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PRICE DEVELOPMENTS OF BEEF CARCASSES IN ROMANIA AND EUROPEAN UNION

EVOLUŢIA PREŢULUI CARCASELOR DE BOVINE ÎN ROMÂNIA ŞI ÎN UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ

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The main objectives of the classification of cattle carcasses (beef and veal) are represented by the correct payment to cattle breeders, according to carcass weight and quality, and standardization, the common language in the international meat trade. The European Union set uniform procedures for quality assessment (the EUROP system), defined by the same parameters in the whole continent. Romania is at the beginning of cattle carcass classification; it is in the third year of reporting on the classification results to the European Commission. In this context, we consider it is very important to analyze these results, for a continuous improvement of carcass quality.
Keywords: Price development, beef carcasses, Romania, European Union

Introduction

The main objectives of the classification of cattle carcasses (beef and veal) are represented by the correct payment to cattle breeders, according to carcass weight and quality, and standardization, the common language in the international meat trade. The European Union set uniform procedures for quality assessment (the EUROP system), defined by the same parameters in the whole continent.

Between the EU member states, there are differences in terms of carcass price, related to the same quality group and fat class; the mean price is calculated as a mean of the national prices.

Material and Methods

The EUROP system for cattle carcass classification is structured per animal categories, classes and subclasses of quality. The animal categories are represented by:

- "A"- carcasses of young ungelded males, of up to 2 years old;
- "B"- carcasses of other ungelded males;

- "C"- carcasses of gelded males;
- "D"- carcasses of farrowing females;
- "E"- carcasses of other females.

There are animal categories that do not present all quality classes and subclasses, because of their specific physiological features.

The price reporting to the European Commission is made in concordance with these criteria. To make the differences evident, we performed some comparative analyses of the prices reported by Romania and of the mean prices reported in the entire EU.

For 2008, Romania's reports and the mean prices in EU in the category A – carcasses of young ungelded males, of up to 2 years old, were the ones presented in Table no. 1.

Table no. 1.

Mean price of carcasses of young ungelded males, of up to 2 years old in Romania and European Union in 2008

CATEGORY	CLASS	MEAN PRICE	
		ROMANIA	UE
		€ / 100 kg	€ / 100 kg
A	U2	255,19	363,39
A	U3	230,55	343,37
A	R2	226,76	330,76
A	R3	217,51	319,61
A	O2	213,77	279,26
A	O3	212,09	289,65
WEIGHT MEAN PRICE ***"A"***		***213,93***	***324,55***

The price differences in the category A are significant, the prices reported by Romania are smaller than the ones in EU, respectively with:

- class U2 - -29.78%;
- class U3 - -32.86%;
- class R2 - -31.44%;
- class R3 - -31.95%;
- class O2 - -23.45%;
- class O3 - -26.78%.

In the category B – carcasses of other ungelded males, the prices reported by Romania and the mean prices in EU were the ones presented in Table no. 2.

Table no. 2.

Mean price of carcasses of other ungelded males in Romania and European Union in 2008

CATEGORY	**CLASS**	MEAN PRICE	
		ROMANIA	**UE**
		€ / 100 kg	**€ / 100 kg**
B	R3	218,18	266,93

The price difference in this category, including a single quality class and subclass, is unfavourable to the price in Romania, this one being -18.26% smaller than the one reported in EU, representing the smallest price difference.

There is a special situation in the category C, respectively carcasses of gelded males, because Romania did not report anything in the classes U2, U3 and U4, because no carcass belonging to these categories was classified.

Table no. 3

Mean price of carcasses of gelded males in Romania and European Union in 2008

CATEGORY	**CLASS**	**MEAN PRICE**	
		ROMANIA	**UE**
		€ / 100 kg	**€ / 100 kg**
C	U2	0,00	336,18
C	U3	0,00	336,42
C	U4	0,00	332,06
C	R3	218,72	321,20
C	R4	211,15	323,26
C	O3	204,44	301,16
C	O4	206,14	311,98
WEIGHT MEAN PRICE ***C***		***206,04***	***317,01***

In the other classes belonging to the category C, Romania reported smaller prices than the ones in EU, respectively with:

- class R3 - -31.91%;
- class R4 - -34.68%;
- class O3 - -32.12%;
- class O4 - -33.93%.

In the category D – carcasses of farrowing females, Romania reported the most similar prices with the prices in EU; on the other hand, this is the category with the biggest representation in the total animals killed and classified.(Table no. 4)

Table no. 4

Mean price of carcasses of farrowing females in Romania and European Union in 2008

CATEGORY	CLASS	MEAN PRICE	
		ROMANIA	UE
		€ / 100 kg	€ / 100 kg
D	R3	196,22	283,12
D	R4	199,77	264,85
D	O2	181,81	231,18
D	O3	183,90	247,04
D	O4	186,86	244,23
D	P2	173,42	197,96
D	P3	176,48	225,39
WEIGHT MEAN PRICE ***D***		***181,95***	***240,05***

In this animal category, the prices reported by Romania, compared with the EU mean, were smaller with:

- class R3 - -33.93%;
- class R4 - -24.57%;
- class O2 - -21.36%;
- class O3 - -25.56%;
- class O4 - -23.49%;
- class P2 - -12.40%;
- class P3 - -21.70%.

In the last animal category, respectively E – carcasses of other females, Romania reported, like in the other animal categories, much smaller prices than the mean price reported by EU. (Table no. 5)

(Table no. 5)

Mean price of carcasses of other females in Romania and European Union in 2008

CATEGORY	CLASS	MEAN PRICE	
		ROMANIA	UE
		€ / 100 kg	€ / 100 kg
E	U2	236,34	373,78
E	U3	235,88	368,68
E	R2	232,36	325,58
E	R3	219,58	326,67
E	R4	211,87	315,41
E	O2	205,62	263,52
E	O3	207,25	275,53
E	O4	215,52	294,48
WEIGHT MEAN PRICE ***E***		***216,78***	***322,67***

The price differences in the category E are also significant, the prices reported by Romania being smaller than the ones in EU, respectively with:

- class U2 - -36.77%;
- class U3 - -36.02%;
- class R2 - -28.63%;
- class R3 - -32.78%;
- class R4 - -32.83%;
- class O2 - -21.97%;
- class O3 - -24.78%;
- class O4 - -26.81%.

Results and Discussion

We analyzed the prices belonging to all categories, classes and subclasses of quality of cattle carcasses, according to the EUROP system, calculated as means reported by Romania to the European Commission, and their results are presented in Table no. 6.

PREȚURI MEDII PONDERALE	**ROMANIA € / 100 kg**	**UE € / 100 kg**	**PRICE RO / PRICE UE (%)**
A	213,93	324,55	-34,08
B	218,18	266,93	-18,26
C	206,04	317,01	-34,68
D	181,95	240,05	-24,20
E	216,78	322,67	-32,82
All categories	**191,26**	**293,56**	**-34,85**

So, on the whole, in all animal categories, classes and subclasses of quality, the mean prices applied by Romania and reported to the European Commission were 34.85% smaller than the means reported for the entire EU.

Conclusions

The prices of cattle carcasses in Romania are invariably smaller than the ones in EU. This fact puts the cattle breeders in our country in disadvantage compared to the cattle breeders in the other EU states, because the costs are smaller and no not cover this difference.

Consequently, the efficiency of this animal-breeding activity is much smaller in Romania than in the other EU member states.

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