

The Role of the Union of Growers and Processors of Oilseed Crops, Prague in Growing of Oilseed Rape in the Czech Republic

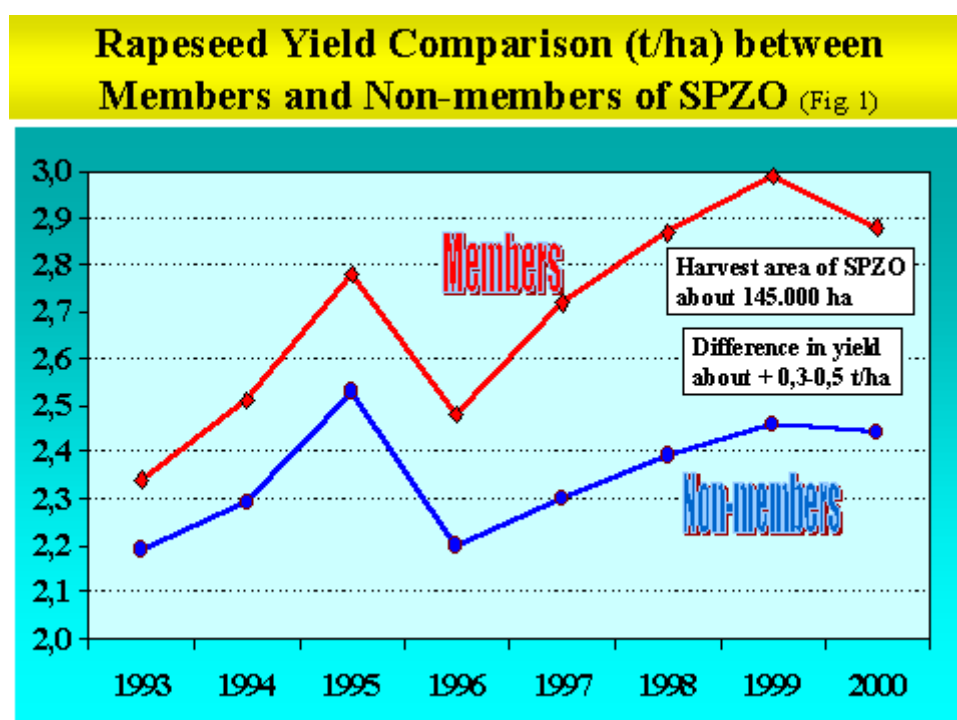
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HISTORY

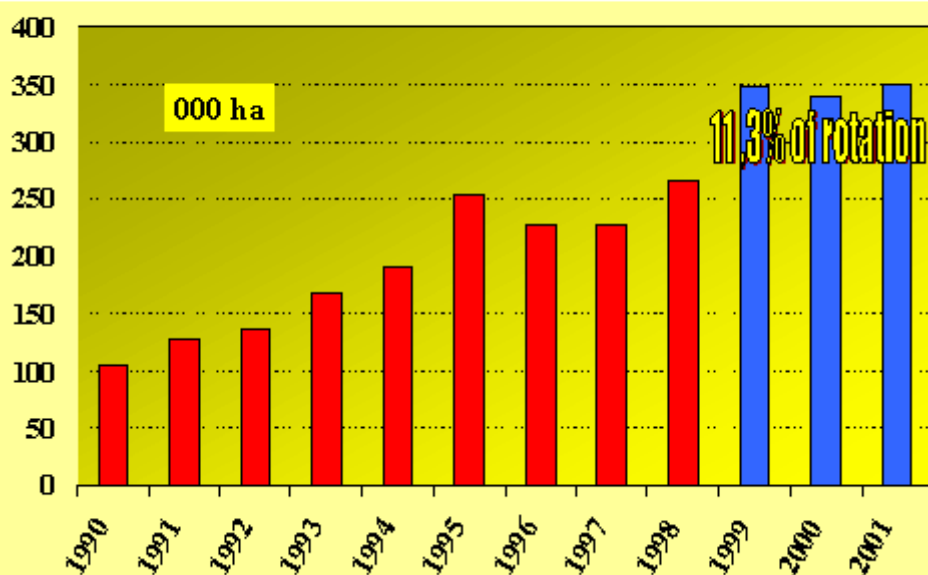
The System of Rapeseed Production (SVR) has been established at the Czech University of Agriculture, Prague in 1983. Based on it - after social changes in Czechoslovakia (1989) - Union of Growers and Processors of Oilseed Crops (SPZO) was set up in 1990. The objectives of SVR and SPZO were similar, but legal organisation was different.

This association of researchers, growers and processors determined own targets in rapeseed production: to enlarge growing area, to increase and stabilise yields, and – last but not least – to improve quality of delivered rapeseed (change from 0 to 00 varieties). These aims were fulfilled step by step (Fig. 1, 2, 3).

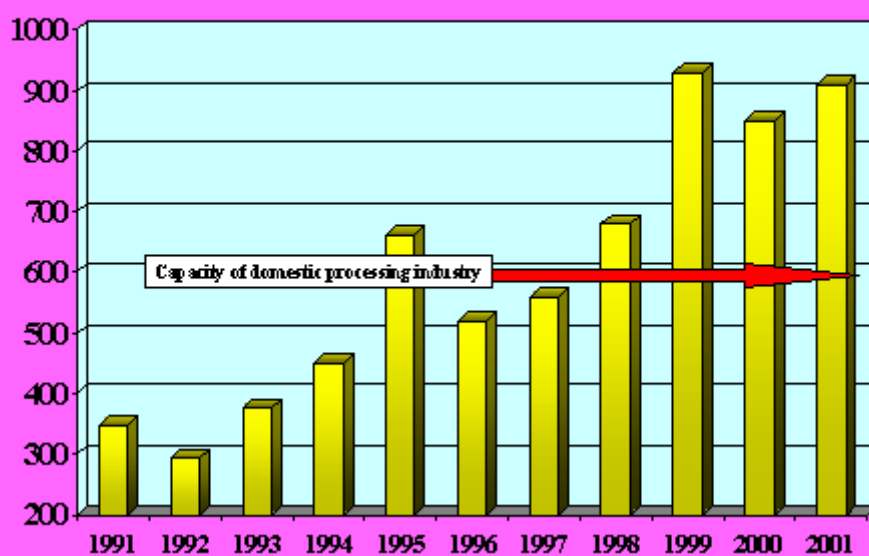


Area of produced rapeseed gradually increased in Czech Republic to approximately 350 thousands ha. Average national yield is about 2,6 t/ha, with members of SPZO having yield by 300-400 kg/ha higher in average. The total production reaches around 900 thousand t of rapeseed now.

Rapeseed Area in Czech Republic (Fig. 2)

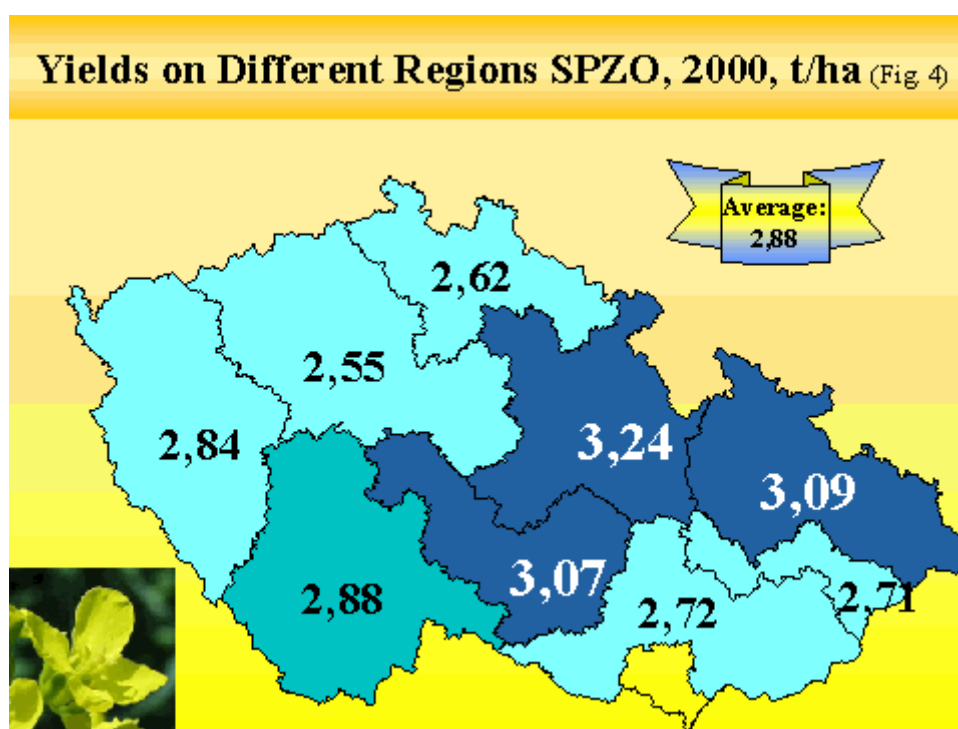


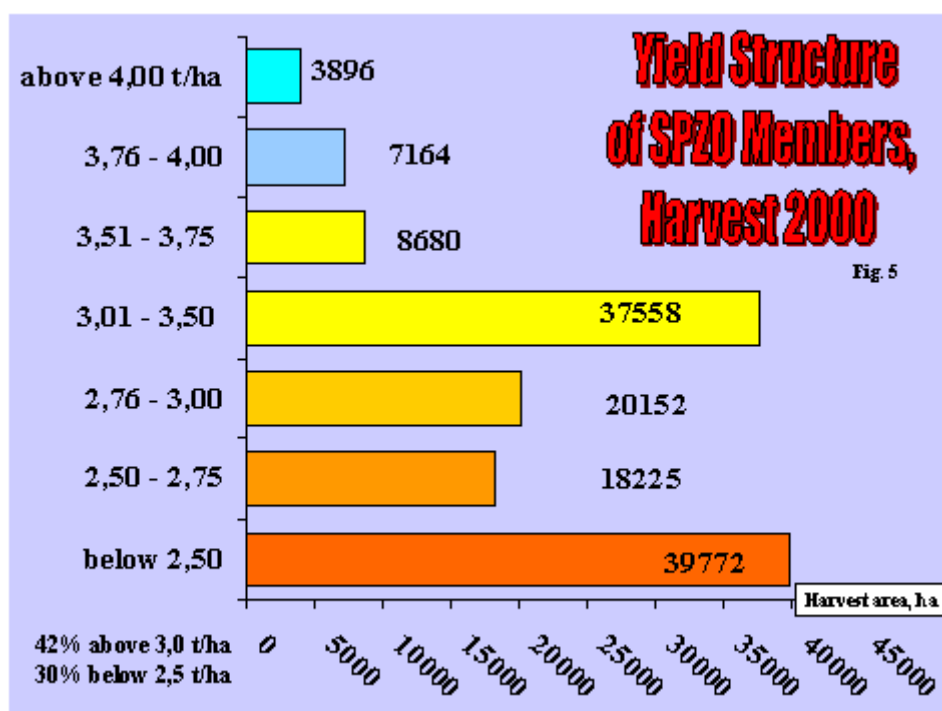
Rapeseed Production in Czech Republic (Fig. 3)



For better contacts with farmers and for the improvement of information transfer the SPZO-agroservice was organized since 1990. This service comprises 9 advisers. Each adviser has own region with more or less specific climatic and agroecological conditions. This is why very different yields can be reached in these regions (Fig. 4).

Individual members of SPZO achieve also – of course - different yields. Important is, most of members are above national average level due to quick information transfer and counselling activities of SPZO. 42% of them are more than 3 t/ha, actually (Fig. 5).





STRUCTURE

The structure of SPZO-members is as following

<i>No. of members</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Market share</i>
820	Growers	42% of rapeseed area
20	Trading organizations	-
5	Seed companies	85% of certified seeds
5	Processors	80% of domestic processing
3	Research institutes and universities	-
853	Members in total	

ACTIVITIES

There are many periodic and also irregular activities of SPZO. SPZO gives and organizes yearly some seminars and trials. To the main activities of SPZO can be designated

- About 10 spring seminars
- About 15 field days with viewing of semi-operating testing of varieties
- One 3-day national seminar for about 800 members
- Many of both small-plot and semi-operating trials
 - Varieties of winter and spring rape in 40 localities
 - Variety of sunflower in 6 localities

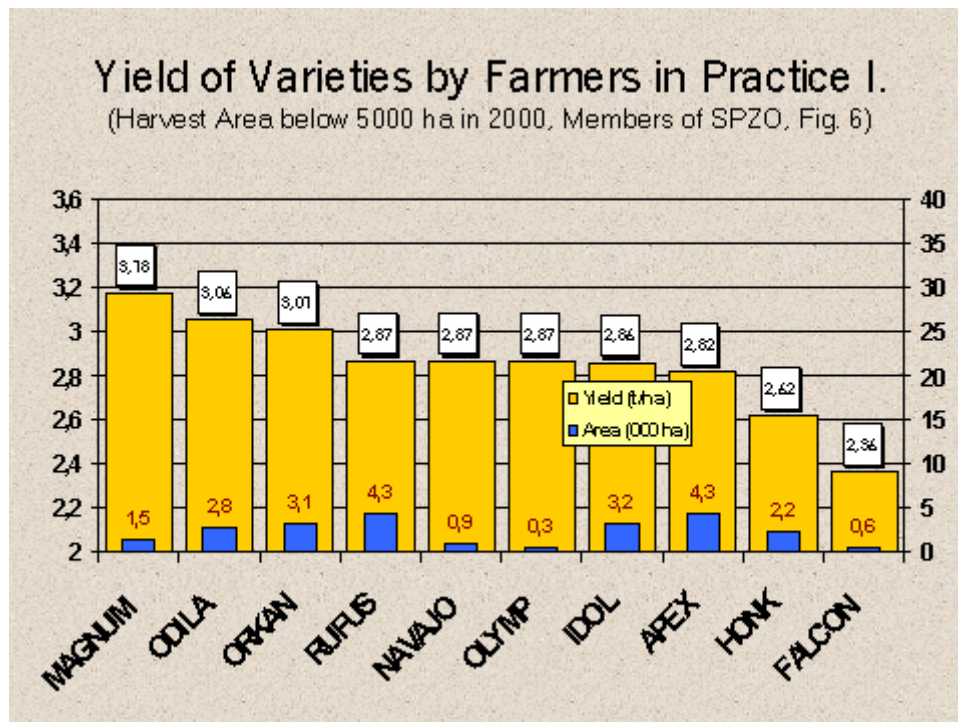
- Growth regulators in 12 localities
- Fertilizing in 11 localities
- Regulation of ripening in 4 localities
- Seed treatment in 2 localities
- Fungicides in 12 localities
- Crop management in 4 localities

SPZO also publishes for its members approximately twice per month information bulletin *Flowers of oilseeds*. It offers actual information on growing and trading of rapeseed. Another regular publishing activity (1x per year) is Standpoint on rapeseed varieties and Standpoint to pesticides.

Chemical (pesticide) firms are not members of SPZO. It ensures independence of SPZO on their trade interests. SPZO can therefore advice objectively individual pesticides on the basis of own trials and experience of its members.

VARIETIES IN FARMERS' CONDITIONS

SPZO analyses characteristics of varieties not only in trials, but also by farmers in condition of real practice. We have statistics from about 135 thousand ha each year. Varieties are divided into two groups for "small" and "large". Criterion for it is harvest area (5000 ha). Yield data from the year 2000 are shown in Fig. 6, and Fig. 7.



Yield of Varieties by Farmers in Practice II.

(Harvest Area above 5000 ha in 2000, Members of SPZO, Fig. 7)

