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**RESEARCH ON UNFAIR AGRO-FOOD TRADE**

**PRACTICES IN ROMANIA**

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## **KEYWORDS**

Unfair commercial practices, agri-food sector, farmer, consumer, food chain, food supply chain

## **SUMMARY**

The paper explores in depth the dynamics of unfair trade practices in the agri-food sector and their effects on the primary links in the supply chain, and is structured in five chapters. The evolution of this concept is presented, including relevant legislative regulations. A review of current literature and research is conducted, using a bibliometric analysis and a systematic literature approach. In Chapter II, the main results of the surveys conducted by the European Commission on the effectiveness of the enforcement of the measures of Directive (EU) 633/2019 on Unfair Commercial Practices are presented and comparatively analyzed.

In Chapter III, a detailed analysis of the agricultural sector, consumption with agri-food products and analysis of internal and external trade with agri-food products. Chapter IV presents the results of a survey aimed at exploring and understanding the nature of unfair trade practices affecting Romanian farmers, as well as assessing the influence of these practices on the sustainability and viability of their agricultural activities. Chapter V estimates the impact of unfair trade practices on both farmers and consumers. Three composite indicators were developed to assess the risk of unfair trade practices. A comparative analysis of the availability of indigenous products on the shelf was conducted to highlight differences in origin and product diversity.

In conclusion, the doctoral research demonstrates that lack of transparency in consumer information is an unfair commercial practice, affecting consumers' ability to make informed decisions and disrupting fair competition. This has serious implications for the relationship of trust between consumers and traders, highlighting the need to promote transparency in the agri-food sector to ensure ethical and sustainable business practices.

Analysis of the effects of unfair trade practices on producers, using composite indicators, reveals that the way products are marketed has the strongest influence on the degree of business damage. Factors such as respondents' age, level of education, and the type of crops or animals raised also have a significant, but smaller influence.

Thus, we conclude that reducing the risk of exposure to unfair trade practices can be achieved by connecting farmers to the market, this facilitates access to essential information and creates

conditions for the development of fair trade practices, thus supporting the sustainable development of the agri-food sector.