

Abstract

The dissertation deals with the concepts of multifunctional agriculture in the context of transformations of Czech agriculture in the post-communist era. In general, the study mainly wanted to discuss the concepts of multifunctional agriculture, known for over three decades, especially from the Anglo-Saxon environment, and to analyse the development of Czech agriculture as well as application of multifunctional agriculture especially in the period after Czechia's joining the European Union, including the perception of multifunctional activities by farmers.

The initial part of the study discusses the concepts of multifunctional agriculture as non-commodity production (OECD 2001) and an integral part of rural development (Van der Ploeg, Roep 2003) on the one hand and of agricultural multifunctionality (Wilson 2007), on the other. The empirical part of the work was based on a quantitative assessment of regional differentiation of multifunctional agriculture in Czechia, the territorial concentration of multifunctional activities and dependence between the variables that influence its implementation. The evaluation of the perception of multifunctional activities by farmers has resulted from a field survey, or interviews conducted with farmers in three areas of interest of various types (municipality with extended powers Nepomuk, Kralovice, Tachov).

Based on the conducted survey, one can state that in the Czech agriculture there are similar processes underway as those described in Anglo-Saxon countries. However, their signs often much differ, primarily due to the specific development of Czech agriculture in the Communist era, the post-communist transformation and Czechia's integration into multinational structures. In the form it is known from Western European countries, multifunctional agriculture also appears in Czechia. Its specific signs are primarily influenced by external frameworks – the support by the European Union (Common Agricultural Policy). This has been confirmed by the boom of the multifunctional activities prior to Czechia's EU entry and after it. Based on an analysis of regional differentiation, a significant concentration of multifunctional agriculture as non-commodity production in the areas with worse natural conditions for agriculture was uncovered. By contrast, multifunctional agriculture as an integral part of rural development does not have, with the exception of organic agriculture, any strong link to natural conditions suitable for agriculture. In addition, there was an examination of spatial unevenness of the representation of multifunctional activities. The field survey proved that in all rural areas of interest with various types, one can find the farmers who have reached strong multifunctionality.

Key words: agriculture, rural development, multifunctional agriculture, productivism, post-productivism, Czechia