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FOOD CANNING AND THE COTTON CROP IN RUMANIA DURING AUGUST 1953

Comment: The following report was compiled from the Bucharest newspapers Romania Libera, Viata Capitalei, and Scanteia of August 1953 and the Vienna semiweekly newspaper Interreport-Ost of October 1953.

Bucharest newspapers published numerous articles on increased food production and better crops during 1953. Moreover, the state promised to make available greater amounts of food to compensate for the food shortage of the winter and spring of 1953. The Central Committee of the Rumanian Workers Party announced in August that the state was prepared to give extensive support to the Rumanian food industry to improve the standard of living. This decision appears to have been prompted by increasing dissatisfaction of the people with rationing. In support of this promise, Bucharest newspapers listed outstanding results achieved so far in many old and new canning and food factories.

The 1953 cotton crop appears to be very disappointing, according to the Vienna Interreport-Ost of 7 October 1953. However Bucharest newspapers report that cultivation is on schedule and that the crop promised to be a good one. Higher prices and additional concessions were offered to cotton growers for quantities and quality above quotas.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.

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## FOOD AND CANNING

[According to the Vienna Interreport-Ost, the Council of the City of Bucharest announced that rations of sugar, edible oils, flour pastes, and soap for the fourth quarter of 1953 will be the same as those for the previous quarter. This announcement, the paper stated, caused great disappointment among the population of Bucharest, because in September the City People's Council promised a 10-20 percent ration increase for the last quarter of 1953. Noisy protests were made in enterprises, and the question was raised in party and government circles as to when the promised improvements in living standards would be put into effect. To appease the resentment, Interreport-Ost said, the city council announced that additional rations of sugar and oil might be granted. The press, at the same time, complained of the poor production of oil mills and the delay in harvesting sugar beets, the paper stated.(1)]

The Central Committee of the Rumanian Workers Party announced in the plenary session of 15-20 August 1953 that the government planned to invest close to 1.6 billion lei in the Rumanian food industry in 1953-1955 (2), instead of the 980 million lei originally planned.(3) Production of meat, fish, edible oils, and sugar will increase 40-60 percent in 1954 over 1953, according to this plan. The plan also provided for expansion of the production capacity of industrial food enterprises. Varieties of foods will also be increased and improved.(2)

The Ministry of Food Industry of the Rumanian People's Republic has devoted special interest to the food canning industry, which has expanded considerably in the last few years. Production of canned vegetables was increased by 147 percent, marmalades by 146 percent, and canned foods in general by 90 percent in 1952 as compared with 1949. In the period 1949-1952 four new canneries were constructed, including the Valea-Rosie cannery, Bucharest Regiune, and the Zagna cannery, Galati Regiune. An additional canning factory was scheduled to start operation during 1953. These new factories, as well as improvements in old ones as a result of sizable investments, contributed to a greatly increased production.

Enterprises under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Food Industry, however, have not kept pace with the increasing needs of the population. Some of these enterprises showed a lack of organization, which hampered the smooth flow of production. For example, the canneries frequently could not deliver on time due to lack of labels and packing materials. Such shortcomings can and should be eliminated. It is also important to develop greater varieties and produce greater quantities of compotes and jams. Many canned vegetables and jams are of poor quality. This, too, must be improved. Special attention to quality is more important than ever, in view of the increase in investments. People must also be guided and urged to prepare canned vegetables and canned fruit at home. People's councils must see to it that containers, cellophane, corks, and parchment are made available to the population for this purpose.(3)

Increasing consumer demands, both for quality and quantity, has been a constant preoccupation for the large canneries of Rumania, such as Flora, Gri-vita, and Valea-Rosie. The canneries realized that labor must be organized and recommendations for labor-saving devices encouraged. At the Buftea cannery, for example, two tanks were constructed for parboiling fruit pulp for marmalades. The marmalade was preserved with sulfur dioxide. This eliminated bottlenecks in production and increased the processing capacity. Special teams were organized at the Flora cannery to select and check fruit and vegetables as they arrived in the warehouses. Workers Dumitru Ungureanu and Ion Oprea of this cannery devised

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a new type of jar with a tin lid 18 millimeters thinner than the old type, thus conserving tin. This innovation has been introduced in the vegetable, fruit, meat, fish, and dairy departments. A narrow-gauge track was set up in the sterilization hall for the transportation of baskets carrying jars and cans to the warehouse, in order to facilitate work and increase productivity.

In line with the labor-saving policy, the hand-operated elevator servicing the sterilization section of the Grivita cannery was remodeled into an electrically operated elevator to make work easier. This increased labor productivity by 15 percent. At the same cannery, mechanic Constantin Olatici built a greasing device for the automatic greasing of bolts at sealing machines. This improvement eliminates interruptions and increases the output of the machine by 8 percent. Furthermore, an automatic jar-filling machine for brine was put in operation and a new department was opened for cooking vegetables in oil. The large-scale application of the Voroshin method increased production at the Grivita cannery by 114.7 percent in July. Labor productivity increased 9 percent in the vegetable department, and the quality of products, such as peppers stuffed with rice, okra in oil, and vegetable stew, improved considerably over 1952.(4)

The Grivita canning factory exceeded its production plan by 15,000 kilograms of canned vegetables for the month of July. Large quantities of fruit compote and marmalades were also turned out in excess of quotas. Workers' collectives gave special care to quality. Good organization of labor enabled the factory to produce 34 percent in excess of quotas. Some workers exceeded daily norms by 30-50 percent. Through the combined effort of all workers the plant was working on its 15 September quotas by 7 August.(5) This cannery also produced dozens of varieties of canned vegetables, jams, and syrups during the summer of 1953. In August it started the production of strawberry syrup. The strawberry, apricot, and prune jams are of excellent quality. The cannery produced 80 varieties of canned vegetables in 1953.(2)

The Valea-Rosie cannery is putting out a greater variety, including tomato juice rich in vitamins, pasteurized at 70-80 degrees centigrade.

The Filaret cannery experimented with a Soviet method for the preparation of acidulated fruit juices. These juices are now produced in several large wineries.

However, there is still place for improvements both in varieties and in output. The Flora, Grivita, Fructonil, and Buftea canneries have greater production capacities which should be exploited in full.(4)

The Buftea, Flora, Grivita, Valea-Rosie, and many other canning factories in Bucharest City and in Bucharest Regiune are now processing and packing larger quantities of vegetables and fruit. They have increased their production capacity 14-33 percent. Some of these factories have set up new departments and new machinery. At the Valea-Rosie cannery a new section for washing fruit and vegetables was opened in the second quarter of 1953. This department processed 60 tons of canned peas and string beans of good quality up to the beginning of August. The Buftea, Fructonil, Grivita, and Valea-Rosie factories produced 457,000 cans and jars of vegetables in excess of quotas.

The General Directorate of Canneries in the Ministry of Food Industry and the Bucharest Regiune Union of Consumers Cooperatives must see to it that the present canning campaign is successfully concluded. Canning factories are duty-bound to use all machines and facilities to maximum capacity. Day and night shifts should be employed at machines which can process several types

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of vegetables, to avoid rushing at the end of each plan period. State farms must also be reminded to live up to their commitments and to deliver vegetables to canneries on time. The quality of the finished product should be the major preoccupation of workers in canneries. Every vegetable and fruit should be processed carefully. A recurrence of errors such as were made at the Buftea factory in 1952 must be avoided, for at that time the fruit preserves of the cannery were of very poor quality. State organizations should exercise a constant supervision over the quality of products.

Housewives of all regiune must be guided and instructed to prepare sufficient quantities of canned vegetables and fruit. The eight raion cooperatives of Bucharest City, Bucharest Regiune, which operate a semimechanized vegetable and fruit preserve center, must also contribute by preparing large quantities of tomato paste, dried fruit, etc. Vegetables or fruit that are not readily sold should be immediately processed for canning to prevent losses. Raion and commune people's councils and primary party organizations must inform collectives, TOZ (agricultural cooperatives), and individual peasants of the importance of preserving vegetables and fruit, and not allow even the smallest amounts to be wasted.(6)

The Argus Oil Mill of Constanta, Constanta Regiune, completed 64.84 percent of the monthly production plan in the first days of August. The Black Sea Floating Fish Cannery on the ship Octombrie-Rosu and the Marea Fish Cannery of Constanta have increased production and improved the quality of their products.(7)

Work progressed well at the Burdujeni marmalade factory, Suceava Regiune. The factory made jams, marmalades, syrups, and other products. In the first 10 days of August production was stepped up considerably and three carloads of products were delivered in excess of plan.(8)

The improved living standard in Craiova Regiune resulted in large volume sales of consumer goods. Sales of food products were 23,654,000 lei higher in the first quarter of 1953 than in the same period of 1952. These sales included bread and pastry products which amounted to 6,379,000 lei. The value of cotton products sold in the first quarter of 1953 exceeded the volume of the first quarter of 1952 by 23,370,000 lei. Sales of wool cloth were 103 percent higher, of silk fabrics 85 percent higher, and of footwear 67 percent higher in the first quarter of 1953 than in the same period of 1952. Factory workers and peasants of Craiova Regiune bought 13,982,000 lei worth more clothing and knitwear during 1 January to 1 July 1953 than during the same period of 1952.(2)

The Dunarea Fruit and Vegetable Cannery of Tulcea, Galati Regiune, was constructed in 1950. By the end of August 1953, it had increased its initial production several times. The cannery is equipped with Soviet machinery and is producing 70 varieties of foodstuffs, including dehydrated vegetables and vegetables canned in oil. Labor productivity increased 30 percent per laborer during July, and production costs were cut 2 percent below the plan. Labor teams exceeded production by 16-105 percent during July.(7)

The same good results were also evident at the Ghecet Fishery of the Galati State Fisheries. The fishermen delivered 1,500 kilograms of fish in excess of quotas during July.(9)

A new modern bread bakery started operation in the city of Iasi, Iasi Regiune, at the beginning of August. The factory, completely mechanized, has a high-capacity kneader and equipment to carry the dough to the molding department and then to five automatic ovens. The factory supplies 24 distribution centers. New bread bakeries with four ovens each started operation in Vaslui and Husi.(10)

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Socialist competition is in full swing at the Intreprinderea Alimentara Dunareana (Danube Food Enterprise) of Galati, Galati Regiune. The collective working on flour paste in the bakery division exceeded the plan by 94.6 percent, and the biscuit and cracker division far exceeded its plan from 1-24 July 1953. Workers in the packing department packed 1,562 cases more in July than in June. (9)

The Munca Biscuit Factory of Constanta, Constanta Regiune, produced 4.5 percent more biscuits in July than required by quotas. (7)

The Pestisani fruit preserve center, Pestisani Commune, Craiova Regiune, received 16,374 kilograms of fruit, including 8,783 kilograms of apples, by the end of August. Large quantities of fruit, including some 10,000 kilograms of raspberries and blackberries, were sent to other centers. The Pestisani Commune Cooperative headed the purchasing campaign, fulfilling its August quota in the first 10 days of the month. (11)

A new canning factory was constructed in Raureni, Pitesti Regiune, next to the already existing marmalade factory. The new factory will produce mainly fruit and vegetable juices. The new building covers an area of 15 hectares. The factory was scheduled to start operation during the fourth quarter of 1953. More than 90 percent of its machines were imported from the Soviet Union. The production capacity of the new cannery will be 3.5 times larger than that of the old cannery and labor productivity will increase 180 percent. (12)

Cooperatives in Targu-Jiu Raion, Craiova Regiune, carried on a sustained drive to buy all the fruit available in the raion. The fruit was then sent to the preserving centers in Pestisani, Runcu, Turcinesti, and Danesti communes. These centers have equipment for preserving fruit for winter. (11)

A new bread bakery was scheduled to start operation in Turda, Cluj Regiune, in the fall of 1953. The bakery will be equipped with machines of high productivity. It will have special equipment to make small white loaves of bread, rolls, French bread, and milk rolls. (13)

The Unirea Candy Factory of Constanta, Constanta Regiune, exceeded its production plan by 13 percent in July. In August, it started production of its September quotas. (7)

#### COTTON CROP

The Vienna Interreport-Ost stated that according to Bucharest newspapers, the 1953 cotton crop was very disappointing. The crop was expected to be 15 percent above that of 1952, but was actually below the average crop of 1951-1952 and caused real concern to Rumanian importers. Anticipating an increase in cotton production in 1953, the government reduced cotton imports to a minimum and is now faced with great shortages. The Vienna paper reported that this proved very embarrassing for the Rumanian government, at a time when propaganda praising improved living conditions all over the country was intended to appease the people.

Interreport-Ost claimed that insufficient manpower, the general neglect of cotton planting, and a delayed harvest were the main causes for the poor yield. It further reported that the newspaper Scanteia had stated that the entire harvest should have been completed by 18 August 1953. According to the Vienna source, this was not the case. The large new state farms in Bucharest, Constanta, Craiova, and Galati regiunes completely neglected the campaign schedule. The executive committees of the people's councils were severely criticized because they did not mobilize the necessary manpower for the cotton harvest. The best results were obtained by the Piatra State Farm

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near Bucharest, where work was performed with the aid of seven combines. The paper said that the harvest results at this farm demonstrate how much the 1953 cotton harvest has fallen behind other years. Only two thirds of the crop was gathered at this farm by 20 September. The yield was 180 tons of cotton. From a statistical table of the Ministry of Agriculture, issued in December 1952, it is evident, Interreport-Ost stated, that the Piatra State Farm had harvested 310 tons of cotton in 1952. According to plan, the Piatra State Farm was expected to have a yield of 900 kilograms per hectare. The Vienna source reported that figures released by the Ministry of Agriculture, however, indicate that the 1953 results were only 780 kilograms per hectare. Consequently, Rumanian importers tried to buy cotton abroad. Interreport-Ost concluded that it is interesting to note that Rumanian efforts to purchase part of the Soviet cotton surplus offered on the international markets evidently failed, because Rumanian purchasing negotiations were directed to most of the non-Soviet markets since the beginning of October 1953. (17)

Engineer Hristu Gheorghe, Director of the General Directorate of Cotton in the Ministry of State Farms emphasized the need for increased cotton planting and increased cotton yields. He also discussed improved picking methods. The picking of cotton is done by teams of 10-12 people with a norm of 8-12 kilograms of cotton per day per worker, just after the plants begin to open. The norms increase to 16-25 kilograms per day, when the plants have completely opened. State farms and collectives have easily exceeded these norms by proper organization of manpower. Rumanian cotton pickers applied Stakhanovite methods in 1952 and increased their daily norms. A woman picker at the Olga Banciuc State Farm, for example, picked 150 kilograms of cotton per day. Another worker picked 114 kilograms per day. At the Roseti State Farm, Calarasi Raion, workers picked 140-150 kilograms per day.

To speed up and improve picking, transportation teams must also be organized to carry the cotton from the fields to the platforms. The state grants many concessions to cotton growers, especially to collectives and TOZ, to encourage greater planting. The state has established prices for cotton according to quality, and even larger gains are assured to those who exceed quotas. For example, an individual cotton grower who obtains 548 kilograms per hectare can earn 1,631 lei. In addition, he is permitted to purchase 274 kilograms of corn and 82 meters of fabrics from the state stores at the official price. If production norms are exceeded by 50 percent, or production of 822 kilograms of cotton per hectare, he will receive 2,753 lei and may buy 411 kilograms of corn and 122 meters of yardgoods. Collectives and TOZ enjoy even greater advantages. The Coconi Collective, Oltenita Raion, for example, received 5,139,252 lei (old currency), including 1,578,920 lei for excess production, for cotton grown in 1951. (14)

#### Bucharest Regiune

The Vitanesti State Farm devoted special attention to cotton growing. Four brigades of workers started the harvest on time and the results appeared to be good. The brigade of Gheorghe Blaj picked several hundred kilograms of cotton in 2 days. Other brigades also harvested large quantities daily. The cotton was immediately delivered to the ginning centers. (15)

The cotton crop in Franceni Commune was rich and ripe for picking by 30 August. Individual peasants of the commune started picking and harvested more than 300 kilograms of cotton in one day. The second day, a larger number of peasants helped with the harvest and a much larger quantity was picked. (16)

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Many state farms in Bucharest Regiune applied technical methods to increase the production of cotton per hectare. Some state farms applied the artificial pollination method in 1953 for the first time. The Roseti State Farm, Calarasi Raion, devoted special attention to cotton growing. This farm has the largest cotton plantation in Bucharest Regiune. State farm workers performed five cultivations up to the middle of August and applied artificial pollination on 8,000 square meters of plants. This state farm devoted special attention to the irrigation of cotton fields. Pumps and pipes were prepared on time for the irrigation of more than 1,000 hectares of cotton plants. Consequently, each cotton plant carried 10-12 blooms and the bolls were well formed. Cotton cultivation and tapping was performed by 381 individual competitive teams and 12 brigade teams.(17)

Members of the Vasile Roaita Collective, Draganesti Raion, completed the fourth cotton cultivation and artificial pollination by 18 August.(18)

Collectivists and individual peasants of Draganesti Raion continued to take good care of their cotton plantations. By 16 August, the fourth cultivation and 25 percent of the fifth cultivation were completed. Tapping was completed in 50 percent of total area.(19)

The 6 Martie Collective, Stoicanești Commune, completed weeding and tapping of 10 hectares of cotton by 21 July. The Olga Banciuc TOZ, Comani Commune, and the 7 Noembrie TOZ of Baneasa Commune completed 100 percent of weeding and tapping of cotton plants.(20)

Independent peasants in Giurgiu Raion applied agricultural rules in the upkeep of plants. Members of the Frasinul TOZ cultivated the cotton for the fifth time and tapped all the plants. The Sfantu-Gheorghe TOZ completed cultivation of 6 hectares of cotton. Independent peasants in Baneasa Commune cultivated 245 hectares of cotton for the fifth time and tapped 47 hectares.

Independent peasants in Pueni Commune cultivated 16 hectares of cotton for the fifth time and tapped 10 hectares. Pietrole Commune cultivated 80 percent of the entire cotton area for the fifth time and tapped 65 percent of plants. Individual peasants in Reiu Commune completed the fifth cultivation of cotton and tapped 40 percent of the plants.

Agitation carried on by primary party organizations in the above communes and lectures given regularly by technicians at cultural centers of raion people's councils contributed to this efficiency.(21)

The Chirnogi State Farm, Chirnogi Commune, Oltenita Raion, completed the sixth cultivation of cotton plants using mechanical cultivators. The cotton plants were artificially pollinated and fertilizer was used.(4)

Workers at the Olga Banciuc State Farm, Piatra Commune, started the cotton harvest on 18 August. By 22 August they had harvested 2,500 kilograms of first quality cotton, which they immediately delivered to the cotton ginning station. Following the example of the state farm, individual peasants in Suhai Commune also started to harvest their cotton. The peasants delivered the first 500 kilograms of first-quality cotton to the Zamnicea ginning station.(22)

#### Craiova Regiune

Areas planted in Cotton in Craiova Regiune were 25 percent larger in 1953 than in 1952. The use of mechanized equipment and better care of the plants

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resulted in richer harvests. The cotton harvest started throughout Craiova Regiune in the last days of August. The collectives of Galicea-Mare, Afumati, and Ciubega delivered large quantities of cotton to the Ballesti collection center.(2)

Collectivists of Vartopu Commune, Corabia Raion, took good care of late crops and plants. The Michurin Club of the collective applied artificial pollination to 8,000 plants, starting early in the morning before the blooms opened.(23)

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