

7 MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT IN AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS

During the last decade, the Czech agriculture underwent huge structural changes which were reflected in technical equipment of agricultural holdings. Particularly massive employment of computer technology is one of key trends in contemporary agricultural production.

In 2010 there were in total 59 thousand tractors in several size categories available in surveyed agricultural holdings. Tractors with the engine power 40–59 kW prevailed (33.4%) followed by size group of 60-99 kW (31.8%) and size group of more than 100 kW (21.6%). The majority (80.1%) of tractors was older than 10 years. In holdings of legal persons the tractors were slightly newer than in holdings of natural persons: there were 78.2% of tractors older than 10 years in holdings of legal persons compared with 81.7% in holdings of natural persons.

In comparison with 2000, the number of tractors decreased by almost one third (-29.4%). However, opposite trends were noted in particular size groups. Number of tractors with low power (up to 59 kW) declined by more than a half (-53.4%) while number of tractors powered by 60-99 kW rose by 21.6% and number of tractors powered by more than 100 kW went up by more than one third (+39.1%).

There was a distinct plummet in the number of harvesters owned by agricultural holdings in the last ten years. While in 2000 there were more than 12 thousand combine harvesters, their number dropped by 40.7% until 2010. Even greater decrease – by 65.0% - was recorded for cutter harvesters. Among soil cultivation machinery, the greatest decline was noted in cultivators and hoeing machines (-33.6%). The modest decrease was observed in fertilizer and manure spreaders (by 19.0% and 17.1%, respectively).

Almost one half (46.7%) of agricultural holdings used personal computers in 2010. There were more than three quarters (77.0%) of holdings of legal persons and nearly one half (42.0%) of holdings of natural persons among them. Compared to 2000, number of agricultural holdings owning a personal computer increased almost twice. Out of the total number of 21 240 computers, 43.9% is owned by holdings of natural persons and 56.1% by holdings of legal persons. In the last ten years, the difference between natural and legal persons became less distinct: in 2000 there were 67.5% of all computers owned by holdings of legal persons.

Majority (82.2%) of computers used in agricultural holdings was connected to internet: this share accounted for 85.2% in holdings of natural persons and 79.9% in holdings of legal persons. The number of computers connected to internet rose almost eightfold in the last decade: in 2000, only 24.0% of computers in holdings of natural persons and 13.3% in holdings of legal persons were connected to internet.