

MANAGEMENT NEO COMPETITIVENESS AND ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE IN AGRICULTURE

Phds. Mihai DORNENU¹

ABSTRACT

The modern economic life reveals the contribution of management to the improvement of performance in various fields. It could be considered as a factor that support progress and influence the activities by establishing how are them organized and co-ordinated, how resources are used and how cultural values guides the work of the employees engaged in operational and functional processes within and organization. Management also enables the change needed to adapt to the dynamic of the environment. A challenge for Romania was the state of the agriculture along time. In this context, it is useful a better knowledge regarding agricultural management. The paper focuses on a review, analysis, and pursues the steps to be followed by a performing agricultural management. The authors envisage both the experience from Romanian agriculture, and the experience from the EU Member States. The latest ones were considered because in their case the use of the agricultural policies' advantages combined with good management resulted in large production and exports of agricultural products.

Keywords: agriculture, management, agricultural management, knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern economy, management manifests, widely accepted, as a new factor of competitiveness and performance. The relevance of agriculture to the economy in general and the Romanian one, in particular, requires increasingly strong orientation towards management, generating new dimensions and ensuring its scientific aspect as predominant, being also needed a different attitude and a different mood based, inter alia, on the involvement and proactive thinking on the part of those managing farms, particularly when they have a commercial character, being so connected to national and even international economic flows, authority and responsibility being full based on private property.

Such a way of looking at things involves conducting training processes, enriching the knowledge and training, and consulting, as a result of the numerous problems facing farmers in the market economy. However, it is not without interest to know what was under the managerial aspect in various stages of relatively recent history of our country, with reference to tradition and transition of management as a result of fundamental changes in the nature of social and political regimes. Moreover, Romanian agriculture, in the interwar period and in the postwar until 1991 and beyond was the "case" for the management approach. Every time it was considered a matter that fall within either empirical or scientific management.

METHOD OF OPERATION

The development of this work was preceded by the formulation of its objectives, found inside of it and the choice of methods for investigating specific management processes and phenomena of the reference period.

Given the theme title and the period investigated, considered relatively long, it was necessary to perform an extensive documentation, using various bibliographic sources and observation and interpretation of contemporary management issues in agriculture to try to capture its specificity (what was done, by whom, how, etc.) from various periods, nature of the economy, driven by property type, putting his mark on managerial behavior of those with agricultural occupations, as appropriate: small producers, owners and administrators of estates managers (directors of agricultural enterprises, agricultural cooperatives presidents) that have holdings in the years of socialism or those created after 1991, having the status of companies or agricultural

¹ *Phds., Mihai DORNEANU, Faculty of Agro-Food Economics and Environment, Academy of Economic Studies of Bucharest, Str. Mihail Moxa, nr.5-7, District 1, Bucharest, Romania, Phone, (+40)021 319 19 00 , 021 319 19 01, fax +40 21 319 18 99, Mobil 0740 466 140, e-mail: mdorneanu7@gmail.com

(associations). It is a very diverse "world" in many ways, general education, professional and managerial, distinguishing them greatly. Since it could not be achieved a comprehensive approach of the thematic area, given the size of the paper, were emphasized the trends considered essential. For this was used synthesis, operating it in the case of the final conclusions too.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is known that agriculture in Romania has known different regimes of land (property types) that have influenced one way or another, its manifestation in the economic, social and economic situation of those who were employed in agriculture. Since the early part of the nineteenth century, Nicolae Bălcescu referred to such matters (Bălcescu, 1849). Subsequently, numerous works have been developed, manifesting prosperity interest to agriculture. In the preface to his "Special agricultural policy of Romania" Gheorghe Ionescu - Sisești presented in a synthetic manner, numerous works by various authors, in which they addressed issues related to agriculture and the peasantry, pointing out that "peasantry Romanian life had to be entirely reconstructed after charters and authentic historical sources in the latest weather" (Ionescu-Sisești), stressing in this regard, the role of the great historian Nicolae Iorga.

The agricultural situation is presented in a paper by Nicolae Xenopol (Xenopol, 2013) references covering a long period of time, covering the second half of the nineteenth century, until 1913. He notes that in general, the Romanian economy, with wealth, which plays its prosperity in time, it "can be seen terrible poverty." Highlighting the "bright side", we reckoned, as written, no umbrellas, including those in agriculture.

Table 1 1930 agricultural census

Category of holdings by area ha	Number of holdings	Area held by each holding category ha	Share in total number of farms %	Share in total agricultural area %
0-10, of which:	3 020 000	9 490 000	92	48
0 - 5	2 460 000	5 535 000	74,9	28
10-50	235 000	3 895 000	7,2	19,8
Over 50	25 000	6 365 000	0,8	32,2

Source: INS

Prewar Romanian agriculture was dominated by small peasant farm, oriented, especially, for subsistence. From the total number of farms existing in 1930, which was 3.28 million, the holdings up to 10 hectares, representing 92% (those with up to 5 hectares accounted for 74.9%), their average agricultural area being of 3.1 ha (General Agricultural Census 1930) (Table 1).

**Table 2 Farms and total area by size classes of the total area,
by the legal status of holdings**

Category of holdings by area ha	Number of holdings	Area held by each holding category ha	Share in total number of farms %	Share in total agricultural area %
0,1-10, of wich:	3 747 365	5 732 345,28	97,4	36,5
0,1-5	3 524 432	4 245 005,07	91,7	27,0
10-50	75 636	1 338 445,91	2,0	8,5
Over 50	22 244	8 624 236,22	0,6	55,0
Total	3845245	15 695 027,41	100,0	100,0

Source: INS

There is a better operating structure than occurred immediately the after application of the Land Law 18/1991, when there were over 5 million properties. Gradually, the number of farms has decreased, reaching in 2010 to 3,845,245 (General Agricultural Census 2010) being 17.2% higher than in 1930 (Table 2 and Table 3).

The average on a farm was, in 1930, 32.8% higher than in 2010 (Table 3).

Table 3 The average area per holding

	1930	2010	% (+/-)
Total holdings	3 280 000	3 845 245	+ 17,2
Agriculture area per holding ha	6,02	4,08	- 32,8
Surface resting on a holding of land use: ha			
- total	-	3,5	-
- Individual holdings	-	2,02	-

Source:

INS

What was in those households was marked by tradition on agriculture, its elements being repeated by rural communities for centuries to come. Mining economy was autarkic, so with little or no elements of openness to economic flows, progress and initiative. "People from Romanian villages, shows philosopher Constantin Radulescu Motru is under collective work tradition every villager is what will make everyone think . He has the courage to start a new job than the deadline set by custom. The world is out of line for Romanian villager, not merely a risk but insane. " (Motru Radulescu, 1998) However, the new initiative is needed for other attitudes.

Household productive behavior endorsement wearing rural communities experience, which was not entirely wrong, but it was certainly enough, if we consider the phenomenon of change that occurs in economic life, it is true, at different rates in different historical periods (much faster lately). Besides, who keeps the tradition says the author cited above, refuses to light. A household could also ensure the progress of agriculture and improving the living conditions of the farming population. Romanian leading personalities have highlighted this and tried to formulate solutions to move to other organizational forms in order to ensure better implementation of land property value. In a mostly rural civilization as the Romanian of

the time, it was natural that great men, such as N.O. - Lupa Popovici, Gheorghe Ionescu Sisești, Virgil Madgaru, ND Cornățeanu Victor Slăvescu etc. to look upon agriculture, realizing its economic and social role. Issues area raised was large enough to highlight the contribution of it, as appropriate, regarding: managing estates, agricultural policy, intensification of agriculture (Cornățeanu, 1941), cooperation and association and more.

Along with small and medium-sized households (7.2 % of the total, with an average area of 16.6 ha) in structure and large mining operation (holdings), recognized as the estates, forming after formulation then big capitalist property. They were in number 25 000, had an average size of 254 acres and operated 32.2% of the total agricultural surface (General Agricultural Census 1930).

Gheorghe Ionescu Sisești, renowned agronomist and agricultural economist, was preoccupied with issues of agricultural policy (Parpală, 1995) and the administration (management) of large-scale mining operations, showing, among other things, that "there is neither matter nor private profitability the economic function of agriculture in the body, which is the quality leader exploitation (Ionescu-Șisești). Opting for version where the owner is the driver, seeming conflict with Frederick Taylor who claimed to lead the one who knows . It seems, however, that Ionescu Sisești need to lead knowledge was implicit as add, following the above statement that if the owner "wants to run one operation, but does not have the time or training necessary for this then he joined a specialist, an administrator (manager), leading the operation, according to the indications of the general, but in accordance with the technical and economic"(Ionescu-Șisești). He appreciated that if the hole initiative was not left to the manager, exploitation often suffer disunity in leadership. The outlined ideas about leadership (manager quality, holding, the knowledge to lead, management unit) are found today in Management Science, that is widely debated and developed. To them are added Ionescu Sisești concerns, and other authors, and other management issues in agriculture, such as: management of production factors, the size of the operation, including operation lesser forms of exploitation, etc. Some of their assessment remain valid today, if we consider that the current operating structure of our agriculture farms with large commercial nature, there are also many small, subsistence farms.

After World War II the Romanian agriculture has experienced since 1949 the movement to command economy, based on a type of property (socialist) fundamentally different from the one above. Occurs the transition to another management, being found excessive centralization for the one already existing, is exercising the leadership of the party at the time and in the economy.

For agricultural units, especially those belonging to the state, most decisions were taken outside of them, whether they concerned the determination of the activity, or the provide of inputs or the outputs (the destination of the products obtained). Although there were higher education teaching units, weak autonomy has limited their decision, not to speak of the enterprise. It is true that agricultural units were collective management bodies (participatory management of late) . With clearly delineated attributions, they must fit into what was called the "up". This limitation of the power of decision was to lose a potentially great creativity and initiative, the rigidity of the system are well known.

Agricultural cooperatives, although rightfully belongs to those who have been, fel some "pressure" such as price controls, centralized distribution of resources, selling products based on contracts, prohibition to process agricultural products, to hold technical means (the work being done by agricultural mechanization resorts, payment being kind) etc.

In the above conditions the management units of the period referred to sum up, as a rule, in the operative, in order to obtain products of vegetable or animal origin according to the profile of each unit. As known, however, that management is richer experience of those

who exercise it could not expand since managerial tasks and thus their ability to work was limited. However, without action can not develop managerial skills.

After the transition to market economy was necessary, of course, little more than an operational management, the former managers being found in a world of agribusiness, which included: private initiative, negotiations, environmental awareness, with special reference to square, etc. It has been said, and perhaps rightly, that things are not going well in the economy, in general, we do not have managers. It is no wonder, because no practical work did not help, nor training, higher education, agriculture and economic position of the focus is on the organization and planning that is exercised in the context of known. Driving course introduced at a time, fold it all the specific concerns of the system. Another transition occurred after reconstitution management of private property, which has radically changed the "picture" of Romanian agriculture in terms of structures (Voicu, 2000): operation (types and forms of exploitations, production, marketing, etc.). Under the new type of property holdings acquired full autonomy. This opened new managerial and entrepreneurial perspectives. It was found that, though, in terms of ownership, agriculture corresponds to the new type of economy, however, there were issues that do not help realizing its advantage, enhancement of existing resources and the rapid progress of the industry, such as: "Atomization" and separation properties plot, insufficient financial means smallholdings, technical resources etc.

Contemporary period is specific operating structure, arising from the land reform initiated by the application of the Land Law No. 18/1991, based on farms.¹

Structural image of agriculture in terms of exploitation, is dominated by individual farms in 2010, accounting for 99.1 % of their total number (Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2012). The rest, about 1 % is the legal status of farms mainly agricultural societies and companies, which brings to mind the name of economic organizations and authorized individuals, individual enterprises and family businesses. Their share is insignificant, but their relevance comes from how agricultural practice, using technology and management, which may lead to higher performance, and with openness to economic flows of agricultural products.

Whatever type of holding, given that it uses human input and intervention work, it is necessary that to be made on the basis of efficiency and will obtain economic results (positive outputs) as a requirement of farm consolidation.

Achieving such things goes to exercise their management. Depending on the type and form of holding the level of expertise, economic and managerial responsibilities of those who have this kind of recourse to management is different, reporting being done mainly to its scientific content.

If **subsistence farms** prevalent not only among individual farms, but also in their total number, intervening actions of persons who hold management (heads of farms) as a result of the reconstruction and building of private property. According that such people have little knowledge assessments, and most are old as age (National Strategic Plan for Rural Development 2007-2013). In addition, these holdings:

- have a small area and increase a limited number of animals of different species;
- have low capitalization;
- operate as closed systems;

¹ Named by the official statistics, there are, however, different views on their name: units, households, farms, ranches. It is important that the name is actually surprising that each type, and the use of a generic, whatever it may be, it can not cover, at least in case, for operating all parts of the structure, see, among others: Voicu, R., Dobre, Juliana, organization and development of agricultural units, ASE Publishing House, 2003 Bold, I., Claus, A., agricultural holding - organization, development, mining, Ed Mirton, Timisoara, 1995, Claus, A., agricultural holding - organization, development, mining, Ed Mirton, Timisoara, 1995.

- have a poor economic power for farming resorting often to income from other sources;
- domestic agricultural produce and process, some of them to the food needs of the family;
- often use seed from their own production, uncertified, traditional technologies based on works carried out manually, and uses animal energy work but noticed some insertion of agricultural equipment in the sense of seeking some means of this kind to perform work requiring great effort (plowing, harvesting grain cereals etc .), which shows a certain openness for the purchase of inputs;
- in case of developed agriculture, farms have also disappeared or have a very poor area of representativeness, their place being taken by commercial family farms connected, so domestic economic flows, helping to ensure the operation of the routes of the various products and agri-food system countries.

Exercised management relies heavily on tradition, experience gained in the course of time, under the influence of that happening in rural communities. " Romanian rural populationstands in the tradition of collective work. Each villager makes what he believes will make everyone". In these circumstances, we can speak of a traditional management model, with a sort of back in time, to what happens in Romanian agriculture under socialism (Rădulescu-Motru, 1999).

Decisions taken are generated by concern for the needs of family food consumption and intermediate consumption insurance. Multiple activities of such holding, although not high volume, assume that such persons have knowledge of various kinds (technical, economical, managerial, etc.).

These farms are a reality of Romanian agriculture, producing food they have a social role and will continue to exist alongside other relevant holdings in greater or lesser practice of commercial agriculture.

If individual subsistence farms, the situation from the point of view of management, is similar, and these traits found in the case of subsistence, their names show that combines elements of the same kind as those on a certain openness to the environment, inducing some quantities of the channels, which meets the Romanian agrifood system operation, and purchasing certain quantities of inputs.

Opening to the environment, be it even partial, impose their decisions on the scope, to consider specific elements of the environment, with emphasis on the economic, market acting factor. It takes information from clients – individuals and / or businesses. Orientation activities (crops, livestock etc. categories obtained from the product) must be made according to customer requirements and quality standards, and other aspects of the environment.

Given the openness to economic flows, the heads of these holdings should focus more on highlighting the costs and revenues, to negotiate relationships with intermediaries or directly with clients to organization and planning, removing hazard related phenomena, gradually approaching to managerial behavior of a commercial family farms.

Agricultural societies (associations with legal personality) belong to associations with simple associative holdings. Their establishment was made for various reasons, the provisions of Law 36/1991 on agricultural companies and other forms of association in agriculture.(Law 36/1991)

The companies were formed by transforming state enterprises into joint stock companies, according to Law 15/1990, they suffered in the aftermath of privatization, in various forms or by showing the private initiative (limited liability companies), which works according to Law 31/1990 on trading companies.

Management of companies mentioned is of course other than the subsistence and semi-subsistence farms, although not commercial agricultural companies, some products satisfy addressing requirements of their members, while others make the sale.

Agricultural companies and trade actions functional organizational structure (management) and operational, and if the limited liability may be one or more associates.

Management bodies are created and have duties according to the law, participatory management, as for any business organization, being institutionalized (Nicolescu, 1999), operating above the laws for agricultural companies constituting the general meeting of shareholders, the Board of Directors, it may elect a steering committee and for limited liability companies, general meeting of shareholders, the Board and Committee. Laws provide as appropriate, each managerial body duties.

The existence of hierarchical management structures at different levels of their managers with higher education background and management, are essential for its functions to be performed according to the requirements of management science.

And in a more or less complex, with the different number of levels, where decisions are carried out and where functional and operational processes is necessary for senior management to use coordination to focus all efforts towards the goals and the "company, agricultural" to maintain the "path" established by the prediction function (which operates with plans, which are basic guidelines to follow and reporting achievement) .

The conditions under which the agricultural production, especially in the vegetable, raises its organizational work processes (displacement technical means labor on certain distances, works under the influence of climate, providing social elements), so coordination is difficult. Operative nature of management is assumed, since the work to be done in due time, otherwise the layout of the disorder, with negative impact on the production.

The control function is more relevant than other business organization as in agriculture, biotic processes can be found, can occur in the system due to disturbances such as pest and disease state which damages the plant growth and the growth of animals. It is the emphasis on active control (preventive), (Thietart , 1999) as the reagent not only help in another cycle of production and management, their conclusions on this occasion, changing how to proceed in the future.

The economic organization of agriculture such decision making is carried out on different parts of their business that require information, identified and collected from the environment, they aimed at: providers, beneficiaries, brokers, real and potential competitors, agricultural policy, labor market employment, financial institutions and insurance etc. Environmental knowledge, identifying trends in the different processes and phenomena, allows the organization to make appropriate decisions, regulatory actions taking place on its internal and connection to economic flows.

Some agricultural organizations of the nature of companies are large sizes, cultivating areas of tens of thousands of acres, concentrating large herds of animals or birds with vertically integrated business, are able to use the knowledge management methods offered, such as participative management and management by objectives, which can help improve their economic performance (Nicolescu, 2008).

TOWARDS ANOTHER MANAGEMENT IN ROMANIAN AGRICULTURE

It is necessary to move to another management, which is common to all farms, but it is necessary for individual farms, especially because they hold most of the agricultural land and arable, labor, livestock, etc.

What happens with these holdings determines the state of Romanian agriculture. The heads of these farms make decisions, even if they call it, with serious incidents on the economic situation of their families (family heritage and the holding coincide) and the broader social, referring to their contribution to providing food products population needed.

Attention to decision-making processes of these holdings increase, if we consider that decisions are one-man stating, that there is a single decision-making center, which is not the case for limited liability companies.

It is easy to assert the need for browsing "road" to the new management, but it is doable if we consider very large number of individual holdings and characteristics of those who manage them. The high age of the heads of farms can contribute to lack of interest by: (Voicu, 2003) strengthening and modernization of farms, diversification of activities and events entrepreneurship is known that the last aspect is stronger for young people. Issues relating to age, lack of funds and rising prices of inputs may lead them not to use new elements in the cultivation and animal husbandry, to a certain openness to flows of agricultural products exist and closed systems feature a subsistence holding . Might the time to eliminate many of these holdings and they will maintain a quasi isolation.

From the perspective of generational change, the installation of young farmers in rural areas, with financial support for this (measure 1.1.2. "Setting up of young farmers", the RDP 2007-2013) actions that are training farmers (measure 1.1.1 " training of farmers and foresters' of the RDP 2007-2013) are essential for management to incorporate as much knowledge, valuing the course, and some valuable items related to tradition and experience.

Opportunity for general training, professional and management is determined by elements of the type above, strengthened by the fact that when someone wants to take a holding is required, among others, to present a diploma certifying that they have knowledge at a certain level.

If elderly people can not be used in the training, because of understandable reasons, this can be replaced with guidance, advice, information and monitoring the functioning of certain agricultural activities, which would lead to use to good agricultural practice.

For young people, the general prior professional preparation training, advice and guidance, can improve the productive and managerial behavior seeking: methods of farming, choice of activities, opportunities to inform the manifestation of openness to the external environment, with respect to the negotiation and implementation of relationships with suppliers and recipients, etc connecting the flows of agricultural products.

Economic knowledge related to management issues with respect to expenses, revenues, gross margin, planning activities, development of budgets as benchmarks and reporting results are required and must, of course, be assured.

Information is also relevant to those who manage farms. Agricultural and Rural Strategy for EU aderation – 2003 appreciate that Romanian farmers were less informed or do not have information regarding: prices of agricultural products in different market segments (retailers, industrial process, etc.) And various locations of the national territory is available on different product attributes, price developments over a year of marketing.

They have, therefore, limited information, which creates difficulties for decision making on product choice (what to produce ?) and their involvement in the marketing phenomenon that diminishes their income.

Since the charges are made and collected revenue accounting as partnerships should be among the concerns of producers. In some cases, expenditure is assessed in a comprehensive way, claiming that they were large, which may be true, but financial education assumes otherwise, proceeding an exactly counting on.

In preparation producers can highlight the benefits of cooperation, even in its simplest forms, especially since, according to appraisals, individualism seems to characterize Romanian. Since then (the text was published in 1937 by the Romanian Bucharest psychological research Society), it is possible that things have changed, regarding economic and social dynamism. However, individualism, resumed conceptually, in the current period, adding the adjective "destructive" is not beneficial either in the social or economic life. In

modern organizations are required cooperation, teamwork, cooperative efforts, such examples of our agriculture producers are represented by groups and associative forms.

CONCLUSIONS

Conducting research in agriculture has allowed noting the persistence of strong elements of traditional farm management in the interwar period, the households in the non-coexisting during socialist agriculture, the return, in the case of individual holdings after reconstitution of private ownership in the industry. However, concerns have found expression leading to large farms (estates) existing before the Second World War, the large scale management units specific to the period of application of the Land Law 18/1991 and its transition by type of property in agriculture. Greater emphasis was placed on agricultural management under current conditions, when we are dealing with an operating structure that coexists in diverse holdings, from subsistence farming to large companies, and agriculture is to develop and operate according to the requirements of market economy.

Below, we list the main conclusions of the paper.

- A good management is exercised overall competitiveness, making necessary an extension of a different attitude towards it, especially because there are manufacturers who consider that production is everything, but getting them right to consumer demands and economic efficiency involves many decisions correctly formulated and applied in real time.

- During the studied period, was found in farm management even if it was not named as such, but not in the proportions found in the economy since the second half of the twentieth century, when it was recognized in the current sense (Drucker, 1999).

- With all the changes in the political and social existing, reference period being specific and different political systems, there were elements of continuity of management in various forms, since any company, regardless of its ideological regime, legal and political management needs if you want the economy to thrive in innovative and creative rhythm (idea belonging to J. Burham, found in his managerial revolution cited by Petrescu, I. in Management Reporter Publishing Holding 1991).

- Fundamental social and political changes that saw Romania in the period studied, their mark on the functioning of the Romanian economy, including the management of organizations of various kinds, including agricultural. Management of different forms of expression, depending on several factors. For example, during the centralized management of the economy, agricultural units with limited autonomy and state interference manifests political factor in their management mainly being due at operational, many decisions regarding their relationships with upstream and downstream were considered to functions and powers of the managerial bodies (collective leadership).

- Changes have been mentioned as elements of continuity management are found only partially, from one period to another, requiring new knowledge to find solutions in other circumstances. Proved steadier management based on tradition.

- Due to different operational structures coexisted in each period management based on the empirical knowledge. Even in socialist agriculture, along with managers from large companies who had higher education were small farmers in areas that appealed more to the tradition of non-co.

- After application of the Land Law 18/1991, it was operating prewar structure, even emphasizing the " atomization " of land holdings and subsistence households resorted to tradition inherited.

- For over 20 years there have been structural changes, but slowly, that increased the farm who use knowledge of various kinds including the management.

- Managerial behavior in different periods shows the need for transmission and acquisition of knowledge along with the native person belonging Manager to be active in management exercise, especially that expands the role of knowledge in the economy.

- Aria managerial knowledge, and not only the broad and diverse and complex decision problems requires management consulting operation, farmers will be increasingly connected to rebuilding agriculture requirements.

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