

CONCLUSION

During the period 2000-2010, the Czech agriculture was influenced by structural changes which started in early 1990's. The total number of agricultural holdings decreased during the last ten years due to distinct decline in the number of holdings of natural persons. At the same time, the average acreage per one holding of natural person increased; this observation can be explained by merging of the holdings and relocation of land to holdings of legal persons. On the contrary, the number of holdings of legal persons grew and their average acreage went down. Probable explanation could be found in division of the holdings or in conversion of their utilised agricultural land to non-agricultural one. Therefore, the total acreage of utilised agricultural area decreased due to transformation into other land types.

The last decade can be characterised by rather adverse conditions for animal raising as well as for growing of some crops. The number of all main livestock species decreased. Lowered acreages of fodder crops correspond with decrement of cattle number while winter barley acreages were negatively influenced by dropped number of pigs and poultry. Growing of potatoes, pulses for grain and vegetables was reduced as well. On the contrary, situation on the agricultural commodity market supported growing of rape and other oleaginous crops.

National and international payment policies played a crucial role in structural changes concerning both crop and animal productions. For instance, permanent grasslands benefitted from such subsidies and, therefore, their acreage increased to the detriment of arable land. Also enlargement of vineyards was largely influenced by payment schemes; vineyard planting and renovation were supported mainly until entry of the Czech Republic into the EU. Raising of suckler cows can be mentioned as an example of animal production type involved in payment schemes. Both national and international subsidies encouraged utilisation of environmentally friendly farming systems.

The number of persons employed in agricultural sector decreased since the beginning of 1990's and this trend did not change during the last decade. Abovementioned decline of animal production together with utilising automated equipment in agricultural holdings belong among main reasons for this situation. Both legal forms of holdings recorded a lowered share of employees among their labour force; in holdings of natural persons they were replaced mostly by members of holder's family while holdings of legal persons preferred employing of seasonal workers. Share of young and middle-age generation plummeted as agricultural work has not been attractive enough despite its subsidies from the Structural Funds.

Change in structure of sown areas towards increased crop homogeneity and towards growing species easy to maintain led to use of lowered number of high-powered agricultural machines. Massive utilisation of computer technology in agricultural holdings was a typical feature of the last decade.