

STATE AND PERSPECTIVE OF OILSEED RAPE CULTIVATION IN POLAND IN THE YEARS 1989-1999

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Intensive development of oilseed rape production in Poland took place in the latter part of '80s. The highest production - almost 1,6 million ton was achieved in 1989. From the beginning of '90s recession of rapeseed production came. That recession was induced by wrong relation of prices to the production cost. Small profitability of rape cultivation and lack of money made farmers to diminish expenditure on production of that plant. Low level of fertilization and plant protection caused decrease of yield. Moreover adequate price relation between rape and wheat was not ensured. Much higher variation coefficient of rape yield (24%) than wheat yield (8%) caused farmers to reserve funds for plants which could ensure higher and more dependable yield. Wheat cultivation was more profitable because the higher risk of rape cultivation was not compensated by higher price. Recession of state farms (in which till later '80s over 70% of oilseed rape were cultivated) intensified regress of oilseed rape production. Decrease of oilseed rape production were also caused by very bad agroclimatic conditions (soil drought in 1992, rainfall during harvest in 1993, frosty winters in 1996 and 1997, flood in 1997).

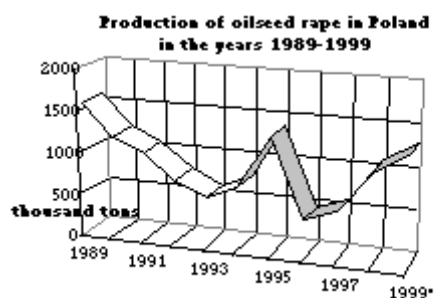


Fig 1



Fig 2

In 1995 things got better. In this year high yield was achieved because of increase of cultivated area to 606 thousand ha. This increase was a result of improvement of oilseed rape cultivation profitability in 1994 when price of oilseed rape was two and a half times higher than price of wheat. Unfortunately, after harvest in 1995 price relation between wheat and oilseed rape amounted to 1,6. In 1998 profitability of oilseed rape cultivation was improved again. In this year, high production of oilseed rape resulted from cultivated area (466 thousand ha) and also from high yield of plants (23,5 dt/ha). Climatic conditions in this year conducted to good wintering (only 6,2% oilseed rape cultivated area was ploughed in spring), early start of vegetation (about three weeks earlier than in 1998), good flowering and maturing. Unfavourable circumstances on cereal market: low prices and difficulties in sale influence increasing winter oilseed rape sowing area to 470 thousand ha. It is also estimated that in 1999 yield will amount to 24 dt/ha, production to 1,3 million tons, seed processing to 940 thousand tons and raw oil production to 380 thousand tons. Opportunity of rapeseed export is estimated at 50 - 60 thousand tons of seeds.

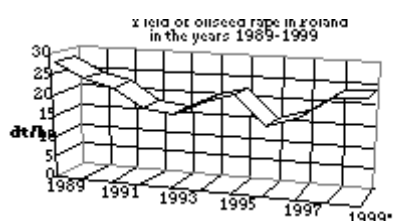


Fig 3

All this data suggest that recession of oilseed rape production is overcome. Thanks to breeder from Plant Breeding and Acclimatization Institute Poland has oilseed rape cultivars well adapted to soil and climatic conditions. Among registered Polish cultivars (Bolko, Bor, Leo, Mar, Marita, Polo, Kana) the most popular are Kana and Marita. These cultivars are characterized by high yield, low glucosinolate content and resistance to fungi diseases. We can also expect improvement of situation because of high oilseed rape consumption, what is a result of intensive advertising and putting on the market new products with different commercial characters.

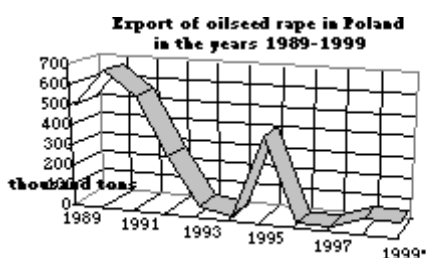


Fig.4

Profitability of cultivation warrants a regular increase of yield and sowing area. Soil and climatic conditions in Poland make an increase of oilseed rape cultivated area possible. Oilseed rape needs soil from I to IVb quality class. In Poland such soils cover an area of 10 million hectares. Oilseed rape should not be cultivated on the same field more often than every four years, and because of it theoretically in our country it could be cultivated on 2500 ha. Therefore, Poland has a chance to be again an exporter and a big producer of oilseed rape. Moreover in our country there is a tradition of oilseed rape cultivation and this plant is a subject of many research works which warrants a regular progress in breeding and gives an access to knowledge about proper phytotechnics and plant protection against pests and diseases.