

The National framework of the Czech Republic for the operational programmes of producer organizations in the fruit and vegetables sector concerning environmental measures for the period of 2015 - 2022

The National framework of the Czech Republic for the operational programmes of producer organizations in the fruit and vegetables sector concerning the environmental measures for the period of 2015 – 2022 (hereinafter referred to as the “National Framework of the CR”) is a continuation of the National Framework of the CR from the original National Strategy of the Czech Republic for the operational programmes of producer organizations in the sector of fruit and vegetables for the period of 2008 – 2013 (hereinafter referred to as the “National Strategy of the CR”) extended until 30 June 2015.

The environmental measures designated in the National Strategy of the CR for the period of 2008 - 2013 under number 6 underwent both a running and a final evaluation. The subject performing the evaluation was the Institute of Agricultural Economics and Information (IAEI). It follows from the report that the targets of the operational programmes of producer organisations that were in accordance with the goal of the National Strategy of the CR, which was the protection of the environment, were fulfilled. All of the evaluated producer organisations used at least two environmental measures. From the total number of seven measures of the National Strategy of the CR, the contribution of the environmental measures was 9 % of the financial expenses. The expenses were oriented primarily on actions to protect the soil (limiting erosion, covering the soil) and, to a lesser extent, on integrated production and improving water management.

Situation in the area of the environment

In the current conditions of the Czech Republic it is possible to select six basic types of degradation threatening agriculturally used soils or also forest soils. These are water and wind erosion, debasification and acidification, physical degradation (the degradation of the soil structure, compaction), degradation by pollution and contamination, the decrease of organic matter (humus) and biological degradation. The problem is that the individual soil degradation processes are very frequently combined and take place concurrently.

By far the most serious is degradation by water erosion. More than half of the agricultural land in the Czech Republic is potentially threatened by water erosion. The extent of the true (current) water erosion cannot be precisely determined, though it is estimated that approximately 1.4 million hectares of agricultural land is damaged. Erosion damage is caused primarily by torrential rains, which according to the recent researches have shown a trend of a slight increase and a slight tendency to shift to autumn months whilst the total annual rainfall maintains the same, though so far it cannot be said if the trend is permanent.

The territory of the Czech Republic is characterised by the huge diversity of its landscape and a high diversity of habitats. Agriculture itself contributed significantly to its increase in the past. In the last fifty years, however, agriculture was the main cause of the decrease in diversity of the countryside thanks to a change in technologies. The greatest decrease in species diversity occurred in typical agricultural production areas with a heavily disrupted landscape structure and with the considerable consumption of agrochemicals. The fields were consolidated into large blocks of land (the average field size has increased from 0.23 ha in 1948 to approximately 20 ha at the current time), which often did not respect the relief of the terrain. These measures have resulted in the considerable disruption of flow conditions, water pollution and soil degradation, which have lasted until the current day. These steps gradually gave rise to the

process of the loss of the natural soil fertility, the natural protection of the soil against wind and especially water erosion, a considerable decrease in the ability of water retention in the landscape, reduced biological diversity, the lower number of species dependant on the agricultural landscape and a decrease of ecological stabilisation landscape elements.

Despite the strongly negative trends mentioned here, it has led to the partial reduction in the intensity of the disruption of the natural resources in recent decades. A considerable decrease in the consumption of fertilisers and plant protection products have meant the lower pressure on the environment, which has been partially reflected in the slight increase of the number of some species of mammals and birds. The negative effect of this tendency is the decrease in the competitiveness of several farmers, particularly in the areas that are not conducive to production. For this reason almost 7 % of the agricultural land is currently threatened by abandonment and by the related processes of degradation of species-diverse parts of the agricultural ecosystem. This is also a reason why the Czech Republic provides support for natural and other disadvantages, while the payments are oriented on ensuring a corresponding level of income, leading to the stabilisation of the rural population so that the land is not abandoned as a result of the farming in these areas being unfavourable.

Definition of the National Framework of the CR

The National Framework of the CR is specified pursuant to Article 36 of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Articles 55, 56 and 58 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 543/2011, or to Article 3 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/892. Article 28 of Regulation No. 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council applies to the determination of the agri-environment-climate payments.

Furthermore, pursuant to Article 36(1) of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council for measures concerning the environment, the National Framework of the CR ensures that the measures fulfilling the requirements of Regulation No. 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, including the requirements for complementarity, coherence and conformity of the individual actions, as defined in Article 8 of the given Regulation.

The National Framework of the CR supplements with its measures the priorities of the Rural Development Programme of the CR (RDP), which are the renewal, preservation and improvement of the ecosystems connected with agriculture and forestry, the support of the effective use of resources and the support of the transformation to a low-carbon economy in the areas of agriculture, food and forestry, which are resistant to climate.

General requirements for environmental measures to be included in the operational programme:

The environment actions selected under the operational programme must:

- respect the requirements for agri-environment-climate payments as specified in Article 28(3) of Regulation No. 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council,
- be in harmony with the National Framework,
- be compatible and complementary with other environmental measures introduced under the operational programme and also, in certain cases, with the agri-environment-climate

commitments supported under the RDP, implemented by the members of the producer organisations.

In case the operational programme would enable the combination of various environmental measures and/or the environmental measures selected under the operational programme could be combined with agri-environment-climate measures supported under the RDP, the level of provided support must take into account the amount of the lost profits and additional expenses that would ensue from the combination of the given measures. The current setting of the environmental measures in the frame of operational programmes of producer organizations eliminates any conjunction with agri-environment-climate measures supported in the RDP.

- The amount of the support for measures in the area of the environment selected under the operational programme, which should cover the additional expenses and lost profit related to the given measures, can be modified in case of amendments of the relevant reference level (i.e. the setting of standards that the commitments in the area of the environment must fulfil).

The prevention of the possibility of double financing is secured by the control system of the State Agricultural Intervention Fund (hereinafter referred to as the “SAIF”), which compares the applicants with the Central Applicants’ Database (CAD) before the actual approval proceedings of the operational programmes of producer organizations. During the actual submission of the application for support the applicant submits a statutory declaration that the expenses of the operational programme for which the support is requested have not been and will not be supported by other EU financial resources or by other national public resources for the duration that the investment is binding. Furthermore during every inspection the applicant’s accounting is inspected on site.

Duration of actions of some environmental measures is directly specified in the commitments for the specific measures below. If the duration of the operational programme is shorter than the specified commitment, the producer organisation is obliged to adhere to this commitment and state it in the following operational programme. The observance of these commitments is subject to possible on-site inspections for the entire duration of the action.

Performance of administration and inspection

The performance of the administration and inspection of the adherence to the National Framework of the CR is verified by the SAIF with its headquarters in Prague. The specific definition of SAIF’s activities is given primarily in Articles 55 to 58 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 543/2011, in Article 36 of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Act No. 256/2000 Coll., on the State Agricultural Intervention Fund, as later amended, and Government Decree No. 318/2008 Coll., as later amended.

List of environmental measures of National Framework of CR – Appendix No. 1

The selection of the individual environmental measures for the National Framework of the CR is in accordance with Article 58 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 543/2011 or with Article 3 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/892 and with Regulation No. 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council and excludes the support provided pursuant to Articles 28 and 29 of Regulation No. 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council. The selection of the environmental measures is limited to those measures that are not applied in the agri-environment-climate measures of the RDP, thereby

preventing the possibility of drawing on double EU support. The SAIF' control systems prevent the possibility of drawing on double EU support with other RDP measures where theoretical overlap exists.

The National Framework of the CR concerns the following environmental measures:

1. Increasing the natural soil fertility

1.1.

Measure: purchase of mulching machines, branch crushers

Justification: increase the content of organic matter in soil and support biological life in the soil

Commitment: the acquisition of the relevant technology, which will be used exclusively in fruit orchards and on land for growing vegetables until the expiration of the fiscal depreciation, the prevention of the clearance of grass and plant matter after cutting (i.e. leaving plant waste on site). The producer organisations ensure the fulfilment of the conditions exclusively for the fruit and vegetable sector.

Calculation of support: according to actual expenses for the acquisition of mulching machines, branch crushers and rules specified in Article 34 of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

2. Anti-erosion measures and measures for environmentally friendly water management in landscape – the actions can be mutually combined in the frame of the measures

2.1.

Measure: grassing of orchards

Justification: prevention of erosion on steep plots.

Commitment: grassing of areas that exceed the requirements specified by the GAEC standard regulated pursuant to Government Decree No. 309/2014 Coll., on the specification of the consequences for breaching the dependence of providing some agricultural support and the maintenance of the grass covering for a period of at least five years

Calculation of support: according to demonstrated expenses for purchase of grass mixture seeds and the rules specified in Article 34 of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

2.2.

Measure: investment in irrigation equipment, except for the main irrigation equipment (i.e. underground pipe rows, irrigation canals, filling stations, diversion structures, irrigation storage tanks, including shafts and related technologies)

Justification: decrease of water consumption and decrease of water erosion by building drip irrigation or micro-spraying

Commitment: the construction of irrigation equipment to lower the consumption of water by at least 25 %

Calculation of support: according to the actual expenses for the construction of the irrigation equipment and the rules specified in Article 34 of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

3. Increasing biodiversity

3.1.

Measure: introduction of organisms for pollination with the exception of bees

Justification: increase the number of animals pollinating plants with the exception of bees.

Commitment: placement of hives with pollinators.

Calculation of support: according to the actual expenses for the acquisition of pollinators with the exception of bees including rental services other than transport, and the rules specified in Article 34 of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

4. Organic farming

4.1.

Measure: planting organic orchards

Justification: support of environmentally-friendly farming methods, reducing the use of fertilisers and products for plant protection.

Commitment: the condition is the certified organic farming in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No. 834/2007 and Act No. 242/2000 Coll., on organic farming, including the use of certified planting material; period of this commitment is 10 years

Calculation of support: according to the actual expenses for the acquisition of certified planting material and the rules specified in Article 34 of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

5. Consultation, training – mandatory of combination with at least one of the measures 1.1., 2.1., 2.2., 3.1., 4.1., 6.1., 6.2., 7.1., 7.2. of the National Framework of the CR

5.1.

Measure: organisation of training for measures of National Framework of CR

Justification: increase level of knowledge of producers about selected NF measures.

Commitment: to train producers farming according to the conditions of one or more NF measures from measures 1.1., 2.1., 2.2., 3.1., 4.1., 6.1., 7.1., 7.2.

Calculation of support: according to the actual expenses and the rules specified in Article 34 of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

6. Support of non-chemical protection methods – action can be mutually combined in frame of measures

6.1.

Measure: use of biological (including predator nutrition), physical and mechanical protection methods

Justification: decrease of environmental damage caused by use of chemical protection products, ensuring natural biodiversity for the support of useful organisms.

Commitment: use according to valid registration; when controlling take into account requirements set in the Act No. 326/2004 Coll., on phytosanitary care; used methods are in accordance with the principles of integrated pest management

Calculation of support: according to the actual expenses for the acquisition of the plant protection products including nutrition for predators, reduced by possible saving of expenses or increased income as result of used methods, and according to the rules specified in Article 34 of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

6.2.

Measure: unwoven textiles for covering vegetation

Justification: decrease of chemical protection, mechanical prevention of infestations of pests, reduce erosion.

Commitment: ensure protection of vegetation by timely covering of area

Calculation of support: According to document demonstrating purchase and acquisition price, reduced by possible saving of expenses or increased income as result of used methods, and according to the rules specified in Article 34 of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

7. Measures for climate change mitigation – action can be mutually combined in frame of measures

7.1.

Measure: replacement of old cooling systems

Justification: decrease of environmental damage (increase the effectiveness of cooling systems).

Commitment: decrease of environmental damage by at least 25 %

Calculation of support: According to the actual expenses and the rules specified in Article 34 of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

7.2.

Measure: thermal insulation of premises for storage and post-harvest treatment in fruit and vegetable sector

Justification: decrease of energy consumption

Commitment: decrease of energy consumption by at least 25%

Calculation of support: according to the actual expenses and the rules specified in Article 34 of Regulation No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF CR FOR ORGANISATIONAL PROGRAMMES OF PRODUCER ORGANISATIONS IN THE SECTOR OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

LIST OF ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES

MEASURE		TYPE OF ACTION		REQUIREMENTS
Č.	Name	Č.	Description	
1.	Increasing the natural soil fertility	1.1.	Purchase of mulching machines, branch crushers	Increase the content of organic matter in soil and support biological life in the soil
2.	Anti-erosion measures and measures for environmentally friendly water management in landscape	2.1.	Grassing of orchards	Prevention of erosion on steep plots
		2.2.	Investment in irrigation equipment, except for the main irrigation equipment	Decrease of water consumption and decrease of water erosion by building drip irrigation or micro-spraying by at least 25 %
3.	Increasing biodiversity	3.1.	Introduction of organisms for pollination with the exception of bees	Increase the number of animals pollinating plants with the exception of bees
4.	Organic farming	4.1.	Planting organic orchards	Support of environmentally-friendly farming methods, reducing the use of fertilisers and products for plant protection
5.	Consultation, training	5.1.	Organisation of training for measures of National Framework of CR	Increase level of knowledge of producers about selected NF measures
6.	Support of non-chemical protection methods	6.1.	Use of biological (including predator nutrition), physical and mechanical protection methods	Decrease of environmental damage caused by use of chemical protection products, ensuring natural biodiversity for support of useful organisms
		6.2.	Unwoven textiles for covering vegetation	Decrease of chemical protection, mechanical prevention of infestations of pests, reduce erosion
7.	Measures for climate change mitigation	7.1.	Replacement of old cooling systems	Decrease of environmental damage (increase the effectiveness of cooling system) by at least 25 %
		7.2.	Thermal insulation of premises for storage and post-harvest treatment	Decrease of energy consumption by at least 25 %