

THE “PROFITABLE AGRI-BUSINESS” CONFERENCE / SORIN MINEA,
ROMALIMENTA:

„Cooperatives - the salvation for small farmers”

Joining together in cooperatives is a solution which could not only ensure the survival of small farmers in times of crisis, but also help them achieve far higher revenues, considers Sorin Minea, the president of the Federation of Professional Associations of the Food Industry (Romalimenta).was

In his opinion, the main problem that agriculture is faced with is the fact that farmers don't have a single entity that represents their interests: „We could talk about the money being allocated to agriculture for days and still not reach an agreement. Excessive politicization has led to the current situation. The entire nation has become politicized and is waging a war that does not belong to it. We are focusing on the wrong things. Europe is giving us money, but it won't stuff it in our bag”.

Mr. Minea stressed the fact that the agricultural sector lacks a correct strategy for attracting funds: „There is no vision, no business plan for the beneficiaries of funds. In Romania, everybody feels they are qualified to do anything. We have enough boardinghouses to host half of Europe and they are empty. In the industry there are factories being put up for sale or shutting down because there is no market for their products. All these things are caused by the fact that we are attracting funds, but there is no business vision for the long term”.

Sorin Minea believes that Romania has a well established place on the European agricultural market, but we are not doing a good job of exploiting it: „There has been lots of talk about land owners joining cooperatives, but the system was not applicable because in Romania the principle «If I lose, everyone loses». There is lots of money to be made through agriculture. But Romania has no working capital, we have no money set aside for periods of crisis”.

The chairman of Romalimenta urged farmers to get together and create organizations and he warned that Romania's huge potential when it comes to organic farming and agritourism.

(A.T.)