

“We are still working with equipment that should be in a museum”

There are still farmers in Romania working with equipment that belongs in a museum, according to Laurențiu Baci, the president of the Romanian League of the Farmers’ Associations (LAPAR), who added that, even though it is the most important sector, Romania’s agriculture is still rudimentary and far from what it should be.

“if we do not manage efficiently the little money we have available, we will remain stuck at the level of the 1920s. We are still using equipment that should be in a museum. Also, in Romania the workload per tractor is about 55 hectares, whereas in Hungary it is 15 hectares per tractor, and 5 hectares per tractor in Austria. And this is another factor that contributes to an effective agricultural sector. We still have a rudimentary agriculture, far from what we would like it to be”.

According to Mr. Baci, some of the major problems of the sector are the volume of imports, which is 15-20% higher than in other countries, as well as the price of Diesel fuel, which is 1.2-1.3 Euros per liter, as opposed to 70-80 Eurocents in other European countries.

Borrowing is still a problem that farmers have to deal with, because the bank interest rates are 10-12%, compared to the interest rate of 4-5% charged in other countries to farmers. The president of the LAPAR said: “There was lots of talk this year about having a very good harvest. A European report shows that the output for 2013 saw increases ranging from 2.5-13% compared to 2012. We fail to understand the reason why prices in agriculture have increased 50%, whereas in other European countries, prices have fallen proportionally to the rise of the output”, Laurențiu Baci further said, and he went on to say that “the managing of European funds was very ineffective. We have no courage, nor the political will to exit this deadlock”.

In his opinion, the European grants should be invested in irrigations, in rural development, research, processing, in agricultural exploitation then in projects such as snail or ostrich farms, because investments in crops bring profit in just a year.

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