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1. Bulgarian Economy in 2009

In 2009 the Bulgarian economy has undergone its development in conditions of severe financial and economic downturn. As a result, there is a decrease in the gross domestic product (GDP) by 5 %, compared to 2008.
The gross value added (GVA), which resulted from the economic activity within the country during 2009, is 58 864 000 BGN (30 097 000 EUR) according to current prices, which marks a decrease by 2.7% in real values as to GVA in 2008, owing to particular sectors:

- Industrial sector – 7.2%, as industry accounts for 30.3% of the value added in the economy;
- Services – 0.4%, as the share in the total value added is 64.1%;
- Agrarian sector (agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing) – 3.5%, as its share in value added is 5.6%;

The total number of employed staff numbers under service contracting in 2009 is 2 404 633, as their number in 2008 is 2 466 852. The staff numbers employed in the public sector in 2009 are 603 207, from which 14 142 staff numbers are recruited in agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors. In 2008 the number of staff employed in these economic activities was lower – 11 765.
In comparison to the real estate and financial intermediation sectors, agriculture, hunting and forestry remain outside the investments scope. Statistics show that the foreign direct investment in agriculture, hunting and forestry sectors in 2008 are only 1%, and in 2009 they are under 1% (155 000 000 EUR).

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2. Economic Results for Agriculture

The value of the gross production on the sector "Agriculture" for 2009 according to current prices of producers, adds up to 7 610 700 000 BGN. It is formed by the values of:

- Production from crops and plants cultivation – 3 855 200 000 BGN
- Production from livestock breeding – 2 402 200 000 BGN
- Production from inseparable secondary activities – 811 800 000 BGN
- Production from agricultural services – 541 500 000 BGN

The agro-climatic conditions in 2009 were not as favorable as in 2008, when the record yield and production results for many years back were achieved for most of the cultures. This has reflected on the economic results of the sector in 2009. The gross production value of the sector "Agriculture" in 2009 has decreased by 15% in comparison to the previous 2008, mainly due to a decrease in the prices for crops and plants cultivation, and livestock breeding.
The value of the final production from agriculture (the value of production after writing off the internal turnovers) according to baseline prices (prices with included subsidies by product) for 2009 adds up to 7 438 100 BGN, and following the trend of change in the gross production value, it marks a decrease by 20%, compared to 2008. Besides the decrease in the physical production capacity in both sub-sectors – in crops and plants cultivation - by 1.1% and in livestock breeding – by 8.8%, a contribution to this result is also added by the decrease in prices of most agricultural products in 2009, compared to the previous year. The prices of wheat, corn, sunflower, and vegetables have decreased by approximately 30% for example.

The prices of live species have increased - of big cattle – by 13.3%, sheep and goat – by 5.2%, but these of swine (by 2.4%) and poultry (by 1.6%), have decreased. A defining factor for the decrease in livestock breeding is the lower milk production, which accounts for half of the production value in this sub-sector – the physical production capacity has decreased by 12.6% and prices have decreased by 18.1%.
In the structure of the final production in agriculture for 2009, the largest relative share is occupied by crops and plants cultivation – 51.1%. For 2009, the relative share of production from livestock breeding is 30.7%, of production from inseparable non-agricultural secondary activities – 10.9%, and of agricultural services – 7.3%.
The gross value added from agriculture in 2009 follows the trend of change in the values of gross and final production, thus marking a decrease by 22%, compared to 2008. It adds up to 2 880 500 000 BGN according to baseline prices (total for the agrarian sector – 3 313 000 000 BGN). In 2009, the gross value added, according to baseline prices, is 38.76% of the final production value (in million EUR).

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3. Use of Agricultural Land

The land for agricultural use in 2009 is 5 490 113 ha of size. One year earlier, it was 50.9% from the territory of the country. The used agricultural land is formed by the cultivated land, perennial crops, grasslands, family gardens and greenhouses. In 2009, it is 5 029 585 ha, which is 45.3% of the territory of the country. The decrease, compared to 2008 is by 1.4%.
The cultivated land is the land, which includes sowing land, temporary fields with wheat and bean grass and fallow land. In 2009 they account for 3 122 516 ha or 62.1% of the used agricultural land in the country. During the years, the share of cultivated land has increased from 59.5% to 62.1%. Only for 2009, the increase is by approximately 2.1%, compared to 2008, which is the highest increase for the past four years. The increase is due to more land, cultivated with cereals (wheat, barley and rye) and oilseed crops (rape).
The temporary fields with bean and wheat grass in 2009 are 3% of the cultivated land and 1.9% of the used agricultural land in the country. There is a decrease by 6.3% in the size of this land, compared to 2008. The fallow land is land, which is not cultivated during the surveillance year. Cultivated or not, the land remains in this category for not more than two years. In 2009, the fallow land has decreased by 14.4%, compared to 2008. They occupy 196 336 ha, which accounts for 6.3% of the cultivated land and 3.9% of the used agricultural land in the country. In 2009, the fruit plantations are 1.4% of the used agricultural land in the country. The decrease here is by 2%, compared to the previous year, and the decrease in mixed perennial crops is by 36.5%, compared to 2008.
The vineyards in 2009 are 84 438 ha, which is by 16.3% lower than in 2008. The share of vineyards is 1.7% of the used agricultural land.
Permanently productive fields, highland pastures, grasslands with weak productive potential and fruit plantations, in 2009, occupy 1 719 028 ha or 34.2% of the used agricultural land. Their size in 2008 is 1 828 865 ha, which is 35.9% of the used agricultural land.
The family gardens in 2009 occupy 21 411 ha or 0.4% of the used agricultural land. They have experienced a decrease by 16.9%, compared to the previous year.
Not cultivated land is the land, which is not part of the crop rotation and has not been used for agricultural production for more than two years. Its exploitation recovery is achievable by

input of minimum resources. The percentage of uncultivated land in 2009 is 4.1% of the country's territory, as the decrease is by 15.9%, compared to the previous year.

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4. Market of Agricultural Land

According to research, conducted by the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), also known as SAPI Ltd., the effects of the economic downturn for agriculture have changed the market trends for agricultural land in the direction of decrease in its activity for the first time since 2004.
In 2009, the market is characterized by extensive supply of land, offered by land owners, as higher pricing is not prioritized, but rather offering pricing, which is suitable for survival of the business. In selection of land for purchase, the requirements are for availability of larger lots, flat terrains, etc. due to the decreased competition in the buyers' sector.
In 2009, there are 110 276 transactions completed for 104 344.6 ha of agricultural land. The signed deals are by 9.3% less than in 2008, and the surface area of the sold agricultural land is by 19% smaller.
In 2009, a decrease has been reported in buying-selling of agricultural land for non-commercial purposes. The number of deals signed in 2009 is 4 932, which is by 61% less than in 2008. The land sold for non-commercial purposes in 2009 is 3 033.9 ha or by 65% less than in 2008. The average market price of a hectare of land for non-commercial purposes in 2009 is 141 860 BGN, which reflects a decrease by 16%, compared to 2008. The average price for dealing with agricultural land (for commercial and non-commercial purposes) in 2009 is 6900 BGN per ha, which is by 51% lower than the average price for 2008.
In 2009, the annuity is characterized by a combined effect from contrary active factors – on one side, the subsidies increase the opportunity for tenant farmers and agricultural cooperatives for higher rental payments, but on the other side the collecting prices for the 2009 harvest are very low. This has led to limitations on expenditure, including such in the rents.
An active role in the land relationships in Bulgaria is played by the State Land Fund (SLF). The total size of agricultural land of it, which is private state property, in 2009, is 229 290 ha, as the total number of properties adds up to 127 410. To a certain extent, in comparison to previous years, the number of agricultural producers, which use, under rental or lease agreements, land lots from the SLF, remains unchanged.
In 2009, the SLF land, used under signed rental or lease agreements, adds up to 76 921 ha, which is 33.5% of the SLF private state property.

Agricultural Land Market for 2008 and 2009

Regions	2008			2009		
	Number of deals	Sold land (ha)	Average price (BGN/ha)	Number of deals	Sold land (ha)	Average price (BGN/ha)
North-West	16 456	16 432	3 510	14 018	17 074	2 680

North-Central	37 885	36 090	4 910	32 332	27 659	2 790
North-East	25 485	35 556	10 920	23 665	26 635	5 740
South-East	15 609	16 200	6 790	17 365	16 169	3 310
South-Central	26 723	25 600	8 680	22 657	16 749	5 780
South-West	12 044	7 523	123 640	5 171	3 092	101 760
In the country	**134 173**	**137 401**	**18 460**	**115 208**	**107 378**	**6 900**

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5. Structure of the Agricultural Facilities/Farms

A statistical observation of the structure of agricultural facilities and working force in the agricultural sector has been conducted in 2007.
According to the European Union legislation in the field of agro-statistics, detailed data for the agricultural facilities is gathered every 10 years by conducting a counting of the agricultural facilities and farms. The last counting of this type in Bulgaria took place in 2003. The first counting of the agricultural facilities and farms, which is fully compliant to the European regulations and indicators, is planned for 2010, and is part of the compulsory data update procedures, conducted by Eurostat every ten years.
In 2009, in the agricultural producer’s register, there are 100 195 producers registered.
This register serves the purposes of collecting information for the agricultural producers and their activities, with the aim to support agriculture and rural development.

Number of the Registered and Re-registered Agricultural Producers for 2007, 2008, and 2009

Bar chart

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Directorate General “Agriculture, Forestry, and Land Relationships” (DG AFLP)

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6. General information on the position of the agricultural sectors

6.1 Cereals production

As a result of the lower yields from the 2009 harvest, compared to the previous year, the total production of cereals has decreased by 11%. There is only an increase in production of rice and rye. For rice, the higher level of production is a result of the increased size of cultivated land and the higher average yield. For rye, there is also an increase in the cultivated land size.

For corn (for grain), the average yield has increased, but the decrease in cultivated land size leads to lower level of production.
This group of crops accounts for 70.5% of the main agricultural crops production. For the 2009 harvest, there is an increase in planted land with cereals by 7.7%, compared to the 2008 harvest. The land, planted with wheat (12.5%), rye (47.2%), triticale (33.1%) and barley (18.7%) has increased in size. The land, planted with oats (18%), corn for grain (15%) and sorgo (58%) has decreased in size.
The Dobrich region has the largest size of land, planted with cereals – 10.5% of the cereal cultivated land in the country, followed by the Pleven region with 9.9% and Veliko Tarnovo with 5.7%

6.2 Oilseed crops

The main oilseed crops, cultivated in the country are sunflower, rape, peanuts and soy bean.
The sunflower cultivated land in 2009 is approximately 687 209 ha, as 683 711 ha are harvested. There is a decrease in the planted land by 5.1% compared to the previous year. In 2009, there is an average yield of 1.92 tons/ha realized, which is higher than in 2008. The production quantity is 1 317 979 tons. The high yields are a result from the favorable climatic conditions and the applied successful agrotechniques while cultivating the crop.
Largest quantities of sunflower are grown in the North-West region – 25.7% from the total land size for sunflower cultivation in the country, followed by the North-East – 25.3% and North-Central – 22%. The biggest sunflower fields are in the regions of Dobrich, Pleven and Russe.
In 2009, the land planted with rape is 112 237 ha, i.e. by 19% more than in 2008. From it, there are 108 372 ha harvested.

6.3 Fiber Crops

The decrease in production of cotton continues in 2009. The harvested land in 2009 is 495 ha, compared to 706 ha in 2008. The decrease in the size of the planted land is by 7.9%. The average yield maintains its level of 0.98 tons/ha. As a result of the smaller size of planted and harvested land, the production has decreased by 29.8%, compared to the previous year and reaches 487 tons. In 2010, according to data from the Cotton Producers Association, the harvested land of is 400 ha, and the expected average yield is 1.00 ton/ha. The expected production is approximately 400 tons.
In 2009 there is no flax cultivation. There are 0.65 ha planted with hemp.

6.4 Medicinal and Aromatic Plants

The land, planted with the main medicinal and aromatic crops (rose, common balm, lavender, spearmint, silibum, fennel, valeriana, coriander) in 2009 is 57 877 ha, which is by 24.07% more than in 2008. The harvested land in 2009 adds up to 54 429 ha – by 19.4% more than in the previous year. The main reason for the increase in the size of the land, cultivated with medicinal and aromatic crops is the crop profitability.

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6.5 Vegetables

During the commercial 2009, the land, used for cultivation of vegetables in professional and small farming facilities is approximately 47 500 ha of size, there are 46 600 ha of harvested land, from which 2.1% are secondary crops. The relative share of the land with greenhouse facilities is approximately 2%. The vegetable production is 735 000 tons. The production of potatoes is the largest – 232 000 tons, tomatoes – 104 000 tons, and watermelons – 89 000 tons. The vegetables grown outdoors in 2009 are 46 500 ha. There is a decrease in the harvested land by 12.3%, compared to 2008. There are 26 300 ha of fresh vegetables planted (tomatoes, cucumbers, pepper, watermelons, etc.), by which 25 600 ha are harvested.
In 2009 there is a slight decrease in the greenhouse land used, compared to 2008, which is a result of the reduced investment in building of new greenhouses, and reconstruction and upgrade of existing ones. The total quantity of vegetables, cultivated in greenhouses is 98 000 tons, which is by 1.8% more than the production in 2008. The greenhouse production is determined by several main vegetable types, such as tomatoes, cucumbers, pepper, gherkins, lettuce, etc.
The larger part of greenhouses in the country are technologically updated facilities with modern technologies and processes for cultivation of vegetables, compliant to the European standards for production, quality and environmental preservation, which defines the higher production capacity in 2009. The increase in vegetables‘ greenhouse production is also a result of their sucessfull realization – increased demands and availability of markets not only in the country, but also in the other European states.
The produced vegetables in 2009 are by 15% less than in 2008. The production of vegetables is associated with high expenses, which determines the higher value added of the final production. This leads to experiencing difficulties with their realization.

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The adopted method of direct subsidising of land has also got a negative impact on this process, as it forces the agricultural producers to move onto production of lower value added crops per unit of land.
In 2009, approximately 98% of the vegetable production is realized, as a large part of it is market oriented (72%).

6.6 Fruits

In 2009 there are 106 173 tons of fruits produced, which is by 17% more than in 2008. The main reason behind the increase in production is the larger cultivated land size. The fruit production is concentrated in the South-Central region – approximately 34%, followed by the South-East – 25%, where peach production is predominant, and South-West region – 17%. In 2009, the largest relative share of the total fruit production is taken by apples – 33.4%, followed by cherries – 16.4%, plums – 16.2%, peaches – 16.1% and apricots – 7.13%.
The land size, planted with fruit trees in 2009 is 71 995 ha, from which 24 269 ha are harvested. There is an increase in the harvested land with fruit plantations reported – by 10% in comparison to 2008. With respect to the separate fruit types, the largest increase in cultivated land is observed in apples – by 33%, followed by cherries – 17%. There is also a

significant increase in other types of fruits – quince, almond, hazelnut, chokeberry, kiwi, blackberry, black currant, fig, etc.
In 2009, there is interest in establishing plantations of apples, cherries, peaches, plums, morello cherries, apricots, etc. The tendency of upgrading the assortment structure has continued. The land size, marked for production of fruit seedlings in 2009 is 254 ha. The farming facilities have produced 525 000 units of fruit seedlings, from which 80% is realized.

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6.7 Livestock Breeding

The development of livestock breeding in 2009 and the occurred changes in the number of farms, the stock, accommodated in them and the resulting output, are associated with the organizational, structural and legal-regulatory changes imposed by the membership of the state in the EU and the corresponding economic environment.
The request, submitted by Bulgaria for extension of the grace period for processing of non-compliant raw milk until the end of 2011, was approved during the reviewed period.
As a result, the process of equipment supply, compiling and technological upgrade of the facilities in compliance with the requirements of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), has continued.
The application of the Community scale for classification of slaughtered carcasses, fit for human consumption has continued during 2009.
The number of farms, raising stock in 2009 is approximately 290 000, which is by 12.6% lower, compared to 2008. The main decrease is reported in farms, which keep from 1 to 9 breeding female species, and this is justified by the consolidation and concentration of livestock breeding production, which has started in 2008. The statistical review shows that over 51% of cows are currently accommodated in farms, consisting of more than 10 cows, 61% of the buffalos are accommodated in farms, consisting of more than 20 buffalos, and 5% of the sheep are accommodated in farms, consisting of more than 50 sheep.
Changes are also observed in species with concentrate type of nutrition, as in swine farming where 78% of the swine are accomodated in farms, consisting of more than 50 sows.
In poultry there is an increase by 17.7% in the category of farms, accommodating from 100 to 9 999 hens and pullets.
In comparison to the previous year, in 2009 a decrease in all types of species bred has been registered. The decrease in the number of cattle is by 4.5%, goats – by 16.1%, buffalos – by 9.9%, sheep – by 5.1%, pigs – by 6.9%. The most insignificant decrease is registered in poultry – by 0.8%.
In 2009, in the country, there are 1 231 760 tons of milk produced, which is by 84 311 tons less than in 2008. All types of milk have experienced the decrease, as the highest decrease is in doe's milk – by 17.3%, followed by cow's milk – by 6.1%. The decrease in the cow's (buffalo) and ewe's milk is correspondingly by 2.1% and 1.1%. The largest proportion of the total milk production is of cow's milk – 87.1%, followed by ewe's milk (7.1%), doe's milk (5.2%) and at last place – cow's (buffalo) milk – (0.6%).
In 2009, the produced meat in total slaughter weight is 243 624 tons, which is by 9.1% higher than in 2008. There is a decrease observed in the production of red meat by 1.1%, and at the same time there is a significant increase in the production of white (light) meat – by 19.9%. The production of eggs marks a decrease by 5.2%. There is also a significant decrease reported in the production of honey – by 19.9%.

Cattle and Buffalo Breeding

Year 2009 marked the continuation of the tendency, which was initiated in the previous years, for restructuring of the dairy livestock breeding – optimization of the number of species in dairy farms and reorientation towards development of livestock breeding for production of meat.
The restructuring of the dairy farms has continued in 2009.The farms that accommodate from 1 to 2 and from 3 to 9 cows mark a decrease compared to 2008, respectively by 14.3% and 20.7%. The number of species bred in these farms has decreased by approximately the same percentage. The decrease in the number of farms that accommodate a single cow continues, and compared to 2008 they are down by 12.5%, currently accomodating a total of 55 000 cows.
The buffalo breeding farms have decreased by 27.3% in 2009, compared to the previous year. A decrease is observed in the total number of bulls (buffalo) – by 9.8%, and by 5.9% in the number of cows (buffalo). There is an increase in the number of cows (buffalo) in farms that breed from 10 to 19 species, as well as in those with over 20 species. Over 60% of the cows (buffalo) within the country are bred in farms with over 20 cows (buffalo).

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Sheep and Goat Farming

Year 2009 marks a decrease in the number of sheep by 5.1%, as well as a decrease in the number of sheep breeding farms – by 13.7%. Compared to the previous year, in 2009, the farms with capacity from 1 to 9 ewes for breeding have decreased by 14.6%, farms with capacity from 10 to 19 and from 20 to 49 species – by approx. 10%, while farms, breeding from 50 to 99 species and over 100 species have increased respectively by 2.5% and 4%. The ewes accommodated in farms with over 100 species are increased by 5.7% and are a total of approx. 391 200. The average size of the herds within the country is of 12 species, and the number of ewes in a single farm is an average of 10. The highest decrease of the total number of sheep and of ewes is registered in the North-West planning region, respectively by 23.7% and by 17.2% and the lowest decrease is registered in the South-Central and in the South-East planning regions. The highest number of sheep is bred in the South-West region – approx. 316 500.

Horse Breeding

According to data from the National Veterinary-Medical Service NVMS, the number of equine species in 2009 is 170 467 (by 2.6% lower than in 2008) and they are bred in 125 888 facilities. From them, the registered horses and the workhorses account for 58.7%, and the donkeys, mules and hinnies represent 41.3%.

Swine Farming and Farrowing

The swine farming sector accounts for 65% of the total red meat production in the country. A significant part of the swine farms have met the requirements for animal welfare and produce high quality and safety products.

The industrialization of the sector continues, which is evident by the constantly changing structure of the farms, aiming at increasing the share of the industrial farms.

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In 2009, there was a decrease in the total number of pigs as well as in the number of sows in the main herd, respectively by 6.9% and 8.9% compared to 2008. As of 01.11.2009, the total number of pigs is 729 798, and the total number of sows in the main herd is 56 486.
In 2009, the total production of swine meat adds up to 73 659.3 tons, which is by 0.1% lower than in 2008. It represents 65% of the total yield and 78.6% of the industrial yield of red meat in the country. During the year, approx. 994 900 pigs were slaughtered, which is by 1% lower with respect to 2008.

Poultry Farming

In 2009, the efforts of the egg and poultry meat producers are concentrated on new equipment supply, compiling and technological upgrade of the facilities with the purpose to comply with the requirements of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).
The large poultry facilities that account for the industrial production of eggs and meat within the country are 952, as 58% of them accommodate layer hens, and the rest concentrate in poultry meat production. Compared to 2008, the large farms for hens, layer hens and chickens for fattening have increased by 1.4% and the number of small farms – by 1.7%.
The decrease in the total number of poultry is insignificant (0.8%), while the number of chickens for meat production has increased by 3.7%. The major factors, defining the increased yield of poultry meat, are the demand of diet raw materials and products by consumers, as well as the expansion and diversification in the deep-processing of slaughtered poultry in variety of packings and semi-processed food products.
The decrease in the number of waterfowl is lower than during the period 2008/2007 – by 22.9%. After 2005 and 2007, in 2009, there is an increase in breeding other types of poultry, such as ostriches, quails, guinea fowl and pheasants. During the reviewed period, the highest increase is by 42%. The large farms with 10 000 or more hens and pullets are 74, compared to 75 in 2008, as the number of accommodated poultry is approx. 4 980 000.

Beekeeping (Apiculture)

Bulgaria occupies one of the top positions in Europe for vegetation diversity. A large part of the relief in the country provides opportunities for keeping bee colonies. In 2009, the number of beekeeping farms is 29 244. The sector is characterized with a large number of small producers, while the number of professional beekeepers, who keep 150 or more bee colonies, is small (336).

Rabbit Farming

There is a growing interest in this type of production, driven by the good natural-climatic conditions, the presence of tradition and experience in breeding and the increased demands for alternative meat types worldwide. A large proportion of the farmers breed rabbits for subsistence consumption. In 2009, the produced meat from rabbits in slaughterhouses has marked an increase by 7.7%, compared to the previous year. The average live weight of rabbits has increased by 10%, and the average slaughter weight is by 5.9% higher than in 2008. In 2009, 3 out of the total of 30 farms for white (light) meat, approved for trade of livestock origin food products with the EU member states, are allowed to perform slaughtering and to process meat from rabbits.

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6.8 Viticulture

In 2009, the vineyeard facilities occupy 74 018 ha of land, from which 54 889 ha are harvested. Approximately 6 % are the young, not yet fruitful vines, as approximately 700 ha are the newly planted in spring 2009. In comparison to 2001, the abandoned vineyards due to social, economic and agrotechnical reasons, have increased 6 times in size.
In the structure of the vineyards, the red wine sorts remain dominant with a relative share of approximately 60%. For red wine sorts, the vineyard land over 30 years old is less than 50%. The leading sorts in grapes production are Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Pamid.
In white wine sorts there is a decrease in the relative share of the cultivated land by 2.5%, compared to 2008. 50% of the vineyard land is 30 or more years old. The leading sorts in grapes production are Red Muscat, Muscat Ottonel, Rkatziteli, Chardonnay and Dimyat.
The average yield of wine sorts in the country is 4 944 kg/ha, respectively for red wine sorts, it is 5 240 kg/ha and for white – 4 424 kg/ha. The average yield of dessert sorts is 5 315 kg/ha.
The production of grapes in 2009 is 281 302 tons, which is by approximately 24% lower than in 2008. The grapes produced from vine is 272 601 tons in the following proportion: wine – 93.6%, dessert – 6.4%. There are also 8 701 tons of grapes, produced from trellis vine.

6.9 Wine Production

From 220 wine producing facilities, 196 have vinified grapes from the 2009 harvest. The total container capacity is 709 246 295 litres, from which 1 668 683 litres have new container facilities built for them. In 2009 there is a tendency of a decrease in the wine production facilities and in the containing capacity in comparison to 2008.
The total quantity of wine produced from the 2009 harvest adds up to 1 397 396 hectolitres. The wine produced from wineries and factories on the terrotory of the country during the 2009 harvest period adds up to 1 215 803 hectolitres and 29 809 hectolitres of grape must. The largest share of the total wine production is occupied by the production of dining wines (wines without a protected designation of origin or protected geographical indication), followed by regional wines (wines with protected geographical indication), and sort wines, which have neither protected designation of origin, nor protected geographical indication. The ratio of red wines and rose to white wines is in favor to the red wines.
According to data from the NSI, in 2009, there is a total export of 53 791 298 litres of wine registered, which si by 39% lower than in 2008. The exported wine is of a total value of 69 113 000 USD.

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7. Trade with Agricultural Production

In recent years, the only one sector in the country, which has accounted for the formation of a positive export trade balance is the agricultural sector. In 2008 and 2009, there is a significant increase in the commerce with agricultural products in comparison with the previous years (increase by 37% in 2008 and by 34% in 2009, compared to 2007).
In 2008 the agrarian commerce forms 9.2% of the total national trade, and in 2009, it has further increased up to 13.1%.
The economic downturn has also impacted the international trade with agricultural production, as in 2009 there is a decrease by 5.5%, compared to 2008.
In 2009, the agricultural export has marked a decrease by 2%, and the import – by 9.3%, compared to the previous year. Nevertheless, in 2009, the trade with agricultural products has once again accounted for the formation of a positive balance of 407 546 000 USD, which is the highest balance for the last 4 years.
The accession of Bulgaria to the European Union has led to modification in the structure of agricultural trade. Due to the more advantageous economic conditions for trade on the single European market, the commercial flows are gradually starting to move towards the EU member states, rather than towards other economic regions. In 2009, approximately 71.8% of the Bulgarian export is realized on the territory of the Community. In the meantime, approximately 75% of the agricultural products delivered in the country, come from the European members states. Despite the decrease in the common Bulgarian commerce with agricultural products in 2009, the trade with EU member states has marked an increase. Compared to 2008, the agrarian commerce with these countries has increased by 4.2%, and import has increased by 22%. There is a positive trade balance formed - 212 700 000 USD (during the previous year the trade balance is negative, adding up to 354 300 000 USD).
The most preferable trade partners of Bulgaria among the EU member states are Romania, Greece, Spain, and Germany.
A leading position in the export list of the country for 2009 is occupied by seeds of sunflower, wheat and a mixture of wheat and rye, raw or unprocessed tobacco, bakery, pastry, confectionery or biscuit products, meat and pluck, corn.
Leading agricultural products from the import in Bulgaria in 2009 are meat, sugar from sugar cane or sugar beet, raw or unprocessed tobacco.

Leading Agricultural Products for Bulgarian Export in 2009

Name of product	Quantity (tons)	Value (USD)	Relative Share from Total Export (%)
Sunflower seeds, even crushed seeds	911 415	289 427 240	10.33
Wheat and mixture of wheat and rye	1 517 746.1	256 512 539	9.16
Raw or unprocessed tobacco, tobacco waste, tobaccos, “sun cured”, Oriental type	44 631.6	251 715 759	8.99
Bakery, pastry, confectionery or biscuit products, even with added sweetener	53 169.6	154 420 693	5.51
Meat and pluck, fit for consumption,	29 019.2	120 487 140	4.30

from domesticated poultry of № 0105, fresh, cooled or frozen			
Corn	572 002.6	101 303 803	3.62

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Name of product	Quantity (tons)	Value (USD)	Relative Share from Total Export (%)
Rape (colza) seeds, even crushed	240 738	96 187 857	3.43
Cigarettes with tobacco	8 184.8	92 982 869	3.32
Sunflower, safflower or cottonseed oil and their fractions, even refined, but not chemically modified	88 208	76 539 360	2.73
Cheese and cheese curd	20 451.3	70 808 018	2.53
Wines from fresh grapes, including fortified wines, grapes must, different to № 2009	54 230.4	69 148 716	2.47
Barley	416 055.7	62 564 701	2.23
Sugar from sugar cane or sugar beet and chemically pure sucrose, in solid state	81 740.4	58 873 323	2.10
Fruits and other parts of plants, fit for consumption, prepared or conserved by other methods, with or without sugar additives or other sweeteners or alcohol, which are not mentioned or included elsewhere	19 930.5	52 865 833	1.89
Preparations from the types, used for animal nutrition	15 117.9	46 619 923	1.66

Source: National Statistical Institute (NSI) preliminary data

Leading Agricultural Products for Bulgarian Import in 2009

Name of product	Quantity (tons)	Value (USD)	Relative Share from Total Export (%)
Meat from the swine sort, fresh, cooled or frozen	86 152.8	208 289 237	8.70
Sugar from sugar cane or sugar beet and chemically pure sucrose, in solid state	226 820.2	139 318 404	5.82
Raw or unprocessed tobacco, tobacco waste	24 348.7	117 662 814	4.92
Meat and pluck, fit for consumption,	67 717.2	90 267 466	3.77

from domesticated poultry of № 0105, fresh, cooled or frozen			
Cigars (including cut cigars), cigarillos, tobacco cigarettes or cigarettes with tobacco substitutes	7 230.9	78 922 997	3.30
Coffee, even roasted and decaffeinated, shells and husks, coffee substitutes, containing coffee, despite of the proportion in the mixture	26 024.4	77 507 310	3.24

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Name of product	Quantity (tons)	Value (USD)	Relative Share from Total Export (%)
Tomatoes, fresh or cooled	80 021.8	76 531 330	3.20
Food products, not mentioned or included elsewhere	18 767.5	74 098 246	3.10
Ethyl alcohol, not denatured, with alcohol content under 80% vol., brandies, liqueurs, and other spirits	11 080	64 617 588	2.70
Chocolate and other food products, containing cacao	14 847.3	63 598 724	2.66
Bakery, pastry, confectionery or biscuit products, even with additives of cacao, wafer, empty dough capsules for medicaments, seal dough, dry dough leaves from flour, starch or farina, and other similar products	20 372.1	53 100 137	2.22
Sunflower cake or other solid remains, even grinded or agglomerated into granules, obtained from soybean oil extraction	112 750.7	50 059 902	2.09
Milk and cream, concentrated or with sugar additive or with other sweeteners	29 861.3	49 615 779	2.07
Fruits and other parts of plants, fit for consumption, prepared or preserved by other methods, with or without sugar additives or other sweeteners, or alcohol, which are not mentioned or included elsewhere	28 843	46 840 653	1.96
Preparations from the types, used for animal nutrition	35 053.4	45 622 744	1.91

Source: National Statistical Institute (NSI) preliminary data

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8. Financial Support for Agriculture

8.1 SAPARD Programme

In September 2009, the blocked funds under the pre-accession programme SAPARD were released and the payments under all measures were re-established. For the entire period of the program application, there are a total of 3 509 project proposals approved and contracted. At the end of 2009, all 2 602 correctly implemented in the preliminary specified deadlines and complying with the stipulated requirements projects were financed, four of which were financed by the national budget. The absorbed resources under the programme for the period 1 June 2001 – 31 December 2009 add up to 881 018 180.55 BGN.
In 2009, 457 projects have been financed under the SAPARD Programme, and the total size of absorbed resources add up to 139 414 218.94 BGN.
The terminated contracts are under 894 project proposals, with approved size of the subsidy of 376 337 457.41 BGN. The main reasons for termination are related to indication of ineligibility of investment, implementation outside the specified terms and deadlines or a request, submitted by the beneficiary for voluntarily termination of the contract.

Implementation of the SAPARD Programme for the period 01.06.2001 – 31.12.2009, paid subsidies (mln. BGN)

Bar Chart

Source: State Fund “Agriculture”

Note: In the group of projects, financed in 2005, there are a number of payments of projects included, which are contracted within a limited duration procedure, according to DCM № 856/01.11.2005. The projects of a total value of 30 000 000 BGN are financed in 2005 with national funds from additional account of the State Fund “Agriculture”. They have been verified as expenditures in 2006.

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8.2 Direct Payments and National Additional Payments

The single area payment scheme (SAPS) is the major scheme for direct subsidizing of agriculture in the new EU member states. For 2009, the envisaged total amount for direct payments, under (EC) Regulation 889/2009, provided by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF), adds up to 289 797 000 EUR (566 784 973 BGN), which has enabled the payment of subsidies in the size of 82.98 EUR/ha (162.29 BGN/ha), at coordinated with the EC selected agricultural land of 3 492 383 ha.
Under SAPS, all agricultural producers, who use agricultural land on the territory of the country, and have submitted applications, are allowed to receive subsidies. The size of the subsidy is defined per unit area and does not depend on the cultivated culture.

National Additional Payments

The European legislation gives opportunities to member states to subsidize the agricultural producers with additional funds from the national budget or by re-distribution of the resources from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

According to the national decision for conducting a campaign in 2009, the following schemes for additional payments are applied:

- National additional payments per area (NAPA) – for the 2009 campaign, the total value under this scheme adds up to 113 140 759 EUR (221 280 696 BGN). Under the scheme for national additional payments per area, the financial support is provided for areas, which are eligible under SAPS, excluding the permanent grasslands, vineyards, land, cultivated with tobacco and land, which is subject to the scheme for support of producers of strawberries and raspberries for processing. The size of the financial support is 38.60 EUR/ha (75.49 BGN/ha);
- National additional payments for livestock (NAPL) – this scheme has started for first time during the 2009 campaign. The additional payments for livestock are entirely financed by the national budget, after an approved notification by the EC. For the 2009 campaign, there are a total of 61 000 000 BGN planned. The national additional payments for livestock are divided into three schemes. In the sector for direct subsidizing per unit area and per unit of species, only under the direct payments campaign of 2009, there are a total of 809 000 000 BGN paid, combining European and national funds. Within the 2009 campaign, for first time, livestock farmers received over 59 000 000 BGN of national additional payments per unit of species.

Scheme for support of producers of energy crops, envisaged for processing

Under this scheme, the subsidies are provided to agricultural producers, who grow crops for processing of biofuels, and who have signed a contract with an approved by the MAF collector/processor. The scheme is applied for the last time, and the financing is entirely provided by the EAGF. The size of the subsidy adds up to 45 EUR/ha, as if there is exceeding of the EU limits, the sum is proportionally reduced.

Scheme for support of producers of strawberries and raspberries for processing

Under this scheme, the subsidies are provided to agricultural producers, who grow strawberries and/or raspberries, and who have signed a contract with an approved by the MFA collector/processor. The finance is provided by the EAGF, and the size of the subsidy adds up to 230 EUR/ha, as if there is exceeding of the EU limits, the sum is proportionally reduced.

For the 2010 direct payments campaign, there is a package of funds envisaged, of a value of over 1 000 000 000 BGN, from which 661 906 156 BGN are for support under the single area payment scheme and the schemes for specific support (financed by the EAGF). According to preliminary calculations, the subsidy per decare under the 2010 campaign will add up to 28 BGN, from which 18 BGN of European financing and 10 BGN of national additional financing.

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During the previous campaigns, the size of the financial support was the following:
Campaign 2009:
- Single area payment scheme – 16.23 BGN/daa;
- National additional payments scheme – 7.55 BGN/daa.

Campaign 2008:
- Single area payment scheme – 12.79 BGN/daa;
- National additional payments scheme – 9.30 BGN/daa.

8.3 Rural Development Programme

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2007-2013 reflects on the national strategy for rural development by applying a package of measures. The realization of these measures is implemented by financial support, provided by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).
The total budget of the RDP for the period 2007-2013 is 6 341 000 000 BGN (3 242 000 000 EUR), from which 5 089 000 000 BGN (2 602 000 000 EUR) come from the EU, and 1 236 000 000 BGN (632 000 000 EUR) are provided by the national budget. The national strategic objectives until 2013 are aimed at development of competitive and innovation-based agriculture, forestry, and food industry, preservation of the natural resources and environment in rural areas, improvement of the living standards and diversification of the employment opportunities in rural areas.
For achieving the above mentioned objectives, there are a total of 30 specific measures envisaged under the four axes of the programme.
In 2009, under the RDP there are a total of 6 758 applications for support submitted (without Measures 211, 212 and 214), at a total value of 3 332 000 000 BGN. There are 3 893 contracts signed, at a total value of 1 189 890 000 BGN, from which 860 000 000 BGN is the subsidy. The public payments (EAFRD and national budget) add up to 277 384 000 BGN.
By the middle of 2010, under the RDP, there are over 900 000 000 BGN of payments. A total of 5 856 projects have received subsidies. In June 2010, the programme is re-opened for project submissions, according to a schedule for processing of the submitted projects and acceptance of new projects, which is coordinated with the EC.
There are key modifications performed in the national legislation for applying the RDP, which aim to prevent the opportunities for fraud during absorption of European funds. There are tax breaks introduced for municipalities, as VAT costs will be covered with budget funds for municipality projects. The advanced payments for such projects have been increased from 20% to 50%.

8.4 State Aid in Agriculture

The support of agriculture in the European Community is provided mainly through two pillars of the Common Agricultural Policy:
- First pillar – direct payments and market support;
- Second pillar – rural development policy.

State aid is an additional instrument for support of agricultural producers, with the purpose of realization of the national policy for development of certain regions and activities. The state aid system in the agricultural sector follows the basic principles of the policy on competition.
In 2009, the following types of state aid are applied in the country:

- Existing state aid;
- Minimum aid (“de minimis”) – provided in compliance with the provisions of the (EC) Regulation 1535/2007;
- New aid schemes – notified and approved during the period 2007-2010.

The existing state aid is the aid, which the new member states are allowed to continue applying for a period of three years after EU accession (for Bulgaria – until 31.12.2009). After the expiry of the preceding period, if the country is willing to continue the application of some of the state aid, it must notify it, based on common grounds, and in compliance with the European legislation.

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The rule “de minimis” is applied with respect to aid, which is normally not eligible, but due to its small size, it does not endanger competition, and may be provided by the member states. According to (EC) Regulation 1535/2007, the size of the aid under “de minimis” for agricultural production is defined to be 7 500 EUR (14 669 BGN) per agricultural facility/farm for the period of three tax years.
In 2009, the agricultural producers have received state aid in the form of target subsidies, interest subsidies and capital subsidies under credits, for implementation of investment projects, tax breaks, etc.

8.5 State Fund “Agriculture”

In 2009, under the schemes for short-term financing, there are 7 076 agricultural producers financed. The total contracted and paid resources add up to 61 552 000 BGN, including the support of the “Livestock Breeding” sector – 42 792 000 BGN and “Crops and Plants Cultivation” sector – 18 760 000 BGN. The payments in the form of credits are 33 852 000 BGN, in the form of subsidies – 27 700 000 BGN, and the total absorbed gross equivalent adds up to 348 000 BGN.
In 2009, during the economic downturn conditions, the agricultural producers have experienced difficulties with ensuring support from trade banks in order to receive the necessary resources for the sowing and planting campaign. With respect to the situation, State Fund “Agriculture” announced two schemes for target short-terms crediting at interest rate of 3%:

1. Target credit for purchase of seeds for production of wheat, 2010 harvest. There are 241 agricultural producers, supported under the measure for 83 627 ha of land. The paid subsidy adds up to 5 018 000 BGN.
2. Target credit for purchase of mineral fertilizers for production of wheat, 2010 harvest. Under this measure, the paid subsidy adds up to 10 378 000 BGN, thus providing support to 427 agricultural producers.

In 2009, the investment crediting is targeted at stimulating the investment process in agriculture, and it is performed within the frame of three programs - “Livestock Breeding”, “Crops and Plants Cultivation”, and “Agricultural Machinery”. The three investment programs, as well as the corresponding subsidies, fall into the category of the so-called “existing state aid”, with application deadline – 31.12.2009. Under the three investment programs, there are 29 projects financed, and respectively re-financed. The provided credit amounts add up to 31 919 036 BGN, which is by 162.5% more than the provided resources in

2008 (12 578 299 BGN). The investment projects are directly financed by the Fund at an annual interest rate of 6% and by re-financing by trade banks at interest rate of 9%.
In 2009, a new scheme for state aid commenced, for maintaining a record book of family trees and for defining productivity and genetic characteristics of species. The aid is to be applied until 31.12.2013, and it is provided to the agricultural producers, through breeding organizations, for covering expenses on the provided services. A subsidy is paid to 28 breeding organizations, adding up to 2 054 000 BGN. With the purpose of solving certain specific issues in poultry farming, milk sector, vegetables production and other sectors, in 2009 and 2010, there are six new state aid schemes notified, with application period 2010-2013.

8.6 "Tobacco" Fund

The "Tobacco" Fund provides financial support for the production of tobacco seeds, which are distributed in the form of grants to the tobacco producers. The paid state aid for distribution of seeds in the form of grants in 2009 is 842 000 BGN. For storage of the genetic resources from tobacco sorts, there are 693 000 BGN provided. For the implementation of the annual program for sort maintenance and seed production in 2009, there are 12 contracts signed with scientific institutes, natural and legal persons.
The awarding of tobacco producers is implemented within the frame of the approved funds under the budget of the "Tobacco" Fund. In 2009, the awards for the sort groups "Basmas", "Kabakulak" and "Burley", harvest 2008, are paid, of a total value of 108 117 000 BGN. Until 30.09.2010, there are 115 955 245 BGN paid in awards for tobacco of the 2009 harvest.

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9. Activities related to Agricultural Production

9.1 Tractors and Agro-machinery Park

During the last few years, there is a solid tendency for upgrade of the tractors and machinery park in the agricultural sector. The average age of the machines is decreasing, as the share of new wheel tractors and coupling machinery is increasing. In 2004, the number of wheel tractors at the age of up to 2 years is 3.1% from the total number, in 2008 it is 6.2% and in 2009 it is 6.5%. The number of coupling, shed and stationary machines at the age of up to 2 years has increased from 2.8% in 2003 up to 8.6% in 2009.

For coupling, shed and stationary machinery, there is also a tendency of technological upgrade. This tendency is very strongly defined by the fertilizer spreaders – in 2004, 9 % are of age up to 2 years, and in 2009 this percentage has risen to 17.7%. For plant protection machinery, these values are respectively 4.4% and 12.4%, for the specialized machinery for vegetables and perennial crops – respectively 4.3% and 22.6%, for mixed crops spreaders – respectively 5.9% and 11.2%.
In 2009, there are measures, undertaken by the regional authorities, for establishing control over the safety of coupling, shed and stationary machinery and devices before their entry in the market. All producers and importers of such devices have been inspected. There are registers elaborated, which include information for the producing and importing enterprises, and for the machinery sold by them.

9.2 Hydro-melioration

The state policy in the field of hydro-melioration is targeted at support for irrigation agriculture, preservation of the hydro-meliorating facilities, which are public state property, protection from flooding of territories outside populated areas, investment in the field of hydro-melioration and support of the processes for creation and functioning of irrigation cooperatives.
At present, in Bulgaria there is a Hydro-melioration Fund established, which is quite large with respect to the country scales. It consists of 240 irrigation systems and a number of individual irrigation fields, which spread on 7 441 000 daa of agricultural land. During the 2009 irrigation season, there are 282 419 400 m3 provided for the irrigation of 39 910 ha of cultivated land for primary irrigation, and 17 986 ha for secondary and consecutive irrigations.

9.3 Food Safety

The globalization of the food chain is constantly leading to new challenges and risks for the health and interest of the consumers in the EU. The major objective of the food safety policy is to achieve the highest possible level of health and interests safety of the consumers.
The leading principle of this policy is the application of an integrated approach – "from the farm to the table". This approach covers all sectors of the food chain – the production of fodder, plants and animals health, animal welfare, primary production, food processing, food storage, transportation, retail/wholesale, import and export.
The food safety is a shared responsibility between the competent authorities and the food producers. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food manages, coordinates, and controls the application of the national policies in the field of agriculture and foods, by its specialized administration – the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency.

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10. Forestry

The total area of the forestry fund is of 4 130 896 ha, from which 3 725 494 ha of afforestation, 23 635 ha of dwarf pine, 73 959 ha of non-forrested for timber production (including fire sites, slashing sites and barren land), and 307 808 ha of non-timber production sites (cultivated land, fields, meadows, nersery gardens, roads and clearings).
The total area of the deciduos forests is 2 602 666 ha, which is 69.4%, and of the coniferous forests – 1 146 463 ha – 30.6%. The natural stands cover area of 2 925 125 ha, from which coniferous are 476 441 ha (16.3%). The forest plantation spreads over 824 004 ha, from which the coniferous are 673 022 ha (81.7%).
Depending on their functions, the forests are divided into:

- Forests and land from the forestry fund with mainly timber production and habitat formation functions – 2 831 644 ha (68.5%);
- Preserved and recreational forests and land from the forestry fund – 963 871 ha (23.4%);
- Forests and land from the forestry fund in protected environmental territories – 335 381 ha (8.1%).

The maximum utilization of the natural recovery potential of forests, and its support, are the bases of all afforestation activities, related to forest management. For implementation of the activities on forestry management, in 2009, there are 3 012 230 BGN spent, as 54.2% are from the commercial activity of the state forest and hunting facilities and 47.85% are from the budget of the Executive Agency on Forests.
In 2009, the general health condition of forests is good. Forest pathological monitoring is performed throughout the whole year in the stationary facilities of the forest preservation territories, as well as forest pathological inquiries, conducted in forests and all forest nursery gardens.
In 2009, there are 495 certificates issued to natural persons for exercising private afforestation practices and 560 to traders for implementation of activities in the forestry fund. At the end of 2009, the registered natural persons for exercising private afforestation practices are 2 679, and the registered traders for implementation of activities in the forestry fund are 1 300. There is an update of the registered traders list, according to which 1 320 were withdrawn from the registers.
In 2009, timber from the forestry fund has been realized in all possible ways, adding up to 3 271 310 m3. By planned afforestation projects, the average annual use by state forests in the size of 4 437 000 m3 of lying timber mass, the reported annual use adds up to 74%.
The realized quantity of timber in 2009 is by 914 000 m3 less than in 2008, which marks a 22% decrease. The decreased sales of timber are a result of the economic downturn, which has led to a rapid collapse of the market. The main approach for selling timber in crisis conditions is by direct contracting.

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11. Fisheries and Aquaculture

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is the main instrument for fisheries and aquaculture management in the EU. The combination of regulations and mechanisms for exploitation, processing and trade of fish and other aquatic organisms formulates the CFP. The Executive Agency of Fisheries and Aquaculture (EAFA) is the administrative unit of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, responsible for the application of the EU Common policies in Bulgaria, in the field of fishery, as it establishes monitoring, management and control over the fishing activities, aquaculture production and the capacity of the fishing fleet.
In 2009, the fish and other aquatic organisms catch from commercial fishing is 8 984.79 tons, which is by 1.4% more than the previous year. The quantities of fish and other aquatic organisms caught for the reported period are divided into the following:

- 7 394.54 tons from the Black Sea;
- 96.06 tons from the River Danube;
- 1 494.9 tons from inland aquatic facilities.

Year 2009 marks a tendency of increase in the catch from the Danube River and the inland aquatic facilities, respectively by 18.3% and 34% compared to the previous year. At the same time, the catch from the Black Sea has decreased by 3.5%.
The common tendency in recent years of increase in the production of aquaculture has continued in 2009. Compared to the previous year, in 2009, the production from fish and other aquatic organisms has increased by 19.7%., as the production from rainbow trout and carp has the largest relative share.

In 2009, the consumption of fish and fishery products by households has risen by 4.3%, compared to the previous year, and has reached an average of 4.8 kg per person per annum. This quantity is calculated, based on the monitoring of households but the data does not include the quantities, consumed in public catering facilities.
According to data from the National Statistical Institute, there are a total of 29 991.5 tons of fish and fishery products imported in the country, which is by 0.8% more than the previous year. The value of the import adds up to 57 726 000 USD.
In 2009, there are a total of 6 460.5 tons of fish, aquatic organisms and fish products exported, which is insignificantly lower (by 0.5%) compared to the previous year. The total value of the exported fish production has decreased by 8%, adding up to 18 651 000 USD, due to the low export prices.

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12.Policy Objectives in the Agrarian Sector

The main purpose of the state policy in the sphere of agriculture is to develop agriculture, so that it becomes competitive on the world markets and complies with strict environmental preservation standards, food safety and animal welfare, and uniform control throughout the food chain.
While implementing this policy in 2010, the entire legal and organizational preparation for functioning of a uniform control authority on food safety, starting from 2011, has been arranged – Bulgarian Food Safety Agency and Risk Assesment Center. Along with that, the national standards for dairy products have been updated – for Bulgarian yoghurt, Bulgarian white brined cheese, and Bulgarian yellow cheese. There are 9 standards approved for 20 products from pork, beef, and chicken.
In the field of forestry management, there is a draft for a new legislation on forestry elaborated, which provides the legal base for realization of a large scale reform and sectoral restructuring. The level of absorbtion of the funds under the Rural Development Programme has increased significantly. The efforts of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food are directed to the implementation of continuous and consecutive reforms in all key agricultural spheres. The politics for achieving the objectives of the government program for European development of Bulgaria will continue in 2011, as this program considers the agricultural development as an important priority for achieving improved living standards for the Bulgarian agricultural producers.

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Municipality administrations will have access to information on their public measures projects on e-mail address - vaprosi_obshtini_prsr@dfz.bg.

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For **Agricultural market mechanisms, State Aid, "Fisheries and Aquaculture" Programme, SAPARD programme**, there is a new e-mail address call_obsht@dfz.bg, and the telephone number is 02/ 8187 169.