Analysis of sub-sector Herbs & Spices: A case study from North Macedonia

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INTRODUCTION

The agricultural sub-sector herbs and spices (H&S) includes a variety of crops which are different by many means: botanical classification, production practices and utilization. This sub-sector is 'invisible' regarding the official data in Republic of North Macedonia. One of the reasons for no data about production, yield and market of herbs and spices are small areas, small yields and variable production.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The H&S value chains selection is difficult to be made due to lack of official data about previously conducted sub-sectoral research, production areas and market values of the sub-sector productions Republic of North Macedonia. Based on desk research information, available national documents and statistics, as well as personal knowledge and field research, four value chains were selected from the evaluation and further in-depth elaboration - herbal teas, lavender essential oil, herbs for fresh consumption and paprika spice according to specific evaluation criteria.

CONCLUSIONS

The herbs & spices sub-sector shall be seen as one of the most environmentally- and climate change- friendly of all agricultural sub-sectors because most of production is done under organic certification that is environmentally friendly by all means. Cultivation of wild autochthonous herbs and old varieties for paprika spice is in line with current recommendations to combat climate changes. All these facts speak about the need for the herbs & spices sub-sector to be further developed and supported as an advantageous one in terms of environment and climate protection.

RESULTS

Crop	2017 (ha)	2018 (ha)	2019 (ha)
Fennel	/	/	259.36
Anise	206.78	438.24	41.21
Milk thistle	/	18.35	35.0
Chamomile	/	34.63	14.0
Dog-rose	23.01	15.92	19.4
Lemon balm	/	5.0	5.76
Mint	/	2.5	2.5
Marsh mallow	/	1.3	/
Thyme	/	1.69	1.69
Cowslip	/	0.94	0.94
Sage	/	/	0.24
Mountain tea	/	/	0.07
Total	229.79	518.56	380.17

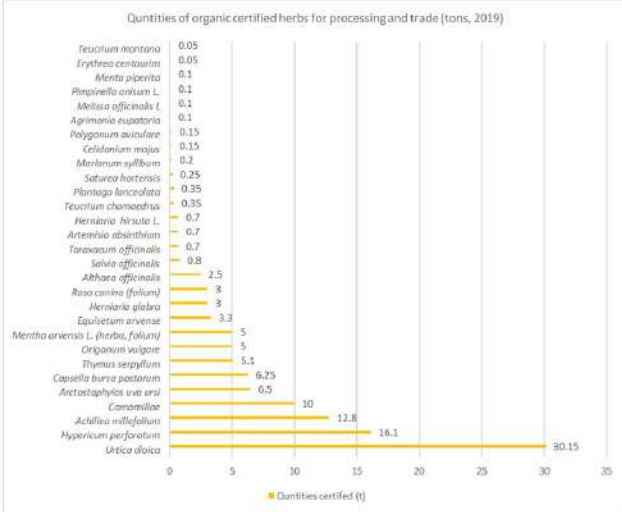

Figure 4. Quantities of organic certified herbs for processing and trade (tons, 2019).

Source: Registry of organic producers of organic agricultural production in 2019, MAFWE; own calculation

Figure 1. Value chain map of fresh herbs.

Figure 2. Value chain map of fresh herbs.

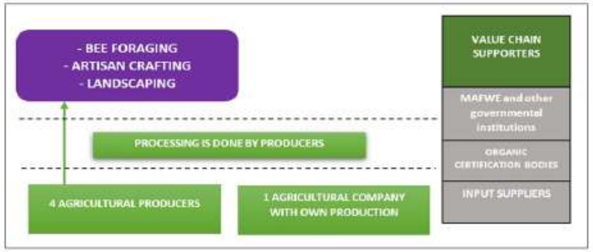

Figure 3. Lavender essential oil value chain map.

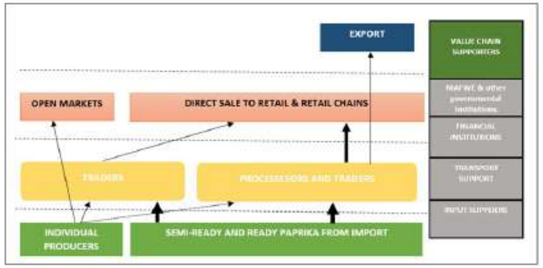

Figure 4. Paprika spice value chain map.

Socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis in the agriculture, UNDP Social Inclusion program, Offic in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia, 2020