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Promotion of Agricultural Education at State Agrarian University of Moldova as a Tool for Agricultural Development

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Abstract

The dominant sector of the Moldavian national economy is agriculture and food industry since it accounts for 33 % of GDP and 65 % of the country's exports. That is due to the limitation of other natural resources, especially energy, temperate climate and fertile soils. On the other hand, Moldavia produces practically no mineral fertilisers, pesticides, mineral or vitamin additives for food or feedstuffs, veterinary medicines or fuel. Importing these items raises prices for the production sector including agriculture and the food industry. Qualitative changes through improvements in the agricultural education are one of possible ways for the country development. This can be considered as a very significant contribution to meeting millennium goals through innovation in agriculture.

The State Agrarian University of Moldova (SAUM) is one of the prestigious universities in the country, but due to its past it features many shortcomings in its education programme structure, international cooperation, technical background and teaching aids, however its main constraint are the university staff age structure and qualifications.

The Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague (CULS) has been implementing a project at the SAUM which focuses on the above constraints and tends to assist the university management, through the know-how transfer and material grants. The main development objective is to support development of Moldavian higher education and rural development through increasing competitiveness of Moldavian agriculture, which is the basis of support for commencing access with the European Union. The specific objectives includes activities as reorganisation of study according to the Bologna declaration, implementing new environmental programmes, reviewing current study subjects and their syllabi, implementing and controlling utilisation of the credit system ECTS, organisation of courses for increasing the qualification of teachers of the University by improving their pedagogical and research activities and supporting their involvement in agricultural extension, organising consultant services in a specific area and improving laboratory equipment for research of alternative energies produced in agriculture.

The significant results were already achieved by the project which evidence importance of the inter-university trans-border cooperation and need of a scientific approach to the study programme formulation based upon the Bologna declaration implementation.

Keywords: Agriculture, development, education, Moldova, research