Establishing a Network to Analyze the International Competitiveness of Apple Production

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Introduction

Nowadays apples are marketed worldwide. Hence, stakeholders in national and international apple value chains, such as apple producers, manufacturers of production factors, retailers or apple processors, need to know where, how and under what kind of conditions today's and future apple production takes place. For predictions in this direction an international comparison of the prevailing apple production systems and the analysis of their competitiveness are crucial.

Source: www.oekolandbau.de

Objective

The scientific network *agri benchmark* Horticulture will be developed, established and managed in order to analyze and benchmark international apple production systems and their economics on an annual basis. The main target of the network is to assess the competitiveness of apple production.

Methodology

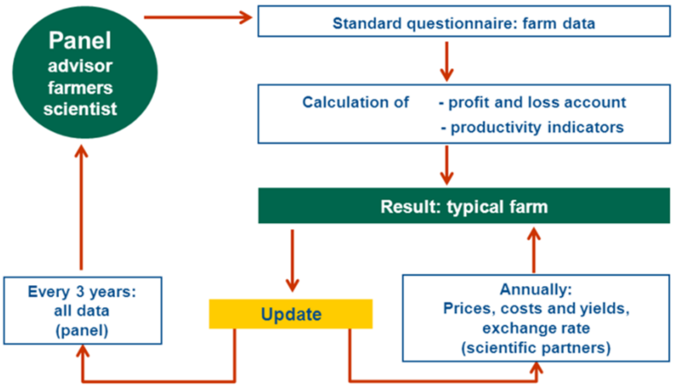

Fig. 1: Methodological background to establish typical farms

Regionally typical models of standardized apple producing farms will be established based on regional expert knowledge derived from focus group discussions (Fig. 1). These typical apple orchards will cover all main characteristics of prevalent production systems in globally important apple production regions. The typical farms vary in size, production technology, productivity etc. For each typical farm monetary and physical input and output data are modeled annually. To reach this, investments, monetary and physical flows of each important production step, such as planting, fertilization, crop protection, harvesting and marketing, are considered in the model.

Output key figures of the model to benchmark the competitiveness are costs of production, cash flow, productivities, and gross margins among others.

Prospects

The approach will be implemented in a three-year starting phase. Within this period the structures required for a long-term management of the network will be developed. Important apple producers such as France, Germany, Italy, China, Chile, USA and South Africa shall be acquired as partners (Fig. 2).

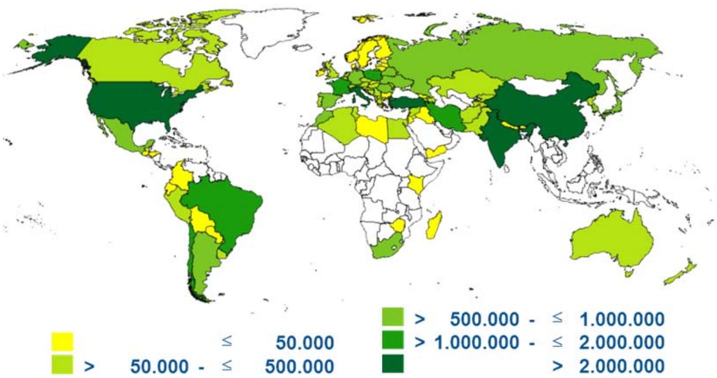

Fig. 2: Global apple production (t) 2010 (Source: FAO 2012)

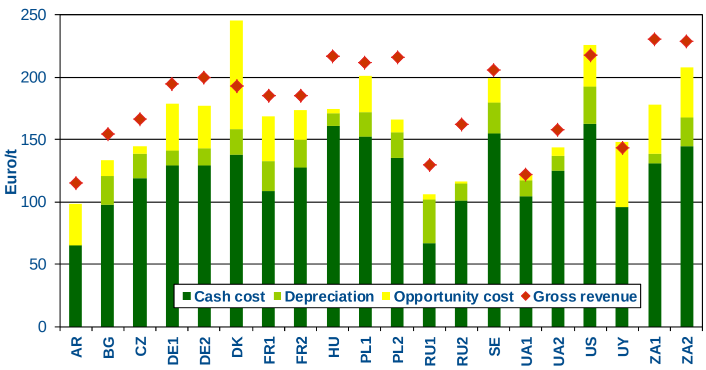

Fig. 3: Expected results illustrated by cost of winter wheat production in 2011 (Source: *agri benchmark* Cash Crop 2012)

Expected results are illustrated in figure 3 for the example of wheat. In the medium term, additional in-depth analyses will be undertaken, e. g. country case studies and food supply chain analyses. Interested bodies are invited to participate.

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