

MAP PRODUCTION IN ALBANIA -FRADITIONAL CULTIVATION AND CHALLENGES FOR SAGE AND LEMON BALM

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INTRODUCTION

Albania is the 16th largest global supplier of medicinal and aromatic

RESULTS

The 30 farmers who participated in the questionnaire were from five

plants (MAP), with 95% of its production exported, involving around 20,000 families in collection and 4,000 in cultivation.

Sage (*Salvia Officinalis*) and lemon balm (*Melissa Officinalis*) are the most widely cultivated MAPs, playing a significant role in various industries, including cosmetics, health products, and medicines.

Aiming to improve MAP quality by blending scientific and traditional methods, the project surveyed 30 farmers across five regions, examining their cultivation techniques and addressing key challenges in the sector.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A structured questionnaire was used to gather detailed information from the farmers. Key topics included field preparation, irrigation, fertilization, harvesting and processing, and the challenges that farmers face.

The questionnaire also explored farmers' traditional knowledge, challenges faced in MAP cultivation and marketing strategies for their products.



different locations: Perrenjas, Pogradec, Elbasan, Gramsh, and Shkoder. Usually it is family farming.





Figure 1. Cultivation of sage and lemon balm in Albania





CONCLUSIONS

Low level of mechanisation, not appropriate irrigation planning, lack of proper drying and storage facilities lead to a reduction in yield and quality of MAPS. Since, the price (local market) is not linked to quality of sage, a reduction in quality is not a big concern for harvesters/ cultivators. However, to sell the dried product at higher price in the international market, focus should be on the quality of MAPS. Therefore, proper field management, which includes water and fertigation planning is important to increase yield and quality (essential oil content).

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