

I. Introduction

The Farm Structure Survey 2013 was conducted during autumn 2013 as a sample survey. It followed the Agricultural census 2010 and sample surveys carried out in 2007, 2005, and 2003 in its contents and aims. Farm structure surveys contribute to systematic building of European Communities' statistics on structure of agricultural holdings which provide comparable outputs for all EU member states.

The aim of the survey is to obtain detailed and complex information on the whole scale of the Czech agriculture, i.e. its size, structure and development of agricultural holdings, about their equipment, specialisation of their production and other gainful activities. The results are used in classification of agricultural holdings by their production orientation, economic size and, newly, by importance of other gainful activities.

The survey also serves as data source for update of the Farm Register, which is a basis for yearly surveys in agriculture. Results will be used for agricultural policy forming not only in the Czech Republic but also in the European Union.

Legislation

The Farm Structure Survey 2013 is conducted in all the European Union member countries following requirements of EU/EC legislation. The most important legal act is the Regulation (EC) No 1166/2008 of the European Parliament and the Council of 19 November 2008, on farm structure surveys and the survey on agricultural production methods and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 571/88. The implementing regulation for this legislation is the Regulation No 1200/2009 of 30 November 2009.

In the Czech Republic, the survey is conducted on the basis of the Act No 89/1995 Coll., on the State Statistical Service, as amended; and of the Programme for Statistical Surveys for the year 2013 (Decree No 343/2012 Coll.), published in the Collection of Laws of the Czech Republic, chapter 127. Decree No 317/2013 Coll. amending Decree No 343/2012 on Programme for Statistical Surveys was published on 9 October 2013.

Definition of the agricultural holding

Agricultural holding means a single unit, both technically and economically, which has a single management and which undertakes agricultural activities based on the common statistical classification of economic activities (CZ-NACE), either as its primary or secondary activity. Among these activities belong: growing of non-perennial crops (01.1); growing of perennial crops (01.2) including wine production from self-produced grapes; plant propagation (01.3); animal production (01.4); mixed farming (01.5); support activities to agriculture and post-harvest crop activities (01.6). Agricultural holdings raising other animals (01.49) are excluded, except ones raising and breeding ostriches, emus and rabbits, and dealing with bee-keeping and production of honey and beeswax. Furthermore, all agricultural holdings carrying out activities under 01.6 of CZ-NACE are excluded, except holdings exclusively maintaining agricultural land in good agricultural and environmental condition.

Threshold values for Farm Structure Survey 2013 were set in such way that only the smallest agricultural holdings representing up to 2% of utilised agricultural area and up to 2% of livestock units¹ were excluded.

Threshold values for the survey:

- Acreage above 5 ha of utilised agricultural area (own or rented);
- Or more than 1 ha of orchards, or 3,500 m² of vineyards;
- Or sum of acreages for vegetable, strawberries and flowers above 2,500 m²
- Or breeding of 5 heads of cattle, or 10 heads of pigs, or 10 heads of sheep and goats;
- Or 100 heads of poultry including ostriches.

¹ Livestock unit (LSU) means a standard measurement unit that allows the aggregation of the various categories of livestock in order to enable them to be compared. 1 LSU represents 500 kg of live weight of an animal.

Questionnaire and Reporting duty

Reporting duty applied to all reporting units included in the sample.

Legal persons and large natural persons obtained the questionnaires by post. Small natural persons and self-suppliers were interviewed by trained interviewers at their home or place of business.

Pursuant to Act No. 89/1995 Coll., on the State Statistical Service, as amended, the reporting unit shall supply all requested data.

Data on rural development measures were taken from an administrative source (namely the State Agricultural Intervention Fund) in order to reduce the respondents' burden.

Farm Structure Survey results in international comparison

All the member countries of the EU are obliged to organize and conduct Farm Structure Surveys according to the legislation of the EU/EC (Regulation (EC) No 1166/2008). The member countries provide Eurostat with anonymized data. Eurostat collects results from all countries and compiles publications summarizing main characteristic features of agriculture in each Member State. These publications are available on Eurostat internet pages: (<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home>).

Eurostat provides on its website a database which is intended to serve for the comparison of the Farm Structure Survey results on an international level; it contains aggregated tables in a demanded structure (<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/agriculture/data/database>).

Several methodological differences should be taken into account when using data from the Eurostat database:

- According to the EU definitions hop is included in crops grown on arable land. In the Czech Republic, however, hop or hop-gardens are reported as permanent crops according to the Law No 252/1997 Coll., on agriculture, as amended. Due to this different approach data on total arable area and permanent crops in Eurostat database differ from the data published on the national level. Data on total utilised agricultural area (permanent crops plus arable land) are identical.*
- According to the EU definition, nurseries are included in permanent crops. In the Czech Republic, on the contrary, nurseries are reported as crops grown on arable land. Due to this fact data in Eurostat database differ from the data published on the national level likewise.*
- According to the EU methodology, trees and bushes grown for use for energy production only are included in wooded area (of which short rotation coppices). In the Czech Republic they are included either in other industrial crops or in other permanent crops (of which short rotation coppices). Therefore in the Eurofarm database total utilised agricultural area is lower and wooded area is higher than in national data.*
- According to the EU definition, temporary grasslands are included in permanent grasslands in the frame of organic farming while on the national level they are included in plants harvested green on arable land (perennial green fodder).*