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Czech hop acreage without major changes

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The total hop acreage in the Czech Republic stays at the 2008 level. Further slight decrease is recorded only with the Saaz variety especially in the Saaz hop growing region. According to the information of the Central Institute for Testing and Supervising in Agriculture the total acreage on 30

h

April 2009 was 5305 ha.

In comparison to the harvested acreage in 2008 this means a reduction of 30 ha. Saaz variety accounts for the majority of the acreage with 4627 ha (decrease of 111 ha), variety Premiat accounts for 239 ha (increase of 26 ha) and variety Sladek accounts for 275 ha (increase of 36 ha). There was also an increase of the Agnus variety by 6 ha to a total of 58 ha.

Development of hop acreage in the Czech Republic (ha)

Variety/ Year

2000

2001

2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

2008

2009

Saaz

5913

5860

5639

5574

5407

5231

4926

4840

4738

4627

Sládek

82

92

152

163

195

202

222

215

239

275

Premiant

70

88

141

149

151

153

181

249

267

293

Total acreage

6095

6075

5968

5942

5838

5672

5414

5389

5335

5305

Saaz hop growing region is the largest hop region of the Czech Republic with 3899 ha.

There was a decrease in the total hop acreage of 54 ha in this region but Saaz variety decreased by 106 ha in this region. The Auscha hop region acreage is 669 in 2009 which is an increase by 6 ha compare to 2008 and Tirschitz hop region acreage is 737 ha which means an increase of 18 ha compare to 2008.

The new hop acreage is 248 ha, i.e. 4,7 % of the total acreage (in 2008 the new acreage was 210 ha, in 2007 – 196 ha, 2006 – 109 ha). This means that the situation is improving and more investments are directed into replanting of hop plants. However in view of the high average age we need to reach levels between 300 and 400 ha of new acreage in the next years. We especially need to support the Saaz variety **since Saaz hops is the European protected designation of origin**

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The spring works are in advance

With regards to the climate development during April, especially higher than average temperatures, the vegetation and therefore also the work in hop gardens is 1-2 weeks ahead depending on the locality of hop gardens. The most important work for further plant development is hop training and last two years there were major problems with securing enough labour force for this period. In 2009 the hop growers were successful, also probably due to the economic crises, to secure workers for the whole period of spring works and the first phase of hop training is already finished by many growers. The availability of work force and its price will however play vital role in hop growing in the Czech Republic in the future.

In 2009 there are 135 hop growers in the Czech Republic (91 in Saaz hop region, 31 in Auscha region and 13 in Tirschitz region)