for irrigation of plantations. There is a disparity problem between high production costs and low purchase prices of fruit. Fragmented holdings are predominant in the individual fruit sector with very old plantations that limit the establishment of modern plantations and thus the following of contemporary world trends.

For the most part (70%) of surveyed companies the problem of plantation expansion is conditioned by planting material supply problem, where usually there is a lack of modern varieties of seedlings (45% of companies) as well as the poor quality of planting material (35%). The price of planting material and lack of subsidies for buying that same material is a problem for 30% of the surveyed companies.

One of the problems accompanying fruit producers is lack of adequate cold storage. Of the total number of respondents 70% owns cold storage, 20% don't have, and only 10% of respondents own a cold storage with ULO cooling system, so it can be said that third generation of cold storages are in their infancy in our region. Production standards and has implemented half of the studied companies. The most common standards are Global GAP, HACCP and some standards from ISO Group. A smaller group or 40% of respondents stated that there is support from the state (Ministry of Agriculture) and 60% that was not inclined to state that.

Less than half of respondents (44%) were satisfied with the credit terms. Credit conditions are considered satisfactory also by the companies for which that loans are not available.

However, one of the insufficiently used tools to help fruit producers is the counseling office. For significant part (45%) of respondent companies there is no available expert office which is important for an adequate, timely help to fruit producers in the field. Only one third of the companies, for which an expert office is available, expressed satisfaction with the services of the office, while two-thirds were partially satisfied.

One of the models that could positively affect the production and export of fruit is the association of fruit growers "*Fruittland*" from Subotica. It is an association of eight cooperatives of fruit growers from the Republic of Serbia. Capacity of this association is nine thousand tons of fruit storage<sup>7</sup>. It has the ambition to grow, in the future, into a big cluster for the production, storage, processing and exporting of fruit and fruit products.

Cold storage "Sirogojno company" and about forty farming households in the Zlatibor village Sirogojno received in 2008 The International Certificate for the production of organic raspberry, which was handed over to them by representatives of the Swiss Control House "SGS". Raspberry production is performed without the use of artificial fertilizers, pesticides and other chemicals and was monitored in past three years by the relevant international institutions, so they finally reached the first 80 tons of raspberry, ready for sending to foreign markets. Certification for organic production of raspberry is the first one in western Serbia. "Sirogojno company" purchase and process mainly raspberry and blackberry, of which more than 90% of purchased quantities are intended for export. Special packages of raspberry produced by above mentioned company found their place on the shelves of supermarkets in Sweden, Finland, Norway, Great Britain, Belgium, Japan and Australia.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.fruittland-serbia.com>

The main limiting factors for fruit production are.<sup>8</sup>:

- small and fragmented plantations: the average size of fruit plantation is below one hectare and represents one of the main obstacles to increasing competitiveness in relation to the quantity and quality of the fruit;
- old plantations and systems of breeding, varieties and cultivated varieties;
- limited production of planting material;
- a bad choice of varieties and use of uncertified planting materials creates long term problems;
- heavy dependence on weather conditions;
- most of the orchards were raised on available land, and without prior examination of certain positions and exposure to adverse climatic factors. Therefore, the summer drought, hail, and especially spring frosts in many cases are the limiting factors of production.
- there are only few insured orchards; low level of knowledge of farmers and expert offices on contemporary forms of breeding and modern technologies
- there is no continuous source of information about new technologies in fruit growing sector related to modern forms of breeding, feeding and protecting fruit trees from pests, frost, hail etc;
- lack of investments, continued low profitability of the existing extensive fruit production discourages new investment in raising orchards;
- new investments can be recovered in the third year, but due to ignorance and lack of professional support, new plantings bring fruit yield not until the fourth, fifth year; orchards are raised spontaneously, without prior analysis of market needs; manufacturers, unfortunately, do not address quality issues;
- along with increasing the quality and quantity of production also the need for acquaintance with international standards, the importance of determining the time of harvest, post harvest losses, losses during storage and so on, will be developed;
- lack of modern facilities for processing; processing capacities in the fruit sector are brought to cold storage (deep freezing, hot processing);
- lack of packaging capacities certified in line with European food safety standards significantly reduces the competitiveness of the final product; frozen cherries are often exported in carton packages of 10 kg up to 15 kg which implies low profitability of exports;
- the need for diversification of products to more expensive fruit products; lack of capacities for dried fruit (even for prune), fruit juices production, fruit jellies and fruit pastes production etc.

Emphasis should be on organic fruit production. Some requirements related to production policy are placed with the following conditions: application of nutrients from organic fertilizers and livestock manure; application of secondary energy sources and energy that does not pollute the environment; the use of environment-friendly substances in the production; considering expiring dates of materials used in organic production. The following *requirements* in organic production would be requirements explicitly related to production:

- organic seedlings;
- replacement of used materials with new environment-friendly materials;
- accepting and the use of means for environmental protection during the entire process of production;
- forcing the production with as much as possible resources which are used in organic production but do not harm the environment,

The following *requirements* for organic production companies are related to products and product quality:

- the product must be bearable for health;
- packaging must be useful in further processing;

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.ledib.org/uploads/downloads/6\\_en.doc](http://www.ledib.org/uploads/downloads/6_en.doc)

- the use of the product must indicate ecological value;
- the product must bring happiness and satisfaction to consumer.

Fruit and fruit products produced in this way must be different from the conventional products, and it shouldn't be hard for customers to find them on store shelves<sup>9</sup>.

*Processing industry* – in fruit processing there is notable existence of the impacts of special circumstances specific to each company. The processing sector there is 81 registered factories for hot processing and fruits and vegetables drying, 181 cold storages for fruit and vegetables storing and 20 factories for juices and concentrates production. Only a small number of processors have a high-tech processing technology and there is also an insufficient number of modern ULO cold storage facilities.

Supply of raw materials (quality, delivery dynamics of the supplier, the purchase price fluctuation) as well as obsolete equipment and lack of skilled workers are the most known problems. When it's about export, fruit processors have a wide dispersion of stated problems. They range from application of standards and changes in prices on export markets to the problems that are frequently mentioned, and refer to: margins, distributors, export licenses, the problems and costs of claims and similar.

Also, despite the difficulties the processors are faced with in the processing and the export, there are external problems related to the environment in which they operate. As frequently quoted issues related to economic conditions we can point out the lack of working capital, partly caused by adverse crediting conditions, insufficient government support for export and unrealistic exchange rates of dinar. Fruit processors expect more governmental assistance in order to achieve competitiveness in export markets, which can be noted in their responses in the survey. Nearly two-thirds of the companies state that the government does not provide the necessary assistance to the fruit export. 82% of the surveyed companies reported some kind of government assistance (Ministry of Agriculture). That assistance is brought down to incentives for the export of some fruits (deep frozen fruit, blackberry, first-class fruit, 5% stimulation on the export price), but financial effects of these incentives are small.

Fruit processors in Serbia, due to lack of working capital, have a distinct need for loans. Most of the surveyed companies (89%) stated that loans are available to them, 11% stated that they had difficulties in obtaining loans. Only 11% of fruit processing companies are satisfied with crediting terms, while 44% of them are partially satisfied and just as many enterprises are dissatisfied with credit terms. It may be noted that almost 90% of surveyed companies have a critical attitude towards credit terms, with attitude that crediting terms are one of the important limitations of their competitiveness in export markets.

The *basic steps* that will inevitably lead to increased competitiveness of our export products are as follows<sup>10</sup>: increase in productivity of production and restructuring of export offer, improvement of business and market environment, the implementation of innovative marketing strategies and initiating cluster associations and similar; for export-oriented development of processing industry is necessary to have a significant and stable raw material base, i.e. the production of quality fruit; constant expanding of fruit-based assortment; seeking and finding new solutions in production and fruit processing technology; applying of modern standards in production and processing; one of the basic orientations of fruit and fruit products export from Serbia is a continuous quality improvement; in order to increase competitiveness in the international market it should be built on quality, not price; for today's customers quality and pleasure during consumption are more important; fruit products should have a modern and attractive design and high quality packaging; it is essential that the product should be

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<sup>9</sup> Kopic, M., Salih, H., Mijatovic, B.: Eco-marketing in Ecological (Biological) production of agricultural and food products (Eko-marketing u ekološkoj (biološkoj) proizvodnji poljoprivredno-prehrambenih proizvoda).

<sup>10</sup> Paraušić, V., Cvijanović, D., Subić, J., (2007): Promotion of Association and Marketing in Creating a Competitive Agricultural Sector in Serbia, Institute of Agricultural Economics, Belgrade (Afirmacija udruživanja i marketinga u funkciji kreiranja konkurentnosti agrarnog sektora Srbije, Institut za ekonomiku poljoprivrede, Beograd).

adapted to the conditions defined by the market, or the desires, demands, needs and habits of the consumers.

*Exporters* - only 15% of business entities engaged in fruit export states that they have significant problems in their operations. Most firms cited prices (procurement of raw materials, placement to the destination) and disorder of the market as important problems in their operations. The largest number of exporters (70%) is not sufficiently familiar with the standards and regulations of importing countries. When it comes to possessing the required standards for the two leading export markets, the European Union and Russia, the situation is more favorable in the case of European Union (67% of companies have standards) compared to Russia, for which only half of the surveyed exporters has standards (GOSTR standard).

How much success company has in the market (domestic or international) depends on marketing concept of operations of the business subject. In 92% of the cases, the fruit exporters don't have their own marketing department. Only two respondent companies stated that they applied the concept of marketing in their business. The possibility of increasing fruit and fruit products export from Serbia the surveyed companies see, above all, in the growth and assuring quality in fruit production and processing, in bigger state intervention in the sector of fruit export, as well as in the implementation of marketing concept of business by exporters themselves.

Often emphasized the need for government intervention in favor of the fruit and fruit products exporters, is based on the fact that nearly two-thirds of the surveyed companies have the experience of some form of government assistance. Distinct requirement for more adequate engaging of the state is the result of dissatisfaction of three-quarters of the surveyed companies with export incentives, as the most frequent instrument of state assistance to exporters. Expectations for government intervention with more export incentives, is related to assessment of the competitiveness of export companies in international markets. None of the surveyed companies considers themselves as competitive, but insists on its partial competitiveness (75% of surveyed companies) or non-competitiveness (25%). In the absence of accessible working capital, in terms of loans that are expensive, it is difficult to achieve competitiveness in the market.

In addition to these, there are many other problems, above all, internal problems. On their solution directly depends the competitiveness of the Serbian fruit and its entering the international market. Some of these issues are: the adequacy of the variety and prolonging of growing and selling season in terms of low profitability of fruit plantations due to old plantations and inadequate varieties, high investments for new plantations with low turnover rate over the long run and a lack of loans with low interest rates for new plantations, inadequate protection and production technologies, the lack of organic production to a significant extent, the lack of cold storages with regulated atmosphere that allow year-round storing of fruits CA (controlled atmosphere) and the so-called storage with a low dose of oxygen (ULO - Ultra Low Oxygen), quality control, packaging, logistics and marketing<sup>11</sup>.

Many authors advocate for integrated fruit production in order to increase the export. Integrated fruit production is a strategic way for fruit-growing development in developed countries, and in the future in our country. Integrated concept is based on application of a combination of genetic, agronomic, biotechnical and chemical methods in economic-acceptable production system, which provides high-quality fruits, preserve the environment and human health [12]. Raising the competitiveness of fruit and fruit products from the Republic of Serbia in the international market can be based on the following *activities*<sup>12</sup>:

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<sup>11</sup> Neel, S., Bonar, H. (2009): Strategy of cooling chains for Serbia, the II World Food Logistics Organization, the USAID Agrobusiness Project (Strategija lanaca rashlade za Srbiju, II World Food Logistics Organization, za USAID Agrobiznis Projekat).

<sup>12</sup> Keserović, Z. (2005): Integrated and organic fruit production, monograph, Institute of Field and Vegetable Crops, Novi Sad (Integralna i organska proizvodnja voća, monografija, Institut za ratarstvo i povrtarstvo, Novi Sad).



- To improve the quality of the fruit while respecting the standards of importing countries – certification of safety and quality system. These are, primarily, EUREPGAP and HACCP standards. Respecting the strict hygiene requirements in the processing of fruit.
- It is essential that manufacturers focus on producing quality fruit in order to obtain high-quality products (juices, jams etc.). Paying attention to the production technology in order to obtain the best possible characteristics of the product.
- To focus on the production of modern varieties demanded in the international market. Reducing of production costs in order to achieve the best possible price in the international market.
- To apply the marketing concept in production and export. The marketing concept is based on the demands of consumers and markets. Therefore, the production must be designed to meet the qualitative needs of consumers.
- Higher export incentives by the Ministry of Agriculture. In 2009 exporters of strawberry, blackberry Rolend and pitted cherry Rolend, used the subsidies of 5% of export price and exporters of prune and many of the canned fruit products (sweet cherry, sour cherry) and apple, raspberry and cherry juice, of 10%. The right to use these funds does not apply to exporters of goods of domestic origin exported to the territories of the countries which signed the Agreement on Free Trade in Central Europe (CEFTA 2006). It may be noted that the export incentives for fresh fruit are modest and do not represent a significant stimulus for export.

## Conclusion

Fruit and fruit products have a predominant place in the structure of agricultural and food products export in Serbia. The main barriers to more dynamic export of Serbian fruit and fruit products are: inadequate varieties and planting material quality, insufficient knowledge about foreign markets and lack of knowledge about new production technologies aimed at prolonging the production season. Problems with export of products are poor quality of packaging, limited choice of varieties, many small producers with an uneven fruit production technology and great instability in export markets. An additional problem is the absence of strong, stable and long-term relationships with importing buyers, partly because of the lack of export associations that would establish these relationships and create demand for Serbian products. Serbia's strategic goal should be a quality production of fresh fruit. This means choosing of new fruit varieties which would yield crops in a prolonged season, the better quality which will create a stronger competitiveness of Serbia. The marketing concept of business should be given prominent place in the planning of production, processing and export, to meet the needs of foreign markets and achieve an appropriate profit.

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## Factori care limitează exportul de fructe din Republica Serbia

### Rezumat

*Fructele și produsele din fructe dețin un loc predominant în structura exportului agricol și alimentar din Serbia. Articolul de față analizează principalele constrângeri și obstacole care împiedică dinamizarea exportului de fructe și produse din fructe din Serbia. Următorii factori par să predomine: varietatea și calitatea neadecvată a materialului săditor, cunoașterea insuficientă a piețelor străine și lipsa cunoștințelor legate de tehnologiile noi de producție care urmăresc prelungirea sezonului de producție. Nu există relații stabile și pe termen lung cu exportatorii din cauza lipsei unei asociații de export care ar stabili aceste relații și ar spori cererea pentru produsele sârbești. Scopul strategic al Republicii Serbia ar trebui să fie producerea de fructe proaspete de înaltă calitate și creșterea competitivității pe piața internațională. În cazul inițiativelor de afaceri, ar trebui să i se acorde un loc predominant conceptului de marketing în crearea conceptelor de producție, procesare și export, astfel încât să se acopere nevoile piețelor străine și să se obțină un profit corespunzător.*