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Current Issues and Prospects of Raspberry and Blackberry Production in the Republic of Serbia

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Abstract: The paper presents analytical survey of the current issues concerning raspberry and blackberry production in the Republic of Serbia in the last fifth of the twentieth century. On the basis of the stated data, coupled with specific natural, demographic and economic-technical factors, as well as of those of organizational nature, which were not studied in the paper, possible measures for improving the production of these fruit species which are of great importance for the entire economy of Serbia, particularly for the hilly-mountainous region, have been proposed.

Key words: Raspberry, blackberry, production.

Introduction

Statistically, total fruit production worldwide in the last decade of the twentieth century amounts to 277.029.000 t (FAO Yearbook Production, 1999). Out of the total production, temperate fruit species account for 87.804.000 t or 31.69%, small fruit - 3.64% with strawberry prevailing - 2.343.000 t (73.29%), followed by currants with 580.000 t (18.14%) and raspberry with 274.000 t (8.57%).

From 1985 to 2000, small fruit production in Yugoslavia, i.e. in Serbia, ranked third (after plum and apple), with an annual share between 8 and 10%. However, small fruits rank first in terms of economic importance. For example, the total export value of fruits and vegetables in 1999 amounted to \$US 151.156.000, with small fruits accounting for 65.800.000 \$US (strawberry - 2.3 million \$US, blackberry - 7.5 million \$US, and raspberry - 56 million \$US).

This paper aimed primarily at defining the state of raspberry and blackberry production in Serbia over 1987-2000 and tracing out its further prospects.

Material and Methods

The data (official and internal) of the Republic Bureau for Statistics, Business Association for Fruit and Vegetables DD Belgrade, Regional Bureau for Agriculture and other relevant institutions and companies, as well as domestic and foreign bulletins and yearbooks (FAO Production Yearbook, 1996-1999; Communes in Serbia, 1999; Yugoslav Statistical Yearbook, 2000; Serbian Agriculture 1947-1996, 1998) and analyses done by Milosevic and Petrovic (2000), were used in this paper. The analysis was based on the so-called "desk research", involving processing primary and secondary data using known mathematical-statistical methods for 1988-2000.

Results and Discussion

Raspberry production. In the second half of the last decade of the 20th century, total world raspberry production amounted to 274.000 t. Petrovic and Milosevic (1998), citing the data of Washington Red Raspberry Commission (1997), reported Yugoslavia, i.e. Serbia, to be the largest world producer and exporter of frozen raspberry. According to the data for 2000, some 55.999 t of raspberry were produced in Serbia. It was followed by Poland (46.028 t), the USA (45.329 t), Chile (28.718 t), Hungary (20.237 t), etc. Over 1980-1999, raspberry production in Serbia increased 3.5-fold (index = 353.3), which is confirmed by production trend for the 1987-2000 period, as well as by the statistically significant correlation coefficient. However, in the last decade of the 20th century, a number of adverse phenomena occurred in raspberry production and trade in Serbia, which, if not prevented, can seriously endanger the positions attained on the world market, partly due to the UN sanctions (Milosevic and Petrovic, 2000).

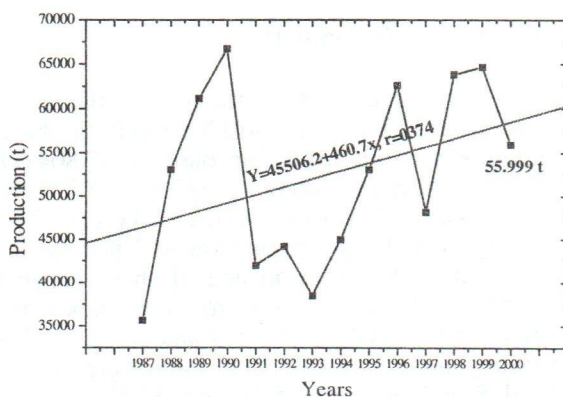


Fig. 1. Raspberry production in Serbia in 1988-2000

The major ones are: (1) extensive spread of production into the areas which objectively have no optimal conditions for its realization; (2) inability application of care measures in plantings, particularly control of pests, diseases and weeds, which results in a drastic deterioration of fruit quality; (3) inadequate management of buying up and transport of fresh fruits to processing capacities; (4) technological lagging behind in all aspects of processing; and (5) disorganized presentation on the world market.

Elimination of the mentioned negative trends would enable a positive and stable status of raspberry from Serbia (Arilje, Valjevo, Kopaonik, Podrinje, Cacak, etc.) on the world market.

Blackberry production. There are no records kept either in the world or domestic statistics on the areas under blackberry and its production in the world or in Yugoslavia, i.e. Serbia. However, over last ten years or so, blackberry production, particularly that of thornless cultivars (Thornfree, Black Satin, Cacanska Bestrna, etc.) has shown a marked upward trend - Fig. 2 (Petrovic *et al.*, 1996; Milosevic, 1997; Petrovic and Milosevic, 1998; Milosevic and Petrovic, 2000; 2001). According to these authors, total production varies from 14 and 18 thousand tonnes, and is realized on about 3,000 ha. Most of it is exported to world markets. For example, 11,500 t were exported in 2000, which is, compared to 1998 with the export of 12,318 t, a reduction of 6.64%.

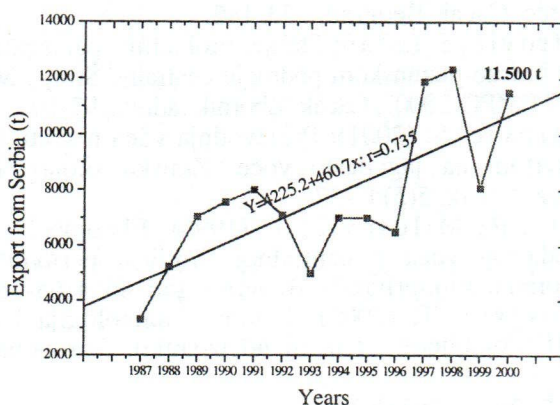


Fig. 2. Quantity of blackberry exported from Serbia to world market over 1987-2000

What contributed to an increased interest of producers in its growing? There are several reasons, the two major ones being as follows: (1) a good buying up price, which in 1999 due to the demand on the European market was the same as that of raspberry. However, as early as in 2000 it dropped to the 2:1 ratio in favour of raspberry. (2) intensive spread of the new domestic cultivar Cacanska Bestrna, etc. It should be noted, however, that domestic blackberry

production is within the limits of the capacities of foreign and domestic markets. Therefore, any extensive spread in the future would inevitably result in deteriorated fruit quality and price fall on the world market.

Conclusions

FR Yugoslavia and/or Republic of Serbia ranks as the greatest and the most significant producer of raspberry on the world market. Since 1987 till today, raspberry production has varied on a year basis, but on principle, has shown an increasing trend. Over the year 2000, the entire production of 55.999 t was achieved.

In the recent years, however, few adverse circumstances (extensive production expansion, unsuitable application of cultivation measures to plantings, irrational organization of purchase and transport of the fresh raspberry up to the processing capacities, low level of fruit processing and unloyal and unorganized placement on the world market) occurred, which might aggravate the rank of this, exportly oriented, produce.

As far as blackberry is concerned, some 14 to 18000 tons have been produced in a few recent years, which is considered marketable on both, domestic and foreign market and, therefore, should be taken into account when establishing new plantings.

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STANJE I PERSPEKTIVA PROIZVODNJE MALINE I KUPINE U REPUBLICI SRBIJI

- stručni rad -

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Rezime

SR Jugoslavija, odnosno Republika Srbija je najveći i najznačajniji svetski proizvođač i izvoznik maline na svetsko tržište. U periodu od 1987. godine do danas, njena proizvodnja je varijabilnog karaktera po godinama, ali u principu ima rastući trend. Tokom 2000. godine ostvarena je ukupna proizvodnja u iznosu od 55.999 t.

Poslednjih nekoliko godina u proizvodnji i prometu maline ispoljava se nekoliko negativnih pojava (ekstenzivno širenje proizvodnje, neodgovarajuća primena mera nege zasada, neracionalna organizacija otkupa i transporta sveže maline do prerađivačkih kapaciteta, nizak nivo prerade plodova i nelojalan i neorganizovan nastup na tržištima sveta) koje mogu ugroziti status ovog, izvozno orijentisanog, proizvoda.

Proizvodnja kupine se u poslednjih nekoliko godina kreće između 14 i 18 hiljada tona što je u granicama propusne moći domaćeg i inostranog tržišta što bi trebalo imati u vidu prilikom podizanja novih zasada.