

The significance of healthy-safe food in development of the rural tourism of Serbia

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Abstract

Rural tourism, by its definition, is based on two activities, the tourism and the agriculture, which form together the specific tourist supply. This supply can be organized within an agricultural holding or in the rural area. All of the activities organized in the specific rural area, which attract tourists, should be specific with basic characteristics; quiet, noiseless area, preserved nature, direct communication with natives, the possibility of being informed about field works and domestic food.

Serbia has such rural areas, with primeval purity, where none of preservatives has ever been applied in food production.

Rapid industrialization, inhuman life in urban areas and excessive and/or unprofessional use of plant protection agents in the primary agricultural protection show increasing interest of population, especially of higher classes, to search for healthy-safe food in the rural areas, and they often require to participate in food preparation.

Exactly the healthy-safe food is often an important factor of tourists' orientation to the specific rural tourist destination. The subject of this paper is how and in what way it affects a number of tourists in the specific rural areas.

The research methodology, applied in this paper, is the combination of qualitative and quantitative research. As a research instrument was used a structured questionnaire, which had enclosed a list of mostly open type enquiries. In-depth interviews were organized in several municipalities of Central Serbia with the natives who were engaged in healthy-safe food production and rural tourism.

The expected result is the development and increase of self-sustainable production of healthy-safe food, as an important argument for attracting tourists in the Serbian rural areas, and who want to consume and/or to take part in the production of healthy-safe food.

Key words: healthy-safe food, rural tourism, Serbia.

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Introduction

In past thirty years, the EU countries have realized that rural areas represent a significant factor of sustainable development, on one hand, and a great opportunity to employ the unemployed labour and the possibility to invest free funds in the tourist industry, on the other hand. At the same time, the rural development policy of every area implies taking into consideration the comparative advantages of that area in regard to the others (neighbouring areas) and making new realistic developmental models (Cvijanovic, et.al. 2011).

According to the OECD, of the total number of 165 municipalities, 130 of them belong to the rural areas in Serbia (areas which density of population is less than 150 inhabitants/ km²), i.e. 85% of the Serbian territory with approximately 55% of the total population number. In the rural areas of Serbia, besides still significant number of active population, there is also natural resources, such as high-quality and preserved land, clean forests and water. In these areas are a rich ecosystem and biodiversity, natural rarities and various activities, cultural and historical inheritance. In situation the Republic of Serbia has found itself in, (unplanned migrations rural-urban area, villages devastation, long-term sanctions, bad and unrighteous privatization, destruction of industry and agro-food sector, bombardment and destruction of property and humans, high unemployment, etc.), it is necessary to perceive its real possibilities of economic development.

Tourism, as the most dynamic service activity in last few decades, has been an indicator of the whole economic development, standard and one country's culture development (Stetic etc., 2014). It is especially important for the transitional countries, such as the Republic of Serbia, which unfortunately has a large number of workers in industry and other activities, who had left jobless in the transitional period, and who seek for their chance in the rural areas of Serbia. Therefore these unemployed workers look for their chance in agricultural production, tourism, trade and handicraft trades and other activities, which have the comparative advantage in regard to other environment, but they have to base their activity on modern marketing activities, i.e. to manufacture those products and services requested by the market (Cvijanovic et.al. 2013).

Healthy-safe food production implies the agricultural production without any artificial fertilizers and pesticides, regulators of plant growth and additives in animal feeding, preserves the diversity of plant and animal species, as well as the natural balance in the environment, all in terms of sustainable production. There are significant natural potentials for the healthy-safe production in Serbia, at least 10% of land is unpolluted and it can be utilized for this kind of production, while, for example, this percentage in Italy ranges up to 1.7% (Roljevic et.al. 2009). The potentials for the production of healthy-safe food have not been anywhere near utilized, as for export, as well as for the potential consumption in the tourist supply.

The rural tourism, a significant segment of multi-functional agriculture, due to a multiplicative tourism effect, can initiate the fastest diversification of rural economy, especially through the insistence of the healthy-safe food production in terms of the tourists' holidays in the most beautiful rural areas of the Republic of Serbia. Furthermore, the rural tourism provides significant incomes to rural areas population, not only through the tourists nourishment, but also through the sale of agro-food products in holdings, and the handicrafts products as well (Njegovan et.al. 2015).

Material and methods

For this manuscript were used data published in manuscripts, publications, books and monographs, as well as the data of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, EU, FAO and others. The research methodology applied in this manuscript was the combination of qualitative and quantitative research. As a research instrument was used a structured questionnaire, which had comprised the list of questions, mostly of open type. In-depth interviews and discussions with hosts who are engaged in the production of healthy-safe food and/or rural tourism were organized on “Ethno-fair” in Belgrade, on 26th and 27th November 2015, and the respondents were from the following municipalities (Vrnjacka Banja, Kraljevo, Aleksandrovac, Cacak, Gornji Milanovac and Mali Zvornik). In the manuscript was applied a comparative-analytical method and a SWOT analysis.

The significance of agriculture in economic development of the Republic of Serbia

Serbia is still the agrarian country, with significant share of agriculture in GDP creation. In the transitional period, the economic structure of the Republic of Serbia has not changed significantly. At the beginning of the XXI Century, the contribution of agriculture to GDP was permanently decreasing thanks to first of all faster growth in non-production sectors (especially trade). In the same period, the share of agriculture in gross value added of economic structure of the Republic of Serbia was extremely high, especially comparing to the EU (27 member-countries). Unfortunately, Serbia has the significant share of GVA of agricultural sector in the total GVA, and much less share of the service sector. This high share of agriculture in the basic macro-economic aggregations (Table 1) in regard to others EU countries are the result of rich natural resources, favourable climatic conditions for this kind of production and slower structural reforming of other economic activities.

Table 1. *Macroeconomic indicators of agriculture to economy contribution in the Republic of Serbia*

Ord. no.	Description	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
1	GVA of agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishery (mill.RSD)	238,478	231,680	261,510	306,608	269,999	305,520	302,226	-
2	Share of GVA of agriculture in the total GVA (%)	8.7	8.0	8.5	9.0	7.5	7.9	7.7	-
3	Employment in agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishery (000 persons)	706.0	622.7	533.0	478.1	467.1	491.9	507.5	-
4	Share of agriculture in total employment (%)	25.0	23.8	22.2	21.2	21.0	21.3	19.9	-
5	Foreign-trade exchange								
6	Export of agro-food products (mill.euro)	1.336	1.385	1.688	1.937	2.106	2.104	2.317	2.579
7	Share of agriculture in total export (%)	18.0	23.2	22.8	22.9	24.1	19.1	20.8	21.4
8	Import of agro-food products (mill.euro)	755	713	903	1.010	1.160	1.229	1.305	1.342
9	Share of agriculture in total import (%)	4.6	6.3	7.3	7.1	7.9	7.9	8.4	8.2
10	Trade balance of agro-food products (mill.euro)								
11	Coverage of import by export (%)	176.8	194.2	186.9	191.8	181.6	171.2	177.5	192.2

Source: *Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and recalculated data of the authors*

The employment in agriculture of the Republic of Serbia, absolutely observed, records a reduction rate, but the share of agriculture in total employment is further significantly higher, so it is among the highest in Europe for over 20%. It can be explained by a fact that the

agriculture depends on temporary and odd (season) jobs, which are very sensitive to the market fluctuations of labour during the crisis period.

In foreign trade exchange, the agro-food products have a significant role, where the export is higher than the import.

As for import of the agro-food products, Serbia imports less than it exports, and therefore the coverage of import by export is higher than 76.8% in 2008, and up to 94.2% in 2009. There imports between 62-65% of the primary agricultural products, around 30% of processed and around 5-8% of fish and fish products. It is good that the import is less, but it is no good to import the agro-food products which the Republic of Serbia can produce. The share of these products in the total import unfortunately increases and it ranges from the lowest share of 4.6% in 2008 to 8.4% in 2014, when the share was the highest in the total import.

In the observed period (2008-2015), the share of these products in the total export ranges from the lowest 18% in 2008 to the highest of 23.2% in 2009. Unfortunately, the structure of agro-food products export is not satisfying, because there the agricultural products are mostly exported (fresh or frozen raspberry, blackberry, strawberry, plum, sour cherry and mercantile maize) and they make around 75%. Very little or negligible is the export of agricultural products of higher-processing phase (except sugar and oil). The reasons why the Republic of Serbia doesn't export more agricultural and/or food products, although there has come to the favourable conditions for export in the world market (increase of agro-food products prices, opening certain markets – crisis and sanctions between the EU and the Russian federation, etc.) should be sought in several facts. First of all, there was incautiously done the privatization of food industry, factory-farms and foreign trade enterprises. There is no organized, specialized and interests related agro-food production and the system of cooperative societies has been destroyed.

There was broken up the repro-chains, and a large number of small manufacturers had left aside, who had been in the cooperative sector or in some other form of cooperation with combines (factory-farms) or food industry, and who could provide significant surpluses of these products, as for the domestic, as well as for very demanding foreign market.¹

A large number of small manufacturers (agricultural holdings) are not capable to comply the “6K”. In other words, there exports the agro-food products which cannot be produced in the EU countries, the Russian Federation or the CEFTA Agreement countries, mostly the primary products. Naturally, those products fulfil the “6K” requirements and every requirement regarding the standards in mentioned importer-countries.

The important production of autochthonous products which produce in small holdings in rural areas of the Republic of Serbia unfortunately does not export. Either they cannot fulfil the 6 “K”, or the standards and different non-tariff barriers represent an obstacle. However, when the tourists from all over the world taste those autochthonous products, they keep seeking information where and when can they buy them, or they simply come again in these rural areas and look for the traditional food and drinks. In other words, they could be a very interesting subject of so called “invisible export” through the supply of rural tourism products.

A special place in the world occupies the development of tourism in rural areas, primarily due to a very stressful life of the people in urban areas (Cvijanovic et.al. 2009). There are different motives why the tourists come to rural areas. Those can be: getting to know and/or participating in agricultural works, enjoying in healthy nature, getting to know with an ethno content of the specific rural area, enjoying the traditional food – especially healthy-safe food, indigenous plants, forest fruits and/or mushrooms, enjoying wine, rakia or other agro-food products and/or

¹ Modern foreign markets require “6K” (in Serbian) or “2Q+4C” (in English): quantity, quality, continuity, control and competitiveness. And for all these is necessary to provide capital.

making them, visiting farmsteads (in Serbian salas) and enjoying the traditional food, participating in manifestations – well-known events (called "tjajade" in Serbian), getting to know with the rural area, especially cultural-historical heritage, bring closer children to rural life, a way of its life and work, hunting and fishing in the specific conditions of the specific rural area, etc.

Extremely worthy natural resources of Serbia with an attractive relief, diverse flora and fauna, favourable climatic and hydrological conditions, rich cultural heritage and national tradition provides numerous developmental possibilities, especially in the field of tourism (Katic et.al. 2011). Despite it, the unfavourable migrations continue, the villages are getting old and wither. There are bad infrastructural and other life conditions of the rural population. Development of rural tourism, with the primary agricultural production, with emphasis on preservation and improvement of the environment, is one of the solutions which would reconcile the opposites and along with the appropriate economic, infrastructural, organizational and educational incentives would enable multiple positive effects (Cvijanovic and Vukovic, 2011).

Agricultural holdings as a carrier of agricultural production and rural tourism

According to the census of agriculture in 2012, the Republic of Serbia disposes with 631.552 agricultural holdings (AH). An average economic size of an AH amounts 5.939 euro, observed from the organizational-legal form of an AH, this indicator amounts: in a sector of family holdings – 4.990 euro; in a sector of legal entities and entrepreneurs – 204.755 euro. The region of Sumadija and West Serbia has totally 262.940 AHs, i.e. 41.6% of the total number of AHs in the Republic of Serbia (Cvijanovic et.al. 2014).

If an average economic size of an AC in the Republic of Serbia by the regions in 2012 is observed, than the situation is as it follows: the biggest average size of an AC is in the region of Vojvodina (12.032 euro), and the smallest average size of an AC is in the region of South and East Serbia (3.414 euro). The Belgrade region has an average economic size of an AC of 6.038 euro, and the analysed region of Sumadija and West Serbia has an average economic size of 4.309 euro (Cvijanović et.al. 2014).

Besides the agricultural activities, the AHs have also other profitable activities (OPA), related and not related to a holding.

The OPA related to a holding include income from: sale of agro-manufactured products (meat, milk, fruits, vegetables and other agricultural products, *rural tourism income*, income from fishery sale of wood, sale of products in the field of folk arts and crafts, etc. These activities can be performed in a holding (for example, tourism, folk arts and crafts, processing of agricultural products for sale – except processing of grape due to a wine production in case that a size of manufactured grape is exclusively or mostly from the own production, etc.) or out of a holding (agricultural work and non-agricultural contract work, for example, work with own combine (harvester), etc.).

The OPA not related to a holding are the ones which don't use a holding's resources, except a holding's labour, and they can be performed in or outside of a holding (in any other economic or non-economic activity).

According to the census of agriculture in 2012, of the total number of AHs in Sumadija and West Serbia, 16,7% of them are the AHs which have the OPA, and in the Republic of Serbia in the same year, the AHs which have the OPA had participated with 12.4%. This region belongs to the regions of Serbia with the highest share of the AHs which have the OPA.

Economic development of rural areas

In the structure of small family holdings income in Serbia, the most are represented incomes from employment out of agriculture, from sale of agricultural products and income of pension (Bogdanov, 2007. p 32). The structure of employment and income of rural population point out that in Serbia dominates the “afflicted” income diversification, as a consequence of unfavourable economic environment and poverty. Thereby the highest share in the total incomes of rural population of all areas has salaries of employees, and right behind are incomes from agriculture. This data shows a disproportionate relation among employees in agriculture (45%) and its share in the total incomes of households (25%), which ones again shows low realized productivity of agriculture.

Economic development of rural areas implies significantly wider field than agriculture, and the policy goals as well as the measures of rural development do not refer exclusively to farms and manufacturers. According to the clause 12 of the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development “the measures of rural development are a kind of incentives, by which stimulate the competitiveness improvement in agriculture and forestry (investing in agriculture and forestry and introduction of new standards in production and turnover of agricultural products), improvement of the environment protection programs, biodiversity preservation and a program of rural economy diversification and improvement of life quality in rural areas” (Law on Agriculture and Rural Development, “*Official Gazette of RS*”, no. 41/09). That is to say, the rural development prefers different socio-economic activities, defined by the rural policy and directed to rural areas. They should contribute to the improvement of life quality and economic activities in rural areas, first of all, through the investments in means for agricultural production, construction and reconstruction of rural infrastructure, training and education of the rural population, affirmation of the traditional and cultural values, protection of the environment and natural habitat, development of rural tourism, etc. In regard to the preferential problems of the rural population, there are indicative several conclusions: (Bogdanov. 2007, p 139):

1. Incomparably greater displeasure the households express for communal issues than the available services.
2. Lack or disorganization of economic infrastructure they value relatively lower as a problem, which primarily seems to be the consequence of their ignorance of such services than the lack of need.
3. Regional distinctions are evident and they point out again to a greater displeasure of households in lowland region, but also different nature of problems in the specific areas. The lowland households have the greatest problems in water and health services, but also the problems they called: unemployment, life standard, neglecting villages, lack of cultural events and similar. The households in the region of big economic centres have greater problem regarding services related to agriculture. Except the paved roads, they have more needs for better repurchase prices and cooperative associations, than the households in other parts of Serbia.

Recognizing the characteristics of rural regions in Serbia distinguish as dominant causes of their sluggish development: migration of rural population in urban areas, unfavourable age structure, insufficient investments in rural areas, identification of agriculture with the rural areas development, along with insufficient engagement in non-agricultural activities, etc. The mentioned regional areas have the specific regional characteristics and a different stage of rural development, so it is suitable to respect the situational, i.e. regional approach in defining the supporting measures. Consequently, in according with the specific needs of some rural regions, it is necessary to support the construction of the regional and local institutions for support to the rural areas development, with the improvement of cooperation among the Ministry of Agriculture and the local authorities. It is also inevitable to increase investments in rural

development with simultaneous direction of support towards the activities diversification in Serbian rural areas.

Organic production and the quality standards

The organic agriculture is based on application of certain methods of organic production. It is becoming increasingly important, by bringing closer a man to nature he has alienated from, it makes almost complete harmony with the requirements on the environment protection, and finally, it provides the population to feed with products made by the natural processes, using the organic and mineral matters (Katic et.al. 2008. pp. 267-276). Consequentially, the goals of the organic production are: production of sufficient amounts of top-quality food; maintaining and increasing long-term fertility and biological activity of soil by using the biological, mechanical and methods adjusted to the local conditions; protection and maintaining the biodiversity in nature and agriculture, in a farm and its surrounding by using sustainable production systems; maintaining and preserving the genetic diversity by paying attention to the management of genetic resources in a farm, recognizing the significance of domestic knowledge and traditional production systems, their protection and application in education (Mihailovic et.al. 2007, pp. 81-94). Numerous goals stated in Codex Alimentarius can add to these goals: promotion of renewable resources in the locally organized agricultural systems, managing the agricultural products in a way to maintain the organic integrity and a vital quality of products in all levels of processing phases, etc. As these goals cannot be easily measured, the best way was to insure their realization in practice and to make a difference between the organic and conventional production and make procedures, official rules, as on the national, as well as on the international level. The organic production development implies getting to know the IFAOM standards in which are also suggested minimum requirements for the organic production (Mihailovic et.al.2007. pp. 81-94).

The Republic of Serbia has excellent conditions for setting up this kind of production. The environment is preserved, especially in mountain regions, which occupies 71.5% of the central part of the Republic of Serbia, i.e. 51.7% of the whole republic territory (Katic et.al. 2008, pp. 267-276). Most of these areas have high-quality water, clean air and they are remote from highways and other sources of the environment pollution. Accordingly, the organic production carries out by very high criteria and is regulated by the special decisions. These regulations exist in Serbia, too, and are well coordinated with the EU regulations.

In such conditions, the standards give a common language to the production. In that way communication is simpler, and marketing more successful. Standardization helps manufacturers to secure a product that is sought and which can be sold, and it helps buyers to get the quality of a product they desire. Large supermarket associations were introduced the quality standards, which the production had to fulfil. These standards refer to bio-chemical characteristics, appearance (mass, colour, yield diameter) and the presence of harmful matters (nitrates and heavy metals, pesticides residues, phyto-hormones). This is about, first of all, EUREGAP 13 for agricultural production and HACCP in processing industry (Presna et.al. 2006). The standards were made as the consumers' reaction when unhealthy-unsafe food appeared during the epidemic livestock diseases (mad cow disease, foot-and-mouth disease), as well as due to the fear of introduction of genetically modified food.

The EUREGAP is the standard which covers all main aspects of production, such as managing land, growing crops and harvest. It is also engaged in pollution issues, treatment of labour and the environment protection. It follows the production from sowing (the origin of seed and soil history are analysed), through growing (there follows the use of herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers – quantity, type, quality, place and method of application), irrigation and harvest

(hygiene level and a method of storage) to packaging, transport and placing the product on the shelf in a shop.

The HACCP standard represents a system which identify, considers and controls risks significant for food safety. The risk involves biological, chemical or physical agent in food, with potential to cause unfavourable activities to people's health. The needs for HACCP were caused by the following factors: increasing number of pollutants, increasing care on health due to hygienic food contamination, increasing risk from diseases caused by the chemical problems in food production, new technologies and life styles and decreasing resistance of people, and also the world trade requires international harmonization. The HACCP enables numerous advantages. The most important are as follows: provides a preventive system for food production, more effective and more efficient supervision by the government with less inspection, responsibility for food safety transfers to industry, helps food manufacturers to be more competitive on the world market. Stimulus for higher organic production in Serbia represents small- and medium-sized enterprises in the field of vegetable processing. The HACCP standard (analysis of risk and control critical points in the production) was introduced by 12 enterprises in Serbia, in the field of fruit and vegetable processing (Malina Produkt, Mondi Food, Sirogojno, Hibrid, Libertas, Flora, Vulić Vulić, Jevremovac ABD, Zadrugar), while the firm Libertas from Sabac, which is engaged in growing fruits and vegetables besides processing, got also the first EUREGAP certificate in Serbia. Although, still a large percentage of Serbian manufacturers and processors of food poorly knows or are not at all familiar with the food safety standards.

Healthy-safe food and rural tourism in some municipalities of Sumadija and West Serbia

Significant decrease of protective means and artificial fertilizers in the primary agricultural production since the beginning of '90s, due to well-known sanctions in the Republic of Serbia, is a good precondition for establishment of organic system of food production. Land, water, climatic conditions and unpolluted environment provide to the Republic of Serbia, in regard to other countries, to increase fast the areas under healthy-safe food, i.e. the organic production. The production of healthy-safe food in the Republic of Serbia can be started on over than 200.000 ha (Roljevic et.al. 2009). Owing to heavy, strictly controlled and specific method of healthy-safe food production, the price is higher in regard to the conventional up to 50%. Due to the production of relatively small amounts, it is hard for manufacturers to deliver these products to the domestic market, and especially to the foreign one. Therefore was organized the research in several municipalities of Central Serbia, i.e. Sumadija and West Serbia, to determine if and whether the production of healthy-safe food affects the rural tourism of these areas. The research was done on agricultural holdings engaged in in the production of healthy-safe food and/or rural tourism. Here are few data which illustrate the best the significance of healthy-safe food for the development of rural tourism and the significance of rural tourism for the development of healthy-safe food.

When they were asked a question *if they make a difference between the conventional and organic agricultural production*, 87.6% of the total number of respondents was answered positively, i.e. that they make a difference between the conventional and organic production, and 12.4% was answered that they don't make any difference. They are even well familiar with the regulations on organic production, which is very praiseworthy.

When they were asked a question *if they have organized healthy-safe or organic production (OP) on their holding, and/or they use indigenous plants and/or forest fruits in nutrition of tourists*, 69.3% of the total number of respondents has answered positively, and 29.2% had answered negatively, and 1.5% had no answer.

When they were asked a question *if they have organized OP in their agricultural holding or they use only indigenous plants and/or forest fruits in nutrition of tourists*, 59.5% of the total number of respondents has answered that they have the organized OP, 39.3% of them had answered that use only indigenous plants and forest fruits in nutrition of tourists, and 1.2% had no answer.

When they were asked a question *which agro-food products they have in OP in their agricultural holdings and which they offer to the tourists*, 89.1% of them had answered that they had organized OP of vegetables and/or spice plants, and/or medicinal and aromatic plants, and/or fruits, and 9.2% of them had answered that they had organized OP in livestock breeding, and 1.7% had no answer.

When they were asked a question *which indigenous plants and/or forest fruits they gather and make to the tourists*, 83.8% had answered they the most often use: indigenous dock, nettle, horseradish, wild garlic, mushrooms, rosehip, wild strawberries, wild blackberries, elder, dogwood, etc. and 10.2% of them used only wild fruits and various herbs for tea, and 6.0% of them had no answer.

When they were asked a question *if they accentuate specially the OP products in their tourist supply*, 53.9% of the total respondents had answered with “yes”, 44.5% had answered with “no”, and 1.6% of them with “I don’t know”.

When they were asked a question *if they offered the OP products for tourist nutrition*, 73.8% of them had answered with “yes”, 25.5% of them had answered with “no”, and 0.7% with “I don’t know”.

When they were asked a question *if they offer to the tourists the OP products to buy “to go” or the tourists ask for the OP products to buy*, 23.9% of the total number of the respondents had answered they offered the tourists to buy the OP products, 75.5% of them had answered the tourists themselves asked to buy the OP products, and 0.6% of them had no answer.

When they were asked a question *which OP products were most commonly purchased*, the respondents had given a purchase order of the OP products: 1. Rosehip jam, 2. Wild strawberries jam, 3. Sweet cherry, 4. Sweet quince, 5. Blackberry jam, 6. Raspberry juice, 7. Blackberry wine, 8. Elder juice, etc.

When asked a question *how users of their services make a reservation for the tourist services in their holdings*, 48.9% of the total number of the respondents answered the tourists make reservations directly, by the phone or e-mail, and 51.1% of the respondents answered that their tourist services users make reservations via the local tourist organization (TO).

When they were asked a question *if the users of their tourist services, while make the tourist services reservation in their holdings, look for specially the OP products*, 58.9% of the respondents had answered positively, and 41.1% of the respondents had answered this wasn’t put as a remark in the reservation.

When they were asked a question *if the users of their services visit their holdings for one year or for several years*, 89.9% of the total number of respondents had answered they had “regular” guests, i.e. the tourists who visit their holdings each year or every second year, and 10.1% of the respondents had answered they have no “regular” tourists or have a small number of tourists who make a second visit.

According to this research and also made in-depth interviews and discussions with the experts, there can be concluded that Sumadija and West Serbia have a great chance in the OP production (healthy-safe food), not only for own population or those who live in these holdings and areas, but also to be the comparative advantage in the supply of rural tourist products, making affluent exactly the tourist product through these agricultural products.

The awareness on importance on, not only what and how much to eat, but also what food should eat, has been arisen, not only of educated population who live in urban areas of the high-developed countries, but also of Serbian population. The agro-food products manufactured in conventional way, with significant use of artificial fertilizers and protective means (applied often very unprofessionally), result particular threats. At the same time, Sumadija and West Serbia dispose with virgin clear land, in which can immediately organize the integral, and somewhere even the organic (healthy-safe) production. Besides, the Republic of Serbia disposes with numerous indigenous plants, forest fruits, mushrooms, etc., which belong to the healthy-safe food, and can be a very important factor of competitiveness or differentiation of the rural tourist supply of these areas. In other words, the research had shown that the population in Sumadija and West Serbia, who offer the rural tourist products, pay special attention to the OP products, and also the tourists, who visit not only to see natural beauties, cultural and historical heritage of this part of Serbia, but to enjoy in excellent autochthonous food, brilliant natural juices, rakia, wines, jams, salads, sweets without artificial supplements as well.

In order to define the significance of healthy-safe food, i.e. OP for the development of rural tourism in Central Serbia, i.e. some municipalities in Sumadija and West Serbia and their better positioning on the market is necessary to define strengths and weaknesses, as well as chances and threats (Table 2).

Table 2. SWOT analysis of healthy-safe food and rural tourism of the Central Serbia

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ favourable tourist-geographic location of Sumadija and West Serbia, ➤ a large number of preserved and protected natural resources (especially clean soil, water and air), ➤ great potential for the tourists accommodation in rural houses, ➤ hospitality of population, ➤ diversity of the tourist product of rural tourism, ➤ good supply of authentic food, especially the OP products, ➤ low prices in regard to other countries, ➤ educated staff for production of OP and rural tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ bad tourist infrastructure and traffic signals in rural areas, ➤ inadequate legislation for categorization of accommodation facilities,, ➤ unfavourable age structure of population in rural areas (old and devastated village), ➤ insufficient marketing presentation of OP and rural tourism potentials, ➤ Insufficient measures of economic and agrarian policy for stimulation of the OP and rural tourism development, ➤ Insufficient support of the government and the local authorities in funding the OP development and the rural tourism development.
CHANCES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ changes in habits and values of tourists, who look for the OP products and a new natural experience in rural tourism, ➤ interests relation of the local authorities, scientific and economic institutions, and agricultural holdings for faster development of OP and rural tourism, ➤ activate “dead”capital (empty houses, stables, cultural centres, cooperative offices, etc.) in terms of the OP and rural tourism development, i.e. rural areas, ➤ solving the state problem of unemployment through employment of especially young people, from unskilled workers to top experts in agriculture, i.e. OP, tourism, traffic, catering industry, trade, handicraft trades and other economic and non-economic activities). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ social-economic crisis, war in the Middle East, refugees and other problems, which affect the readiness of tourists to travel, ➤ bad or insufficient coordination among institutions in the field of OP, i.e. agriculture and tourism, ➤ tough competition in countries which develop similar or the same tourist products, like Switzerland, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, etc. ➤ spontaneous, unplanned and unprofessional approach in strategic planning and realization of the organic production and rural tourism in rural areas of central Serbia, ➤ potential jeopardy of rural areas, if the principles of sustainable development are not respected, and if the natural wealth of these areas is not preserved, ➤ Potential jeopardy of flora and fauna in unplanned utilization.

Conclusion

This was a modest research, based on relatively small sample, but a good “guide mark” of the future research for these areas in much larger samples in the Republic of Serbia. The Republic of Serbia, and especially Sumadija and West Serbia, dispose with clean land, water and air, not only for growing healthy-safe (organic production – OP) food, but also for the rural tourism development. Besides the OP, Serbia disposes with growing wild (indigenous) plants, forest fruits, etc., as they are very interesting in healthy-safe food, not only of the local population, but also the tourists who come to the rural areas.

All of this significantly enriches and differentiates the rural tourist supply of these areas, and it can have more significant impact, as the OP to the tourism, as well as reversely. It would be good to plan strategically the development of the rural tourism in rural areas of the Central Serbia, along with the respect of comparative advantages of these areas, as with its natural beauties, cultural-historical heritage, as well as regarding the OP growing and picking of indigenous plants, forest fruits, etc.

A unique tourist supply of the rural tourism of all rural areas of the Republic of Serbia, strategic planning of the organic agriculture and rural tourism development, would also save the rural areas from destruction of their original beauties, pollution and preservation of flora and fauna these areas dispose with.

A large number of workers, experts and professionals would be employed, not only in the fields of agriculture and tourism, but also every other economic and non-economic activity. Investing in the development of the OP production and rural tourism would reduce a gap in development between the rural areas in regard to the urban ones, and there would stop migrations of working population from rural to urban areas.

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