

## 1 Introduction

Farm structure survey 2007 (FSS 2007) was the last one of three sample surveys that are organized in between full agricultural censuses, referred to as Agrocensuses, which are carried out under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) all over the world at the turn of each decade. FSS 2007 was realized by the Czech Statistical Office (CZSO) with the financial support of the European Commission. European Commission is not responsible for published data.

The survey was realized in a way to meet the requirements of the national and European legislation. The main aim of the survey was to describe in detail a recent situation in agriculture - economic size, structure and development of agricultural holdings, their equipment, production orientation and non agricultural activities for rural development - using the system of characteristics included in the EU legislation. Secondly, the survey was aimed at providing background data for calculation of farm typology by economic size and production orientation. Thirdly, processed data was utilised mainly for updating the Farm Register, the database used for generating samples for regular agricultural surveys. Lastly, the Survey provided input data for some characteristics needed for evaluating the "Programme of Rural Development in the Czech Republic".

The publication Farm Structure Survey Results 2007 will be succeeded by publications Farm Structure Survey Results 2007 – Regions and Districts and Farm Structure Survey Results 2007 – Analysis.

### Legislative Framework

During farm structure surveys' preparations the Czech Statistical Office followed EU regulation as from Agrocensus 2000. Basic law, that places duty for member states to organise surveys on the structure of agricultural holdings in their country, was Council Regulation (EEC) No. 571/88 of 29 February 1988. Other follow-up regulation was Commission Decision 2000/115/EC of 24 November 1999 relating to the definitions of the characteristics, the list of agricultural products, the exceptions to the definitions and the regions and districts regarding the surveys on the structure of agricultural holdings.

As a result of the accession of 10 new countries including the Czech Republic on 1 May 2004, Commission Regulation (EC) No. 2139/2004 of 8 December 2004 adapting and implementing Council Regulation (EEC) No 571/88 and amending Commission Decision 2000/115/EC with a view to the organisation of Community surveys on the structure of agricultural holdings in 2005 and 2007 came into force. This regulation amends the list of surveyed characteristics and defines characteristics that were not surveyed in previous surveys. It also determines that all Member States' statistics transmitted to the Commission, which are broken down by territorial units should use the NUTS classification. Consequently, the regions and districts should be defined in accordance with the NUTS classification. Moreover, there are set out time limits for the communication of validated individual data from the farm structure survey.

Commission Regulation (EEC) No. 204/2006 adapting Council Regulation (EEC) No. 571/88 and amending Commission Decision 2000/115/EC with a view to the organisation of Community surveys on the structure of agricultural holdings in 2007 is the legislative act determining the list of surveyed characteristics for Farm Structure Survey 2007 for all member states of EU.

Programme of Statistical Surveys for 2007<sup>1</sup>, which was published as an annex to Decree No. 476 in the Collection of laws of the Czech Republic, chapter 156 from 2 November 2006, laid down the obligation to conduct Farm Structure Survey 2007.

New national legislation in the field of agricultural business, Act No. 85/2004 Coll. on agriculture, came into force at 1 May 2004, i. e. at the moment of accession the Czech Republic to the European Union. Besides the new definition of business in agriculture the law brought a change of registration. New agricultural entrepreneurs fulfilling conditions prescribed by law obtain a certificate about registration as agricultural entrepreneur. Farmers registered according to previous regulations have to be reregistered excluding private farmers. Their certificates are valid till 1 May 2009. Natural person keeping small planting and breeding activities is not subject to registration as agricultural entrepreneur.

Among reporting units of farm structure survey 2005 and 2007 these legal forms occur, i.e. unincorporated agricultural entrepreneur – natural person, incorporated agricultural entrepreneur – natural person. Reporting

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<sup>1</sup> Programme of Statistical Surveys is set down by the Czech Statistical Office on the basis of Act No. 89/1995 on the State Statistical Service, as last amended.

duty for farm structure survey applied to all natural and legal persons regardless of legal forms that are engaged in agriculture from level of thresholds.

### **Definition of reporting unit**

Reporting unit of the Survey is an agricultural holding that is defined as a both technically and economically single unit dealing with agricultural production.

Holdings of legal persons and natural persons with the last known SGM<sup>2</sup> ≥ 600 000 CZK were surveyed exhaustingly. Other reporting units, natural persons, were sampled. To be surveyed they had to meet at least one of thresholds.

- The threshold limits were set in accordance with Agrocentus 2000:
- 1 ha of utilised agricultural land own or rented, or
- Area of 1 500 m<sup>2</sup> of intensive crops (orchards, vegetables, flowers), or
- 1 000 m<sup>2</sup> of vineyards, or
- 300 m<sup>2</sup> of greenhouses or hotbeds, or
- 1 head of cattle, or
- 2 heads of pigs, or
- 4 heads of sheep and goats, or
- 50 heads of poultry or 100 heads of rabbits or fur animals.

### **Questionnaire and reporting duty**

Reporting duty applied to all reporting units included in the sample. The questionnaire is available on <http://dw.czso.cz/pls/vykazy/pdfsoub?xid=1173&xtyp=V>. Entrepreneurial subjects were obliged to provide all requested data whereas natural persons farming without the certificate of registration as agricultural entrepreneur or the trade certificate were (according to law) only obliged to fill in identification data, data on holder and the following sections of the questionnaire: ZC06, ZC06A and ZC09 till ZC15. Answering the other sections was optional. Data confidentiality is ensured by law<sup>3</sup>.

### **Farm Structure Survey results in international comparison**

All EU Member States have a duty to organize and conduct Farm Structure Survey according to the legislation of EU/ES (Council Regulation No. (EEC) 571/88, as amended). Member states provide European Statistical Office – EUROSTAT with data which had been made anonymous. Eurostat collects results from all countries and compiles a publication Statistics in Focus – Farm Structure Survey<sup>4</sup> summarizing main characteristic features of agriculture in each Member State. The publication is available on EUROSTAT internet pages (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>).

EUROSTAT database New Cronos (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat>) contains aggregated tables in a demanded structure that are available for international comparison of FSS results.

When using data from New Cronos it is necessary to take into account 2 methodological differences:

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<sup>2</sup> SGM (Standard Gross Margin) represents an economic benefit of one either crop or animal production unit. SGM is expressed either per hectare of each crop or per head of each animal category. SGM value indicates a standard value of production from 1 ha of the cultivated crop or it represents a standard value of production of 1 head of animal of a given animal category after deduction of specific (variable) production costs spent on the given production. SGM values are laid down in individual Member States according to real conditions in a given country for all crops and animal categories and are regularly updated. Research Institute of Agricultural Economics (VÚZE) is the institution responsible for tackling SGM in the Czech Republic

<sup>3</sup> Act 101/2000 Coll., on personal data protection and § 17 of Act 89/1995 Coll., on State Statistical Service (all workers engaged in Survey or data processing are bound to the pledge of secrecy relevant to all surveyed facts).

<sup>4</sup> Data included in this publication only cover agricultural holdings with SGM >1 ESU to ensure data comparability among Member States. (i.e. unlike in the CZSO publications, Czech results published in Statistics in Focus – Farm Structure Survey do not cover all agricultural holdings.)

- According to the EU definitions, hop is included in crops grown on arable land. In the Czech Republic, hop or hop-yard is traditionally reported as permanent crops just like vineyards, gardens, orchards and permanent grassland. Due to this different approach data on total arable area and permanent crops in New Cronos differ from the data published on the national level. Data on total utilised agriculture area (permanent crops + arable land) do not differ.
- According to the EU definition, nurseries are included in permanent crops. In the Czech Republic, nurseries are traditionally reported as crops grown on arable land. Due to this fact data in New Cronos differ from the data published on the national level likewise.