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## Natural Grasslands as the Most Important Feed Resources

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Review paper

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### SUMMARY

- This paper presents the results of a study on modern free-range animal husbandry in the Republic of Buryatia.
- Distant grasslands are an important reserve of livestock feed. The object of research is the territory of distant grasslands of the Tunkinsky district of the Republic of Buryatia. The studies were carried out in accordance with the Guidelines for conducting scientific research on hayfields and pastures.
- To obtain a long-term economic effect in the Republic of Buryatia, it is necessary to observe the basic elements of rational grazing (grazing load, dates of beginning and end of grazing, compliance with optimal coefficients of phytomass disposal, etc.). The rich natural grasslands and sources of water supply significantly improve the taste of livestock products, and thus increase its competitiveness, while reducing feed costs.
- As a result, the cost of production is reduced by an average of 25-30% in

25-30%

comparison with the stable housing of cattle. The development of free-range animal husbandry in Buryatia, in particular sheep, herd horse breeding and beef cattle fattening for the production of ecological products should be combined with the type of grazing animals, the type of grasslands and the seasonality of their use. This moment is important, since it is necessary not only to keep the livestock, but also to get maximum production during the fattening period.

**Key words:** distant grasslands, feed, free-range animal husbandry, rational use, the Republic of Buryatia

## INTRODUCTION

Free-range animal husbandry is a system of grazing of farm animals in the natural pastures in different seasons. Distant pastures present important reserves for creating a bioresource forage base in the livestock breeding (Larin, 1990; Imeskenova, 2009).

Free-range animal husbandry is now developed in the UK, the Balkans, the Scandinavia, the Caucasus, Central Africa and the Middle East. In Europe, free-range livestock breeding, became widespread in the pre-Roman period (Farb, 1969; Lall, 1981; Blench, 1999; Xinchun, 2011; Van Veen, 2005). Due to historical, cultural and geographical reasons, distant cattle breeding with three types of pastures is practiced: pastures close to settlements (winter, located near villages in the valleys), intensive (spring-autumn, those at the foot of the mountains), and distant (summer, in the highlands) (Robinson, 2015).

Historically, the Republic of Buryatia (RB) is a cattle-breeding region, which is due to the huge reserves of feed resources, and above all grasslands. Areas suitable for distant free grazing serve as great fodder base reserves. The

Imeskenova, 2009).

(Larin, 1990;

(Farb, 1969; Lall, 1981; Blench, 1999; Xinchun, 2011; Van Veen, 2005).

(Robinson, 2015).

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| <p>(Imeskenova, 2017; Imeskenov, 2016).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- vegetative cover of such grasslands is undoubtedly characterized by the rich and diverse floristic herbage, which is very much due to soil and climatic conditions. The quality and volume of the harvest obtained from pastures is largely determined by the species composition of the grasses growing there. The main types of farm animals that are most adapted to the free grazing are horses, young animals and sheep (Imeskenova, 2017; Imeskenov, 2016).</li> </ul>   |
| <p>33.1% (360000 )</p>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The development of free-range animal husbandry requires the solution of a set of problematic issues, since in the Buryatia Republic the overall situation with grasslands is unfavorable. The areas of such pastures make up 33.1% (360000 hectares) of the total area of natural pastures of the Republic of Buryatia. To date, there has been an uneven distribution of grasslands, as well as significant recent growth in the number of individual livestock which has created an imbalance in the needs and availability of natural forage lands. Distant pastures in the republic are located in sparsely populated areas, in forests of the Federal ownership and in the highlands. With the proper use of the distant pastures capacity, Buryatia can become a region producing environmentally friendly livestock products. The sustainable development of animal husbandry in the republic largely depends on the availability of grazing feed to animals. Therefore, free-range animal husbandry should be one of the priorities in the development of the agro-industrial complex of the Republic of Buryatia (Imeskenova, 2015).</li> </ul> |
| <p>2015).</p>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The available areas of natural pastures as a whole must be properly and effectively used, maintaining and increasing their productivity from year to year. Under this study distant pastures are considered as an important reserve of the feed base of animal husbandry.</li> </ul>   |

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The object of the study was the territory of the distant pastures of the Republic of Buryatia. Tunkinsky district is located in the southwestern part of the Republic of Buryatia, 40 km west of Lake Baikal, bordering Mongolia in the southwest. The region is located in the belt of the mountains of Southern Siberia: the Khamar-Daban range, the Munko-Saridak massif, and the Tunkinsky Goltsy (Bald peaks). Of the total area of the region, 67.1% is forest land, 8.7% is agricultural land (of which 2.5% is arable land) (Imeskenova, 2017).

The studies were conducted in the Urgadei location of the High Mountain area of the Tunkinsky District. The total area of these pastures is 7000 ha. To date, these territories are not used in a sustainable way (no more than 20%), while in this unique area over 20 thousand farm animals can graze.

Highland ridge district is characterized by very harsh climatic conditions. According to long-term meteorological data, the average annual air temperature is minus 5.6°, the vegetation period is 109 days, and the frost-free period is 36 days; the average annual rainfall is 276 mm. The soils of the study area are alluvial, alluvial-meadow, thin, light loamy and loamy (Imeskenov, 2016; Imeskenova, 2015).

The studies were carried out in accordance with the Guidelines for conducting scientific research on hayfields and pastures (Metodika..., 1971; Kutuzova, 1996).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Semi-nomadic animal husbandry practiced by herders of the Tunkinsky district supporting the preservation of nomadic ways established for centuries ensured a high level of livestock production (1928). From the moment of collectivization (1934 is the of the first livestock census after collectivization) until



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foliage and leads to their degradation; grazing load in some areas has increased by 7-10 times while trotted and depleted pastures are to be restored at significant economic costs by improving fodder production and cultural farming.

The development of distant pastures involves a whole set of activities, which is primarily related to areas inventory and identification, soil and geobotanical surveys, assigning the areas to the land user, the determination of the seasonal feed volume for animals grazing there. This study requires a certain approach with the participation of diversified specialists and services.

The prerequisites and problems of the degradation of the free-range animal husbandry in Buryatia taking into account legal, economic, environmental, organizational and economic issues are shown in Figure 1.

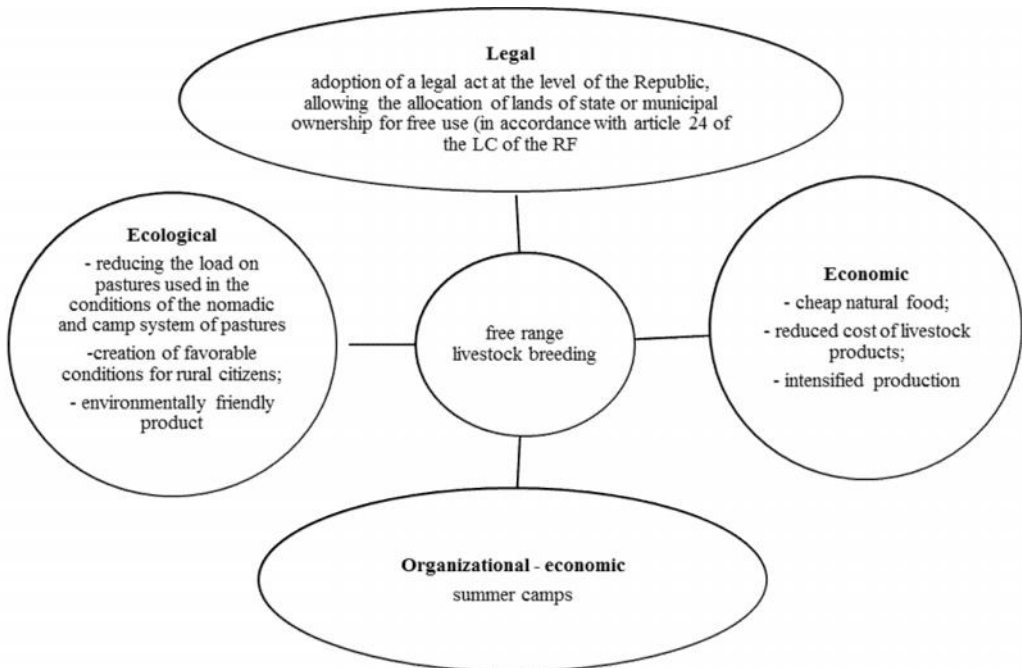


Fig. 1. Background and problems of degradation of free-range animal husbandry in Buryatia

- Abandoned highland grasslands are apt to degradation due to the increased amount of plants that are not eaten. These lands should be used for livestock to be driven from pasture near settlements, and the transfer of available grazing lands to expand grasslands of farmers.

- The process of distant pastures use should take place in two directions. Firstly: rural citizens should be able transfer their livestock to remote pastures for fattening. Secondly: distant pastures should be widely used for the sheep breeding and the production of cheap, ecological beef and horsemeat.

- These activities should be carried out only on a scientific basis, in order to avoid past mistakes, when the ratio between the feed capacity of land and the number of grazing livestock was ignored.

- With little costs for feeding and keeping the livestock, the cost of livestock production is reduced. The important point is the transition to an intensive form of production, as well as to choose the most effective ways to intensify production, which include the number of employees, power use, basic production assets per 100 hectares of farmland, etc.

- Analysis of the current use of grasslands areas shows that in Buryatia it is necessary to streamline and preserve the long-established system of distant-pasture livestock breeding, which uses cheap natural forage, necessary for the production of high-quality animal products.

- For distant pastures of the Tunkinsky district, a number of measures are recommended that are aimed at preserving the most valuable plant associations, afforestation of galleys and landslides, preventing erosion and

increasing the productivity of trolled grasslands. Rational use of distant grasslands should be based on the development of a methodology for drawing up schemes for the redistribution of grasslands by rotation.

It is also necessary to work out the issues of on-farm organization of the territory in a schematic way, to carry out calculations on the feed intensity of the plots, to plan the location of the economic facilities.

Thus, the improvement of the organization of the use of distant pastures in Buryatia has two sides:

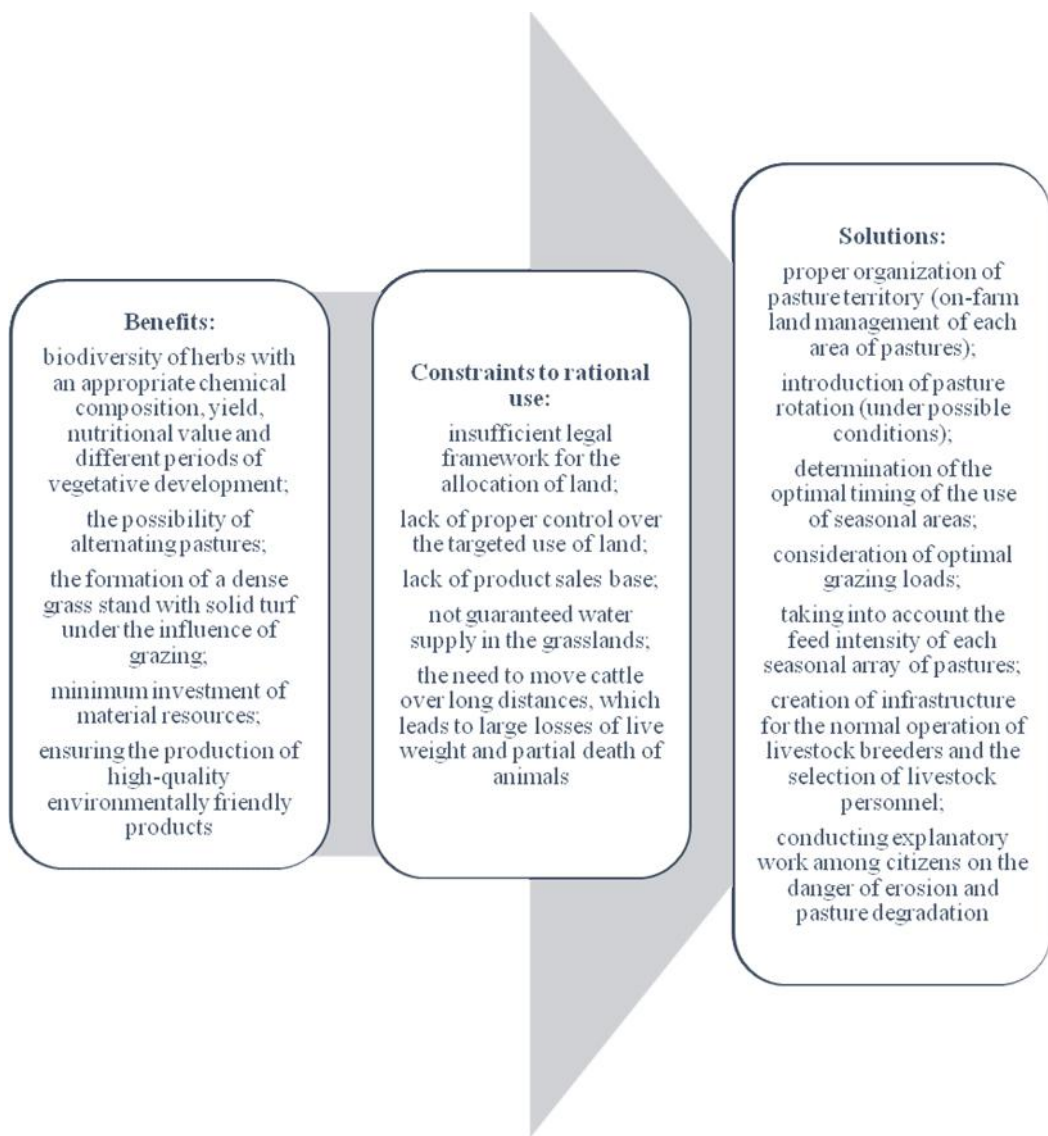
1. Creation of territorial conditions for the most effective use of this category of land in relation to the traditionally established forms of organization of agricultural production;

2. Consideration of climatic and socio-economic conditions in the process of organizing a given territory.

Also, when managing distant pastures, a number of factors are important that are associated with driving cattle over certain distances. These factors include: loss of weight during the transfer of livestock, the organization of water supply and, if necessary, the cost of construction of buildings.

The general scheme for the rational use of distant pastures in the area is shown in Figure 2. The scheme suggests factors constraining the rational use, advantages and solutions.





. 2.

Fig. 2. The general scheme for the rational use of distant pastures in the area

## CONCLUSIONS

Free-range animal husbandry is a system that is justified both in environmental and economic terms. To obtain a long-term economic effect in the Republic of Buryatia, it is necessary to observe the basic elements of rational grazing (gazing load, dates of beginning and end of grazing, compliance with

optimal coefficients of elimination of phytomass, etc.). The rich herbage and natural sources of water supply significantly improve the taste of livestock products, and thus increase its competitiveness, while reducing feed costs. As a result, the cost of production is reduced by an average of 25-30% in comparison with the stable housing of cattle.

25-30%

The development of free-range animal husbandry in Buryatia, in particular sheep, herd horse breeding and beef cattle feeding for the production of environmentally friendly products should be combined with the type of grazing animals, the type of pastures and the seasonality of their use. This moment is important, since it is necessary not only to keep the livestock, but also to get maximum production during the feeding period.

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## Drought: Impact on the Production of Fodder Crops in the Czech Republic. How Can Good Quality Be Achieved?

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Review paper

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### SUMMARY

- This paper focuses on data
- analysis in the field of fodder crop
- production on arable land under dry
- weather conditions. Alfalfa and alfalfa-
- grass mixes were found suitable for dry
- and warm areas. The grass component
- for a mix must be chosen very carefully,
- taking into consideration its higher
- demand for water. Suitable grass species
- for mixes include Felina intergeneric
- hybrid and late varieties of orchardgrass
- (*Dactylis glomerata*). Red clover and
- grasses themselves do not provide a
- sufficient amount of dry matter; they are
- not suitable for dry climatic conditions.
- Silage maize resists shorter periods of
- drought but long-term drought reduces the
- yield and quality of fodder.

**Key words:** drought, alfalfa, red clover, orchardgrass, Felina, yield, fodder quality

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(*Dactylis glomerata*).

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## INTRODUCTION

Bulk feed is a source of many nutrients directly beneficial to cattle, ensuring proper rumination due to the grass stalks mechanically stimulating the rumen. Bulk feed has lower energy per unit of dry matter and an important content of both digestible (cellulose, hemicellulose) and indigestible fibre (lignin). Fibre is a significant source of energy for ruminants, and certain monogastric herbivores, as the numerous microorganisms inhabiting such animals' reticulorumen, cecum and colon can effectively break down fibre components.

A stable balance of microorganisms is necessary for proper gastrointestinal performance; a lack of roughage in feed leads to physiological disorder and illness in the animal. Digestible fibre usually prevails in young fodder crops and the ratio shifts towards indigestible fibre as the plants grow older.

Maize for silage is a special type of fodder crop; it is valued for its high energy level, fibre content and high yield per hectare.

Maize silage cannot replace common bulk fodder crops, with their high fibre content, because it contains a high amount of rapidly-degradable starch which, in higher doses, induces acidosis in ruminants.

While the production of grain feed in dry years or dry summer spells doesn't usually cause a big problem, fodder crop growing is more difficult.

Fodder grasses and clovers have a high demand for water and drought significantly reduces bulk yield. Plants age quicker and the harvested fodder is of lower quality due to the increased proportion of indigestible fibre and fewer nutrients (saccharides, nitrogenous substances) (Kohoutek et al., 2010).

The yield and quality of alfalfa (Hakl et al.,

) (Kohoutek et al., 2010).  
et al., 2014)

(Hakl

2014) are also lower in dry years, although it is commonly grown in dry areas. Clover-grass mixes in bulk feed production bring the advantage of easier preservation and for the animals they are a source of both nitrogenous substances from clovers and saccharides from grasses.

These mixes are more stable in fluctuating temperatures and precipitation, as the grass component ensures the yield in cooler periods, especially in springtime, while alfalfa secures the yield in warm periods, usually with a lack of water, suppressing the growth of fodder grasses.

The risk of low yield is also reduced by the fact that clover-grass mixes can be harvested three to four times a season, and thus eventual low yield from the main first harvest can be topped up by subsequent harvesting, which is not possible with crops that can only be cut once

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

This publication presents a meta-analysis of data from scientific papers dealing with the production and quality of annual and perennial fodder crops grown on arable land in dry weather conditions in the Troubsko area (Southern Moravia, Czech Republic). Troubsko lies in a sugarbeet growing region at an altitude of 270 m, with 8.6°C average annual temperature and an average vegetation period (April - September) temperature of 14.8°C. Annual precipitation is 547mm and 346mm in the vegetation period. Evaluation of the local temperature and precipitation were carried out according to WMO recommendation for describing climatic conditions (Kožnarová and Klabzuba, 2002).

(Kožnarová and Klabzuba, 2002).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An article published in 2011 focuses on the yield and quality of two grass hybrids: Felina (festucoid) and Perseus (loloid), grown on arable land, under two different systems of nitrogen fertilizer application and three levels of fertilizer dosage. Although the paper does not deal precisely with the yield of the hybrids in relation to agri-ecological conditions, the hybrids' reaction (in terms of yield) to drought can be found if the climatic evaluation of the location is taken into consideration.

The dry matter yield was calculated as an average of trial variants, regardless of fertilizing system and nitrogen dose (differences in fertilizing system and dosage for the two hybrids were not statistically conclusive). In the 1<sup>st</sup> harvest year, Felina yielded 12.84 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>; Perseus 12.26 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>. No statistical difference was found in the two hybrid yields. The half-year vegetation period (April - September) was evaluated as very warm with normal precipitation in nearly all evaluated months, except April which was very wet.

The yield from both hybrids was above average and the results show that both hybrids thrive under higher temperatures and sufficient – mainly springtime – rainfall. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> harvest year (2009), the yield in both hybrids fell significantly – to 7.03 t.ha<sup>-1</sup> in Felina and 4.48 t.ha<sup>-1</sup> in Perseus.

The difference between hybrids was conclusive. The 2009 vegetation period was evaluated as extremely warm with normal precipitation. However, in terms of individual months, April was extremely warm and extremely dry with only 11% of the usual precipitation. These poor conditions at the beginning of vegetation resulted in a low first harvest yield.

The following months were above average, in terms of both temperature and

precipitation, and the second harvest yield compensated for the first harvest.

Precipitation in August and September amounted to about 40% of average figures which, again combined with the influence of temperature, reflected in poor yield from the third harvest. Similar results were obtained from the second cycle of the trial, i.e. 2009 and 2010 harvests, especially from the 1<sup>st</sup> harvest year – 2009 (Lang and Novosádová, 2011), as 2010 was very wet during the vegetation period.

Such results show that the festucoid hybrid is more suitable for dry areas as it can cope with the lack of water better than the loloid hybrid. This conclusion supports the recommendation of seed producers that Felina hybrid is suitable in predominantly dry and warm areas (DLF, 2019). Another study from the same location focuses on testing orchardgrass (*Dactylis glomerata*) and also explores its yield in dry conditions. In this study, Felina hybrid was chosen as a control plant.

The trials were launched in 2011 and the tested grasses were grown as pure crops and in mixes with alfalfa or clover. 2012 was the first harvesting year.

The spring months were very dry to extremely dry, the summer months were warm to very warm. The weather affected yield and the results show that, in such climatic conditions, the suitable option is to grow either pure alfalfa, with an all-season yield of 9.33 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>, or alfalfa-grass mixes yielding 8.19 - 9.33 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>. Red clover yield was 3.44 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>, mixes of clover and grasses 3.55 - 4.72 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>. Orchardgrass yielded 1.25 t.ha<sup>-1</sup> and Felina hybrid 1.11 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>. The conclusion is clear: grasses grown on their own, red clover and clover-grass mixes are not suitable in dry weather conditions due to their poor yield.

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| <p>2013</p>  | <p>- The study also presents, for comparison, the yield of alfalfa and alfalfa-grass mixes from the same trial in 2013, which was an average year in terms of temperature and, except for an extremely dry July, the vegetation period was wet.</p>   |
| <p>18.6 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>,<br/>17 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>,<br/>8,59 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>,</p> | <p>- The all-season yield from alfalfa was 18.6 t ha<sup>-1</sup> and average yield from alfalfa-grass mixes was 17 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>. Red clover yielded 8.59 t.ha<sup>-1</sup> and clover-grass mixes with a varying ratio of components produced a yield in the range of 7.95 - 9.11 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>.</p>  |
| <p>7.95 - 9.11 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>.<br/><br/>(Lang, 2014).<br/><br/>2012</p>           | <p>- These are normal yields in average years, but the use of clover-grass mixes in crop rotation in dry years would be risky (Lang, 2014). The dramatic decline in the yield of red clover and red clover mixes in the dry year of 2012 has also been thoroughly reported by other authors in a study of trials in the Troubsko area and their results (Pelikán et al., 2013).</p> |
| <p>(Pelikán et al., 2013).</p>   | <p>- Further results of the afore-mentioned trial, evaluating the competitive ability of grasses, and the ratio of individual components in mixes with alfalfa or clover in terms of drought, show that, similar to Felina hybrid, orchardgrass is suitable in alfalfa-grass mixes for dry locations (Lang, 2013).</p>  |
| <p>2013).</p>  | <p>- Another publication evaluating the vitality of mixes and their individual components in this trial reveals that red clover disappears from the vegetation due to lack of water, and that it is not suitable for use in grass mixes in dry areas.</p>   |
| <p>(N, P, K).</p>  | <p>- In such areas, it is recommended that alfalfa-grass mixes are only grown on one site for three harvest years at most, unless regularly fertilized with basic nutrients (N, P, K).</p>  |
| <p>(N, P, K).</p>  | <p>- After a longer period, the mix becomes infested with weeds and yield falls. Other results of this trial support the</p>  |



2012, 2013  
 2013  
 19 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>,  
 124.6 mm  
 (Ned Iník et al., 2014).  
 2014  
 17.1 23.0 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>.

In a different source, the authors state that the Prague-Uh in ves locality has record yield and it is obvious that even slightly above-standard temperatures, together with sufficient precipitation are beneficial for maize. In the Troubsko area, in comparison with 2012, the year 2013 was more balanced in both temperature and precipitation, except July 2013 which was very warm and extremely dry. The hybrids still coped well with such a fluctuation and their average yield in both localities was comparable – around 19 t.ha<sup>-1</sup> even though the Prague site had 124.6 mm more rain from May to August than Troubsko (Ned Iník et al., 2014).

In 2014, the weather in Troubsko varied considerably, and yield from individual hybrids also varied significantly. Dry matter yield ranged from 17.1 to 23.0 t.ha<sup>-1</sup>.

A successful maize yield in imbalanced climatic conditions depends on the right choice of hybrid. As the seed market offers a great number of ever-changing types of hybrid, the grower has to rely on the knowledge and recommendation of seed growers, or on their own experience.

## CONCLUSIONS

Bulk fodder is irreplaceable in cattle nutrition, as it significantly affects the process of digestion and the quality of milk. Drought complicates the production of good quality fodder, because some clovers and grasses cannot tolerate unfavourable weather conditions. Of the bulk fodder plants, alfalfa is a suitable species for dry areas.

However, alfalfa hay is difficult to produce due to its high content of nitrogenous substances which hamper the preservation process. Moreover, alfalfa wilts slowly after cutting, which results in nutrient loss due to respiration.

Therefore, it is recommendable to include

festucoid

grass components with alfalfa. Fodder grasses are demanding in water consumption, but seed producers offer some species able to cope with drought better than others. These include e.g. Felina festucoid or orchardgrass.

The latter is of an earlier character, so its late varieties should be used in mixes with alfalfa to synchronize their harvesting stages and achieve the best possible quality of fodder.

In dry spells the dense cover provided by alfalfa has a synergic effect on the grass, retaining more moisture which can be used by the grass, thus bringing a higher yield than that of pure grass growth.

Alfalfa-grass mix yield decreases in dry conditions but still remains economically significant.

Clover or clover-grass mixes are not suitable for dry conditions, besides giving poor yield, the vegetation quickly loses its clover component in drought.

Perennial fodder, grown on arable land, is mowed several times a season, which can increase the harvesting costs but at the same time this can reduce the risk of low yield which occurs in species cut only once, such as maize for silage.

Maize tolerates dry spells well and can be suitable for dry areas, but is sensitive to longer periods of drought, especially in the stages of vegetative growth (until the tasselling stage).

Its suitability depends on the selection of the right hybrid, as not all hybrids provide rich yield and good quality feed under dry conditions.

Maize is an important energy component in cattle feed but cannot replace traditional fodder containing a sufficient amount of fibre.

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## (*Lotus corniculatus* L.)

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2 37000 , , 37251 ,

## Mycopopulations of Different Genotypes on Birdsfoot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus* L.) in Serbia

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### SUMMARY

(*Lotus corniculatus* L.)

Birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus* L.) is a moderately long-lived herbaceous perennial legume. The birdsfoot trefoil is widespread in Europe, Asia, America and Australia. It is almost a regular component of a mixture of natural meadows and pastures. It is characterized by good nutritional value of feed.

- The roots of birdsfoot trefoil are associated with bacteria that fix atmospheric nitrogen and, thusly, its populations increase the availability of nitrogen in the soil. This species often forms dense, fibrous root networks that reduce soil erosion.

- There has not been a systematic research of birdsfoot trefoil mycoflora in Serbia. This research aims to present the results of preliminary research of

12  
 480  
 5  
 : *Fusarium*, *Alternaria*,  
*Sclerotinia*, *Mucor* *Rhizoctonia*.

- mycopopulation of 12 different genotypes of birdsfoot trefoil. Total of 480 plant parts have been examined and 5 genera of fungi were isolated: *Fusarium*, *Alternaria*, *Sclerotinia*, *Mucor* and *Rhizoctonia*.

The results indicate that birdsfoot trefoil is vulnerable to the large number of phytopathogenic fungi that can have a significant impact on reducing its yield and quality.

**Key words:** birdsfoot trefoil, fungi, mycoflora

## INTRODUCTION

- Perinnal legumes represent a special group of plants important for the production of forage crops. The birdsfoot trefoil has a significant role in providing protein components in animal feed on low quality soils that are not suitable for growing alfalfa and red clover.

- Birdsfoot trefoil is a widespread plant species, and it is grown on all continents, where there are minimal conditions for plant life. It has a high ability to utilize nutrients and has very modest demands on the conditions of its growth (Radovi et al., 2007).

- It has excellent tolerance to the extreme conditions in terms of heat and cold, and is not subdued by shallow and poor lands where the most other plants fail. There are small requirements for soil acidity (Petrovi et al., 1996).

- It can be grown at altitudes from 2,000 to 3,000 m, so considering all of these traits, it can be called an universal legume (Mijatovi et al., 1986).

- Birdsfoot trefoil hay contains an average of 18% of crude protein. The Birdsfoot trefoil is distinguished by its high digestibility and ability to utilize nutrients and very modest requirements considering the conditions of its growth,

(Radovi et al., 2007).  
 (Petrovi et al., 1996).  
 2 000 3 000 m,  
 (Mijatovi et al., 1986).  
 18%

(Petrovi et al., 1996).  
*Fusarium oxysporum f. sp. loti*  
 (*Lotus corniculatus* L.),  
 (Miller-Garvin et al., 2011).

*Rhizoctonia solani*,  
*Cercospora medicaginis*, *Sclerotinia trifoliorum*,  
*Stemphylium botryosum*, *Verticillium albo-atrum*,  
*Phytium*, *Leptosphaerulina*, *Phoma*,  
*Fusarium* *Alternaria*,  
 (Villegas-Fernández Rubiales, 2011;  
 Sillero et al., 2014, Vasi , 2017).

(*Lotus corniculatus* L.)  
 ( )  
 ( )  
 ( )

especially the soil (Petrovi et al., 1996).  
 Diseases caused by phytopathogenic fungi have a significant impact on yields and quality of the final product to a greater or lesser degree every year.

They can, also, affect trade plant material and cause the expansion of the disease in new areas where legumes are grown.

Fusarium wilt (caused by *Fusarium oxysporum f. sp. loti*) is a serious disease of birdsfoot trefoil, *Lotus corniculatus* L., reducing yield of forage and seed (Miller-Garvin et al., 2011).

Similarly, inducers of diseases such as *Rhizoctonia solani*, *Cercospora medicaginis*, *Sclerotinia trifoliorum*, *Stemphylium botryosum*, *Verticillium albo-atrum*, as well as species of genus *Phytium*, *Leptosphaerulina*, *Phoma*, *Fusarium* and *Alternaria*, are significant disease agents in birdsfoot trefoil as a fodder crop, spread in all the areas of its production (Villegas-Fernández and Rubiales, 2011; Sillero et al., 2014, Vasi , 2017). If care is not taken, the disease can cause serious damage to birdsfoot trefoil seedlings.

Considering the importance of birdsfoot trefoil as a fodder crop in Serbia, the aim of this study was to identify phytopathogenic fungi as casual agents of diseases in birdsfoot trefoil for a clearer perception of problems (the extinction of plants, reducing yields, deterioration of the quality of feed and other) arising as a result of the presence of those fungi.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

For the mycopopulations study, samples were collected from the experimental plant genotypes of birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus* L.) originating from Serbia, from the Rasina region (Gaglovo i Globoder), Ma va region (Svileuva), Pomoravlje region (Gložane).



2016-2017  
 .  
 ,  
 0.5-1 cm.  
 96%  
 (NaOCl)  
 1%  
 1  
 (PDA)  
 ( )  
 25°  
 12 /12  
 3 , -  
 14  
 PDA  
 PDA.  
 Olympus CX31.  
 (Dhingra and Sinclar, 1995).  
 %  
 et al. (2011):  
 Vrande i

The samples were collected between March and June 2016-2017 at the location of the Institute for forage crops in Globoder. Parts of plants are carefully washed under running water. After washing, the parts of stem and roots are cut to piece of 0.5-1 cm in size. Prepared samples of roots and stems were disinfected with 96% ethanol for 10 seconds and with 1% sodium hypochlorite (NaOCl) for 1 minute and then washed three times in sterile distilled water.

They were then dried on sterile filter paper and placed on potato dextrose agar (PDA) with streptomycin. Five pieces of the plant parts (roots and tree) were placed in each Petri dish in four replications. They were kept in a thermostat at 25°C in 12 h light / 12 h night regime.

The observations were performed every 3 days, and the majority of mycelium samples were developed up to 14 days. Developed mycelia were screened to a new PDA substrate and, after an initial grow, the peak part of the mycelium was reseeded on PDA again.

Microscopic examination was performed using microscopes Olympus CX31. Morphological identification of fungi to the genus was carried out using a standard method (Dhingra and Sinclar, 1995).

Calculated by the frequency of isolation in % according to the formula by Vrande i et al. (2011):

$$(\%) \text{ Isolation frequency} = \frac{\text{Number of segments containing the fungal species}}{\text{Total number of segments used in the isolation}} \times 100$$

## RESULTS

In the study of mycopopulations of birdsfoot trefoil genotypes, total of 480 plant parts were analyzed. Fungi were isolated on all plants from birdsfoot trefoil, and there were clear symptoms on stems in the form of spots and necrotic lesions.

*Alternaria*, *Botrytis*, *Fusarium*  
*Rhizoctonia*.

*Sclerotinia*.

*Mucor* ( 1).

Fungi from genus *Alternaria*, *Botrytis*, *Fusarium* and *Rhizoctonia* were isolated from these plants. Also, in large number of plants, there were necroses with white airy mycelium in the lower third of stems and fungi from the genus *Sclerotinia* were isolated from those plants. Also, saprophytic fungi from the genus *Mucor* were isolated and (Table 1).

1.

(*Lotus corniculatus* L.)

**Table 1. Frequency of fungal isolation on birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus* L.)**

| Genotypes | Number of samples |                 | Fungi species - stem  | (%)                     | Fungi species - root                          | (%)                     |
|-----------|-------------------|-----------------|---|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|
|           | Plant part-stem   | Plant par -root |   | (%) Isolation frequency |   | (%) Isolation frequency |
| Svileuva  | 20                | 20              | <i>Alternaria</i> sp.   | 40                      | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.                           | 85                      |
| Svileuva  | 20                | 20              | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.   | 35                      | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.                           | 90                      |
| Gaglovo 1 | 20                | 20              | <i>Alternaria</i> sp.<br><i>Mucor</i> sp.                         | 35<br>15                | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.                           | 75                      |
| Gaglovo 2 | 20                | 20              | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.   | 25                      | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.                           | 100                     |
| Gaglovo   | 20                | 20              | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.<br><i>Rhizoctonia</i> sp.                     | 35<br>25                | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.                           | 65                      |
| Gložane 1 | 20                | 20              | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.   | 30                      | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.                           | 60                      |
| Gložane 2 | 20                | 20              | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.<br><i>Mucor</i> sp.                           | 25<br>20                | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.                           | 65                      |
| Gaglovo 3 | 20                | 20              | <i>Sclerotinia</i> sp.<br><i>Mucor</i> sp.                        | 20<br>25                | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.<br><i>Rhizoctonia</i> sp. | 40<br>40                |
| Gaglovo 4 | 20                | 20              | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.<br><i>Rhizoctonia</i> sp.                     | 15<br>35                | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.                           | 90                      |
| Gaglovo 5 | 20                | 20              | <i>Alternaria</i> sp.<br><i>Rhizoctonia</i> sp.                   | 15<br>40                | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.                           | 75                      |
| Gaglovo 6 | 20                | 20              | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.<br><i>Mucor</i> sp.<br><i>Rhizoctonia</i> sp. | 25<br>15<br>35          | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.                           | 60                      |
| Globoder  | 20                | 20              | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.<br><i>Rhizoctonia</i> sp.                     | 25<br>10                | <i>Fusarium</i> sp.<br><i>Rhizoctonia</i> sp. | 65<br>20                |

*Rhizoctonia*.

*Fusarium* ( 1).

The symptoms of a light to dark brown necrosis on the root system of the plants were observed, and from these plants fungi of the genera *Rhizoctonia* were isolated. Discoloration of the conductive tissues of the root system was observed in a large number of plants, and from these plants, fungus of the genus *Fusarium* was isolated (Table 1).

Isolations were conducted in all the birdsfoot trefoil plants with clearly visible symptoms of the disease.

*Alternaria, Rhizoctonia Fusarium.*  
*Fusarium* -

*Alternaria.* *Fusarium*

*Fusarium, Alternaria Sclerotinia.*

Chao et al. (1994)

*Colletotrichum Rhizoctonia.* Beuselinck (1994)

'Dawn'

In these studies, there was a difference in the frequency of isolation of certain genera of phytopathogenic fungi in birdsfoot trefoil genotypes originated from different regions of Serbia. It has been observed that in birdsfoot trefoil genotypes that originated from the Rasina region, fungi of the genera *Alternaria*, *Rhizoctonia* and *Fusarium* were more frequently isolated. Likewise, genera *Fusarium* were more often isolated from genotypes originated from the Pomoravlje region. While in the Ma va region isolated fungi from the genus *Fusarium* and *Alternaria*.

The results indicate that birdsfoot trefoil is vulnerable to the attack of a large number of phytopathogenic fungi that can have a significant impact on reducing its yield and quality.

## DISCUSSION

In all the plants, in which isolations were conducted, there were clearly visible symptoms of the disease present. In these studies, there was difference in frequency of isolation of some genera of phytopathogenic fungi in birdsfoot trefoil genotypes from three regions in Serbia. It was observed that in the genotypes that originated in Serbia, fungi of genus *Rhizoctonia*, *Fusarium*, *Alternaria* and *Sclerotinia* were frequently isolated.

Many abiotic and biotic factors, such as drought, nutrient deficiency, pests and diseases, affect resistance. Studies carried out by Chao et al. (1994) in diverse regions of Uruguay indicated that crown and root diseases have a marked incidence in the establishment, plant vigor and survival of birdsfoot trefoil.

Fungi associated with the crown and root rot were species of *Fusarium*, *Colletotrichum*, and *Rhizoctonia*. (Beuselinck, 1994) suggested that genetic progress could be made in resistance to root diseases. Actually, Dawn is the only cultivar reported in the literature which was specifically bred for

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   | - | resistance to root rot (Beuselinck,1994).   |
| (Beuselinck, 1994).                         |   |   |
| <i>Alternaria</i> spp.                      | - | <i>Alternaria</i> spp. are usually known to be foliar pathogens, causing various types of spots. This may explain why they were less pathogenic on the roots compared to other fungi (Al-Jaradi et al., 2018). <i>Alternaria alternata</i> resulted in lesions and root rot symptoms on the taproot of <i>Vicia faba</i> . <i>Alternaria</i> has been detected on <i>Vicia faba</i> , <i>Pisum sativum</i> and <i>Vigna unguiculata</i> . Likewise, Coca-Morante and Mamani-Álvarez (2012) detected fungus from the genus <i>Alternaria</i> on <i>Vicia faba</i> plants in Bolivia. |
| (Al-Jaradi et al., 2018).                   |   |   |
| <i>Alternaria alternata</i>                 | - |   |
| ( <i>Vicia faba</i> ). <i>Alternaria</i>    | - |   |
| ( <i>Vicia faba</i> ), <i>Pisum sativum</i> |   |   |
| <i>Vigna unguiculata</i> .                  |   |   |
| Coca-Morante Mamani-Álvarez (2012)          |   |   |
| <i>Alternaria</i>                           |   |   |
| <i>Vicia faba</i>                           |   |   |
| sp.   | - | At three sites in Bolivia, <i>Alternaria</i> sp. were found during the vegetative growth of the plants. Problems appeared as isolated spots. Two species of <i>Alternaria</i> , <i>A. tenuis</i> and others that remains unidentified were present. The symptoms caused by <i>Alternaria</i> sp. were dark brown to blackish spots with irregular rings   |
| <i>Alternaria</i> , <i>A. tenuis</i>        |   |   |
| <i>Alternaria</i> sp.                       | - | Coca-Morante and Mamani-Álvarez (2012).   |
| (Coca-Morante and Mamani-Álvarez, 2012).    |   |   |
| 80-   |   |   |
|   | - | In the mid 1980s in USA, Fusarium wilt was identified as a major contributing factor to stand loss in certified birdsfoot trefoil seeds production areas, making seeds production unserviceable.  |
|   | - | Plants infected by the Fusarium wilt fungus have chlorotic, wilted, and dead stems and root necrosis. The disease is progressing rapidly by unitial infencion.  |
|   | - | Fusarium wilt can cause plants to die, often by the frst production year, thus reducing stand productivity for seeds and forage yield (Miller-Garvin et al., 2011).   |
| (Miller-Garvin et al., 2011).               |   |   |
| Miller-Garvin et al. (2011)                 |   |   |
|   | - | Also, Miller-Garvin et al. (2011) induce that six experimental lines of birdsfoot trefoil populations were used in breeding and evaluation studies. These authors found that Fusarium wilt-resistant population had a 52% higher plant stand than the average of not tested   |
| 52%   | - |   |

Garvin et al., 2011).

*Rhizoctonia solani* Kühn

(Assunção et al., 2011).

304

*R. solani*,

(Rashid and Bernier, 1993).

populations at the end of the first production year.

Birdsfoot trefoil with resistance to *Fusarium* wilt yielded more and persisted longer than other cultivars under *Fusarium* wilt-infested field conditions (Miller-Garvin et al., 2011).

*Rhizoctonia solani* Kühn is soil parasite that can cause serious problems in many legumes, especially on faba bean (Assunção et al., 2011). In Canada, 304 faba bean genotypes were tested on the resistance to *R. solani* and only five of them were identified with high resistance (Rashid and Bernier, 1993).

## CONCLUSIONS

This paper presents the preliminary results of mycopopulations research in 12 experimental Birdsfoot trefoil genotypes. Birdsfoot trefoil is an important forage crop and its importance as livestock feed is growing within our country. This research is the beginning of a more comprehensive study of phytopathogenic fungi on of birdsfoot trefoil. So far, there were no significant researches in this direction in Serbia, so the future researches related to birdsfoot trefoil will go in the direction of selection of genotypes with increased tolerance to fungal diseases.

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- high vitality, forming grass stands with good density and high forage yield.

Experimental populations studied can be used as components for a synthetic alfalfa variety creation or as a valuable germplasm source for further breeding program.

**Key words:** alfalfa, experimental populations, yield, green mass, dry matter

## INTRODUCTION

Alfalfa (*Medicago sativa* L.) which means “Best Fodder” in Arabic, is a perennial legume forage crop of the family *Fabaceae*, has been originated from the Mediterranean basin and Southwest Asia (vicinity of Iran, Afghanistan) (Russelle, 2001; Kumar, 2018). Alfalfa is also called “the queen of forages” because of its excellent nutritional quality, high yields and high adaptability (Tesfaye et al., 2006).

- It is one of the most important legume forages of the world as major source of protein for livestock and considered as the crop with the greatest contribution to achievement of sustainable agriculture (Kertikova, 2008).

Alfalfa is also especially important for restoring soil fertility: with no cost for nitrogen due to N-fixation by *Rhizobium*, the residues increase soil organic matter, the root system mobilizes nutrients deep within the soil profile and improve permeability to a water (Veronesi et al., 2006).

Cultivated alfalfa (*Medicago sativa* L.,  $2n = 4x = 32$ ) is an allogamous open pollinated autotetraploid species with polysomic inheritance (Barnes et al., 1988; Zhu et al. 2005). It is cultivated in more than 80 countries in an area exceeding 35 million hectar (Radovic et al., 2009). World production of alfalfa was around 436 million tons (FAO, 2006).

(*Medicago sativa* L.),

” -

“,

*Fabaceae*,

( -

) (Russelle,

2001; Kumar, 2018).

” -

”

(Tesfaye et al., 2006).

(Kertikova, 2008).

-

:

N-

*Rhizobium*,

,”

-

(Veronesi et al., 2006).

(*Medicago*

*sativa* L.,  $2n = 4x = 32$ )

,”

(Barnes et al., 1988; Zhu et al., 2005).

80

35

(Radovic

et al., 2009).

436

(FAO, 2006).



(Veronesi et al., 2006; Annicchiarico et al., 2010).  
 (0,2% - 0,3%),  
 1% (2%) (Woodfield and Brummer, 2001).  
 T 5%) (Veronesi et al., 2010).  
 (Annicchiarico et al., 2010).  
 / (Veronesi et al., 2010; Mili et al., 2011).  
 (*Medicago sativa* L.)  
 (Robins et al., 2008).  
 (Riday and Brummer, 2006).  
 (Lamb et al., 2006).

- The increase of forage productivity characterizing the agronomic value of the varieties still remains the most important breeding target for alfalfa therefore it deserves a particular attention and it is the subject of discussion in a number of publications (Veronesi et al., 2006; Annicchiarico et al., 2010).

- In respect to dry matter yield were established the low rates of genetic gain in the alfalfa varieties (0.2%-0.3% per year) compared with other crops (about 2% for maize and 1% for white clover) (Woodfield and Brummer, 2001). Data also show that DMY increase is very limited (not more than 5%) with respect to local ecotypes and old varieties, (Veronesi et al., 2010).

- This trend can be explained by various factors, such as the autotetraploidy and the high degree of non-additive genetic variation resulting from gene interaction, the strong genotype x environment relationship and the perennial growth cycle of (Annicchiarico et al., 2010).

- Other main goals in alfalfa breeding besides yield and quality are also persistence, adaptability and stability of newly created populations/cultivars (Veronesi et al., 2010; Mili et al., 2011).

- Elite alfalfa (*Medicago sativa* L.) cultivars not only must have high forage yields but also must maintain their productivity and stands over several years (persistence) (Robins et al., 2008). Persistence is a complex trait that is affected by a number of factors, including genotype, abiotic and biotic factors, management, and their interactions (Riday and Brummer, 2006).

- Some findings suggested that alfalfa forage yield gains were primarily the result of improved disease resistance, probably due to improved stand longevity (Lamb et al., 2006).

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 , . .) (Rotili et al.,  
 1996; Kertikova and Kertikov, 2008,  
 Kertikova and Kertikov, 2018).

(Schitea et al., 2007; Petcu et al., 2009;  
 Radovi et al., 2009; Tucak et al., 2009;  
 rinova et al., 2015).

2014-2018 ,  
 " - ,  
 " - ,  
 ( F-23,  $11-3$   $11-3$  ,  $12-4$ , SS<sub>90-3</sub>  
 SS<sub>88-7</sub>) ,  
 3.  
 2014 .  
 ,  
 10 m<sup>2</sup>.  
 , 2,5 kg da<sup>-1</sup>

Creation of new alfalfa varieties is a difficult and very time-consuming process of several cycles of selection and intercrosses of plants and its success depends largely on a choice of superior germplasm, parent number and breeding methods. Considering that the alfalfa varieties are mainly synthetic populations, a number of breeding schemes have been proposed for their creation (with and without self-pollination, with and without progeny testing of polycross, topcross, etc.) (Rotili et al., 1996; Kertikova and Kertikov, 2008, Kertikova and Kertikov, 2018).

In Europe, by application of adequate methods of selection and breeding, many alfalfa varieties with a high genetic potential for yield and other positive characteristics have been created (Schitea et al 2007; Petcu et al 2009; Radovi et al 2009; Tucak et al 2009; Marinova et al., 2015).

The aim of present study was to evaluate the experimental alfalfa populations based on main quantitative traits and to predict their genetic potential for productivity and persistence as a valuable resource for breeding programs.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The experimental work was carried from 2014 to 2018, in the experimental field of the Institute of Agriculture and Seed Science "Obraztsov Chiflik" - Rousse, without irrigation on soil type strongly leached chernozem.

Six experimental alfalfa populations (MF-23, SP<sub>11-3A</sub>, SP<sub>11-3V</sub>, SP<sub>12-4</sub>, SS<sub>90-3</sub> and SS<sub>88-7</sub>) of local origin created by polycross, were the subject of the study. Prista 3 variety was included as a standard. The experiment was sown in a randomized block design with four replications and harvesting plot size 10 m<sup>2</sup> in the spring of 2014. The sowing was done at the optimal agrotechnic period, at a sowing rate of 2,5 kg da<sup>-1</sup> and 12,5 cm

12,5 m.

17 : 2014 , 2015

2016 . 2018 .- . 2017 .

:

cm,

5

m<sup>2</sup> (50 50 cm)

( kg da<sup>-1</sup>)

( %),

(200 g).

105°

( kg da<sup>-1</sup>).

(ANOVA).

STATGRAPHICS PLUS.

inter-row space. The harvesting of the green mass is carried out in early flowering stage. For the study period, a total 17 cuttings were made: 2014, 2016 and 2018 – three cuts, and 2015 and 2017 four.

The yield structural components grass stand height and grass stand density before every cut were determined. The grass stand height in cm was recorded as the majority of normally developed stems were measured from the surface of the soil to the top. It was done in 5 places in each harvesting plot for variants.

The grass stand density expressed by stem number per m<sup>2</sup>, in each harvesting plot for each variant by sampling plot with area 0,250 m<sup>2</sup> (50 cm x 50 cm) was accounted.

The green mass yields (kg da<sup>-1</sup>) were estimated by regrowth, years and average for the study period by weighing the harvested green mass.

In order to determine dry matter content, before every cut for each variant samples of fresh mass (200 g) were taken. The samples were dried to constant weight in a drying chamber at 105°C and weighted.

Data for green mass yield and dry matter content to dry matter yield calculation (kg da<sup>-1</sup>) were used.

For weather characterization the data for precipitations and average monthly air temperatures from meteorological station of the Institute were used.

The experimental data were analysed by the One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) method. The STATGRAPHICS PLUS product was used.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During study period (2014-2018) were observed significant differences in

(2014-2018 .)

- both the temperature sums and the amount of rainfall and its distribution in individual regrowths and years.

## 1.

**Table 1. Meteorological characteristic of the study period**

| Months, decades        | / Rainfall, mm |       |       |       |       |           | t °    |        |        |        |        |           |
|------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|
|                        | 2014           | 2015  | 2016  | 2017  | 2018  | 1896-2005 | 2014   | 2015   | 2016   | 2017   | 2018   | 1896-2005 |
| –<br>October – March   | 311,6          | 395,7 | 327,2 | 259,7 | 320,3 | 311,6     | 946,7  | 873,4  | 1191,2 | 758,9  | 837,6  |           |
| / April                | 7,5            | 21,8  | 22,2  | 2,2   | 4,6   | 14,8      | 109,8  | 72,2   | 156,2  | 109,3  | 134,8  | 99,5      |
| II                     | 53,2           | 11,9  | 36,3  | 50,3  | 4,0   | 20,6      | 96,6   | 137,6  | 158,3  | 107,0  | 160,7  | 110,2     |
| III                    | 4,1            | 3,5   | 18,1  | 22,7  | 0     | 15,6      | 143,9  | 132,5  | 123,0  | 129,1  | 188,2  | 132,3     |
| / May                  | 64,8           | 37,2  | 76,6  | 75,2  | 8,6   | 50,7      | 350,3  | 342,3  | 437,5  | 345,4  | 483,7  | 341,8     |
| II                     | 19,5           | 5,1   | 40,7  | 43,0  | 30,7  | 16,8      | 138,8  | 175,3  | 127,6  | 152,5  | 204,0  | 152,2     |
| III                    | 38,2           | 0     | 2,0   | 13,8  | 0     | 21,3      | 156,6  | 186,3  | 156,0  | 165,7  | 178,3  | 167,7     |
| / June                 | 109,0          | 14,3  | 55,6  | 33,5  | 6,4   | 28,1      | 213,1  | 207,7  | 209,6  | 188,0  | 223,3  | 192,3     |
| II                     | 166,7          | 19,4  | 98,3  | 90,3  | 37,1  | 66,1      | 507,7  | 569,3  | 493,2  | 506,2  | 605,6  | 512,2     |
| III                    | 10,7           | 12,9  | 42,9  | 36,1  | 53,0  | 24,1      | 192,4  | 204,5  | 182,1  | 200,3  | 225,3  | 192,3     |
| / July                 | 55,8           | 10,8  | 28,0  | 24,3  | 16,0  | 30,0      | 194,8  | 219,9  | 230,8  | 203,3  | 233,8  | 202,2     |
| II                     | 12,9           | 41,4  | 3,3   | 0,8   | 36,4  | 26,4      | 197,5  | 190,3  | 247,8  | 251,6  | 198,7  | 212,1     |
| III                    | 79,4           | 65,1  | 74,2  | 62,1  | 105,4 | 80,5      | 584,7  | 614,7  | 660,7  | 655,2  | 657,8  | 606,6     |
| / August               | 28,2           | 11,8  | 2,2   | 56,8  | 20,6  | 25,0      | 220,2  | 228,5  | 235,0  | 235,2  | 209,8  | 220,1     |
| II                     | 20,7           | 5,7   | 0     | 8,8   | 52,7  | 24,1      | 218,7  | 239,8  | 241,0  | 224,4  | 231,6  | 225,4     |
| III                    | 18,4           | 1,3   | 0,0   | 19,1  | 94,5  | 18,3      | 262,7  | 294,5  | 286,3  | 267,8  | 251,2  | 252,2     |
| / September            | 67,3           | 18,8  | 2,2   | 84,7  | 167,8 | 67,4      | 701,6  | 762,8  | 762,3  | 727,4  | 692,6  | 697,7     |
| II                     | 0,1            | 87,4  | 0,0   | 0,0   | 4,4   | 15,8      | 241,6  | 241,3  | 256,7  | 265,9  | 237,1  | 281,0     |
| III                    | 2,4            | 47,6  | 37,1  | 3,6   | 8,7   | 16,3      | 244,6  | 239,8  | 211,3  | 247,4  | 235,1  | 223,5     |
| / October              | 32,7           | 69,7  | 17,0  | 30,4  | 0,2   | 17,3      | 243,0  | 234,6  | 240,8  | 222,6  | 267,2  | 235,4     |
| II                     | 35,2           | 204,7 | 54,1  | 34,0  | 13,3  | 49,4      | 729,2  | 715,7  | 708,8  | 735,9  | 739,4  | 739,8     |
| III                    | 25,2           | 0     | 0,0   | 41,2  | 30,6  | 14,3      | 204,9  | 223,8  | 229,4  | 209,5  | 224,4  | 193,6     |
| / November             | 0,7            | 64,6  | 11,9  | 0,0   | 21,4  | 15,2      | 188,5  | 187,6  | 210,2  | 232,0  | 195,1  | 179,4     |
| II                     | 41,2           | 48,6  | 4,8   | 1,0   | 13,8  | 15,1      | 143,6  | 161,2  | 143,4  | 144,5  | 151,1  | 162,3     |
| III                    | 67,1           | 113,2 | 16,7  | 42,2  | 65,8  | 44,6      | 537,0  | 572,6  | 583,0  | 586,0  | 570,6  | 535,3     |
| –<br>April – September | 480,5          | 458,4 | 321,1 | 388,5 | 398,0 | 367,5     | 3410,5 | 3577,4 | 3556,1 | 3507,6 | 3749,7 | 3426,2    |

2014

- the weather conditions in 2014, allowed alfalfa sowing at the optimal agrotechnic time to be performed. The early stages of alfalfa establishment passed at relatively low soil moisture supply and temperatures close to the norm. Drought conditions after sowing resulted in slow alfalfa germination and growth suppressed of the young plants.
- The prolonged and heavy rainfall in the following months of the vegetation of alfalfa also had a negative influence on the stands development and 3 regrowths were harvested.

3

The amount of precipitation and the temperature sums for the period April-

20015 .

2016 .

2015 . - 2016 .)

2017 .

2016 .

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3

- August 2015 were not deflected to the long term norms. The favourable weather conditions ensured good growth and development of the studied experimental populations in all regrowths.

The meteorological conditions in 2016 were favorable at the beginning of the fourth alfalfa growing season. Autumn-winter soil moisture supply (October 2015 - March 2016) was sufficient for vigorous first regrowth. After the prolonged drought in next month the alfalfa stands development was suppressed and 3 regrowths were harvested.

- The temperatures and rainfall in 2017 were close to the long-term norms and favorable for expression of productive potential of the populations studied. The final year of study in respect to meteorological conditions was similar to 2016 and was defined as relatively unfavorable.

- Significant differences in the extent of phenotypic expression of the quantitative traits studied were found during the years of study. Plant height is one of the main structural components of alfalfa forage productivity, which determines to a large extent the amount of green mass and dry matter yields. As a quantitative trait, the extent of its phenotypic expression is determined by the intensity of changes in the environmental factors.

- The data presented in Table 2 showed that stand grasses of experimental populations were relatively equally high in the year of the stand establishment. The reported values showed that the differences between the populations studied and Prista 3 variety were in favour of the standard.



Data for trait stability showed that the plants height varied more over the years than among the studied experimental populations. The variation coefficients values determined the degree of phenotypic variation of the trait between the experimental populations as weak and as medium during the study period.

The results regarding the grass stand density, expressed by stem number (SN) per m<sup>2</sup>, indicated SS<sub>88</sub>-7 (196 SN) and SP<sub>12</sub>-4 (194 SN), exceed in value of the trait both standard (177 SN) and the mean value (178,2 SN) for the investigated populations in the first productive year (Table 3). The lowest value for SP<sub>11</sub>-3A (169 stems/m<sup>2</sup>) was reported.

Experimental populations: C<sub>12</sub>-4 (194 SN), SS<sub>88</sub>-7 (196 SN), C<sub>11</sub>-3 (169 SN), (177 SN), (178,2 SN) (3).

### 3.

**Table 3. Grass stand density of alfalfa experimental populations**

| Experimental populations                | / Stems number per unit area (m <sup>2</sup> ) |        |       |       |       |         |                | CV    |
|---|--|--------|-------|-------|-------|---------|----------------|-------|
|   | 2014   | 2015   | 2016  | 2017  | 2018  | Average | % vs. Prista 3 |       |
| 3/Prista 3                              | 177 abc  | 515 b  | 467 a | 318   | 359   | 367,2 b | 100,00         | 36,08 |
| F-23                                    | 169 bc   | 532 ab | 460 a | 322   | 365   | 369,6 b | 100,44         | 37,55 |
| <sub>11</sub> -3 / SP <sub>11</sub> -3A | 160 c  | 554 ab | 446 a | 343   | 350   | 370,6 b | 100,71         | 39,30 |
| <sub>11</sub> -3 / SP <sub>11</sub> -3V | 168 bc   | 530 ab | 438 a | 330   | 366   | 366,4 b | 99,56          | 36,76 |
| <sub>12</sub> -4 / SP <sub>12</sub> -4  | 194 ab   | 586 a  | 465 a | 349   | 352   | 389,2   | 105,76         | 37,57 |
| SS <sub>90</sub> -3                     | 182 abc  | 502 b  | 490 a | 313   | 348   | 367,0 b | 99,73          | 36,25 |
| SS <sub>88</sub> -7                     | 196 a  | 510 b  | 479 a | 322   | 363   | 374,0 b | 101,63         | 33,81 |
| Average for populations                 | 178,2  | 535,7  | 463,0 | 329,8 | 357,3 | 372,5   |                |       |
| LSD <sub>5%</sub>                       | 25,20  | 61,21  | 52,25 | 35,80 | 24,33 | 21,88   |                |       |
| LSD <sub>1%</sub>                       | 34,31  | 83,33  | 71,13 | 48,75 | 31,72 | 29,46   |                |       |
| LSD <sub>0,1%</sub>                     | 46,28  | 112,41 | 95,96 | 65,76 | 42,78 | 37,78   |                |       |
| CV                                      | 7,59   | 5,44   | 3,87  | 4,06  | 2,12  | 2,15    |                |       |

The values in the columns followed by same letter are not significantly different at P 0.05

Experimental populations: C<sub>12</sub>-4 (194 SN), SS<sub>88</sub>-7 (196 SN), C<sub>11</sub>-3 (169 SN), (177 SN), (178,2 SN) (3).

In the second year, the stems number varied in range from 586 SN (SP<sub>12</sub>-4) to 502 SN (SS<sub>90</sub>-3) and indicated a higher stem formation potential of the populations than the Prista 3 standard. There were detected some deviations from outlined trends for experimental populations in the following years of study. The reported values showed that SS<sub>90</sub>-3 population formed a

C<sub>12-4</sub> - SS<sub>90</sub> -3.  
 SP<sub>12-4</sub>  
 C<sub>11-3</sub> SS<sub>90</sub>-3.  
 SS<sub>88</sub>-7 (CV=33,81%).  
 SS<sub>88</sub>-7 (2849 kg da<sup>-1</sup>),  
 SS<sub>90</sub>-3 (2829 kg da<sup>-1</sup>) 3 (2828 kg da<sup>-1</sup>).

relatively more stems during the third growing season. higher stems formation potential established for SP<sub>12-4</sub> was kept, except the last growing season. In the fourth and fifth growing season, the populations developed stand grasses with a relatively equal density. An average of 17 cuts SP<sub>12-4</sub> formed significantly higher stems number per unit area compared to Prista 3 standard and SP<sub>11-3A</sub> and SS<sub>90-3</sub> populations.

The variation coefficients values showed similarity to the results for grass stand height. The analyzed trait varied more significantly over the years than among the populations studied. It was determined that for the period of study SS<sub>88-7</sub> population characterized with better stability (CV= 33,81%).

Data for the main indicator fresh vegetative mass yield presented in Table 4 showed significant differences between the populations studied. In the year of stand establishment, the highest values was reported for SS<sub>88-7</sub> (2849 kg da<sup>-1</sup>), followed by SS<sub>90</sub>-3 (2829 kg da<sup>-1</sup>) and Prista 3 (2828 kg da<sup>-1</sup>).

4.

**Table 4. Green mass yield of alfalfa experimental populations**

| Experimental populations              | , kg da <sup>-1</sup> / Green mass yield, kg da <sup>-1</sup> |         |           |         |          |          | Average / % vs. Prista 3 | CV    |
|---------------------------------------|---|---------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|--------------------------|-------|
|                                       | 2014  | 2015    | 2016      | 2017    | 2018     |          |                          |       |
| 3 / Prists 3                          | 2828 ab   | 9802 ab | 8113 cd   | 8755 d  | 3603 e   | 6620,2   | 100,00                   | 48,00 |
| F-23                                  | 2726 ab   | 9350 b  | 8245 abcd | 9457 c  | 3928 b   | 6741,2 b | 101,83                   | 47,19 |
| <sub>11-3</sub> / SP <sub>11-3A</sub> | 2622 b  | 10044 a | 7939 d    | 9920 bc | 3878 bc  | 6880,6 b | 103,93                   | 50,09 |
| <sub>11-3</sub> / SP <sub>11-3V</sub> | 2624 b  | 9527 ab | 8442 ab   | 9490 c  | 4190 a   | 6854,6 b | 103,54                   | 47,05 |
| <sub>12-4</sub> / SP <sub>12-4</sub>  | 2788 ab   | 10092 a | 8511 a    | 10102 b | 3723 de  | 7043,2   | 106,39                   | 50,17 |
| SS <sub>90</sub> -3                   | 2829 ab   | 9804 ab | 8338 abc  | 10410   | 3758 cd  | 7027,8   | 106,16                   | 49,90 |
| SS <sub>88</sub> -7                   | 2849 a  | 9853 ab | 8116 bcd  | 9831 bc | 3843 bcd | 6898,4 b | 104,20                   | 48,38 |
| Average for populations               | 2739,7  | 9788,3  | 8265,2    | 9868,3  | 3886,7   | 6907,6   |                          |       |
| LSD <sub>5%</sub>                     | 212,98  | 657,74  | 326,64    | 575,98  | 152,58   | 194,74   |                          |       |
| LSD <sub>1%</sub>                     | 289,94  | 895,23  | 444,71    | 784,20  | 207,72   | 265,14   |                          |       |
| LSD <sub>0,1%</sub>                   | 390,87  | 1087,60 | 599,88    | 1057,92 | 280,20   | 357,65   |                          |       |
| CV                                    | 3,64  | 2,71    | 2,46      | 5,54    | 4,85     | 2,18     |                          |       |

C P 0.05  
 The values in the columns followed by same letter are not significantly different at P 0.05



9350 kg da<sup>-1</sup> ( F-23).  
 10092 kg da<sup>-1</sup> ( 12-4)  
 kg da<sup>-1</sup>).  
 11-3 (10044  
 12-4.  
 SS<sub>90</sub>-3. -  
 SS<sub>88</sub>-7. F-23  
 ( 7043,1 kg da<sup>-1</sup> 12-4  
 6741,1 kg da<sup>-1</sup> F-23),  
 3 (6620,1 kg da<sup>-1</sup>).  
 12-4, SS<sub>90</sub>-3  
 SS<sub>88</sub> -7.  
 6,39%, 6,14% 4,2% Prista 3  
 m<sup>2</sup>.  
 34% ( F-23)  
 24,75% ( 3, 11-3  
 11-3 ) ( 5).

There were found more significant differences, both among populations studied and between them and the standard in the second productive year. The total annual yield was in the range of 10092 kg da<sup>-1</sup> (SP<sub>12-4</sub>) to 9350 kg da<sup>-1</sup> (MF-23). It was also found a fresh forage productivity high genetic potential for SP<sub>11-3A</sub> (10044 kg da<sup>-1</sup>). The reported value for SP<sub>11-3A</sub> (10044 kg da<sup>-1</sup>) outlined trend for high genetic potential. In the following years, the variation in the yields of the experimental populations was kept, with the exception of the third one, when close values was reported for all. SP<sub>12-4</sub> population with a strong phenotypic expression of the genes controlling the trait was distinguished. Green mass yields harvested for SS<sub>90-3</sub> outlined tendency for high productivity, too. The lowest fresh forage yield was found for MF-23 and SS<sub>88-7</sub>.

The summarized data showed that all experimental populations have a higher average annual green mass yield (from 7 043,1 kg da<sup>-1</sup> for SP<sub>12-4</sub> to 6 741,1 kg da<sup>-1</sup> for MF-23) in comparison to Prista 3 standard (6 620,1 kg da<sup>-1</sup>). The differences found between populations were in favour of SP<sub>12-4</sub>, SS<sub>90-3</sub> and SS<sub>88-7</sub>. Reported excesses of 6,39%, 6,14% and 4,2% versus Prista 3 was statistically significant. The results for green mass yield variability were one-way with those for plants height and stems number per m<sup>2</sup>.

Concerning dry matter content in the green mass, significant differences in the values for study period were found, from 34% ( F-23) in the fifth growing season to 24,75% (Prista 3, SP<sub>11-3A</sub> and SP<sub>11-3B</sub>), in the second one (Table 5).



5,

12 -4 ( )  
 SS88 -7 ( )

11 -3 -  
 SS90 -3 -

F-23.  
 11-3 3,93%,

(100,43%).

F-23

F-23 3.

SS90-3,

12-4 SS88 -7, 3,  
 7,52%; 6,67% 6,18%.

The dry matter yield data for the five-year study period are presented in Table 5. The results showed significant differences in the degree of trait phenotypic expression. Reported values also showed some exceptions from the tendency for green mass yield, although the trend for high productivity of populations was kept.

In three of the years of investigation, the highest dry mass yield were harvested at SP<sub>12-4</sub> (first, second and fourth) and SS<sub>88-7</sub> (second, third and fourth). With high productive potential were also outlined both SP<sub>11-3B</sub> (third and fifth growing season) and SS<sub>90-3</sub> (fourth and fifth growing season). Considerable differences between populations were established during the first, fourth and fifth productive years. The mean annual dry matter yield values were one-way with those for the green mass yield. For SP<sub>11-3A</sub> and MF-23 some deviations from this tendency were reported. There was found SP<sub>11-3A</sub> exceeding the standard by 3,93% in respect green mass yield but as a result of the lower dry matter content in the years of study, the population was with equal dry matter yield (100,43 %). The results for both indicators were opposite for MF-23. The population and the standard were with equal average fresh forage yield, but MF-23 produced higher dry matter yield than Prista 3. For the study period the highest dry matter yields for SS<sub>90-3</sub>, SP<sub>12-4</sub> and SS<sub>88-7</sub> were found, which exceeded Prista 3 by 7,52%; 6,67% and 6,18%, respectively.

Considering data for the main forage productivity components, they showed the differentiation of studied populations regarding grass height increased from first year to the fourth one. For the stems number per unit area indicator, the differentiation of the populations was greater in the first years, and in the following decreased.

The differences observed in components

17

12-4

(389,2 .)  
3 (367,2 .)

12-4 ( 7043,1 kg da<sup>-1</sup>  
6741,1 kg da<sup>-1</sup> F-23)  
( 1993,4 kg da<sup>-1</sup>  
SS<sub>90-3</sub> 1862 kg da<sup>-1</sup> 11-3 ),  
da<sup>-1</sup> 1854 kg da<sup>-1</sup>). ( 6620,1 kg

12-4, SS<sub>90-3</sub> SS<sub>88-7</sub>

6,39%, 6,16% 4,2%,  
6,67%; 7,52% 6,18%.

determining forage productivity explain to a large extent the results obtained for both green mass and dry matter yields.

The significant variability of green mass yield and dry matter was also the result of the population x environmental interaction which extent depends on the genetic composition of experimental populations and on the intensity of impacts of particular environmental factor during the regrowth formation in the years of study.

In respect to persistence, the reported values for the quantitative traits studied in the fifth year proved that with stands age increasing the experimental populations formed relatively high plants and kept a relatively high potential for stems formation. It was resulted in good crop density and stable forage yields.

The concluding analysis of the results for the five-year study showed there were no considerable differences in grass stands height between the experimental populations. Mean of 17 cuts SP<sub>12-4</sub> population formed significantly higher stems number per unit area (389,2) compared to Prista 3 (367,2) and two of the populations studied.

Experimental populations were distinguished with high genetic potential for forage productivity, producing higher both average annual green mass yield (7 043,1 kg da<sup>-1</sup> for SP<sub>12-4</sub> to 6 741,1 kg da<sup>-1</sup> for MF-23) and dry matter yield (from 1 993,4 kg da<sup>-1</sup> for SS<sub>90-3</sub> to 1 862 kg da<sup>-1</sup> for SP<sub>11-3A</sub>) versus the standard 6 620,1 kg da<sup>-1</sup> and 1 854 kg da<sup>-1</sup>, respectively. SP<sub>12-4</sub>, SS<sub>90-3</sub> and SS<sub>88-7</sub> with the strongest phenotypic expression of the forage productivity were distinguished. The populations significantly exceeded Prista 3 standard concerning green mass yield by 6,39%; 6,16% and 4,2%, respectively and regarding dry matter yield by 6,67%; 7,52% and 6,18%, respectively.

12-4  
 3  
 12-4, SS<sub>90-3</sub> SS<sub>88-7</sub>  
 3  
 6,39%; 6,16%, 4,2%,  
 7,52% 6,18%, 6,67%  
 ,

## CONCLUSIONS

here were no found considerable differences in extent of phenotypic expression of grass stands height between the experimental populations.

SP<sub>12-4</sub> population formed significantly higher stems number per unit area compared to Prista 3 and two of the populations studied.

SP<sub>12-4</sub>, SS<sub>90-3</sub> and SS<sub>88-7</sub> experimental populations were high genetic potential for forage productivity and significantly exceeded Prista 3 standard concerning green mass yield by 6,39%; 6,16% and 4,2%, respectively and regarding dry matter yield by 6,67%; 7,52% and 6,18%.

With stands age increasing the experimental populations kept their high vitality, forming grass stands with good density and high forage yield.

Experimental populations studied can be used as components for a synthetic alfalfa variety creation or as a valuable germplasm source for further breeding program.

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1, 2\*  
1 " ", 7017  
2 " ", 7007

## Influence of Some Herbicides on the Structural Elements of Ruse 424 Maize Hybrid and Its Parental Lines

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### SUMMARY

In a field experiment, on soil type of strongly leached chernozem, during the period 2008-2010, the influence of the baluricides rimsulfuron (Titus 25DF) and nicosulfuron (Mistral 4 ) applied at optimal doses once and twice at an interval of 14 to 20 days on yield and its main structural elements in Ruse 424 maize hybrid and its parental forms (61/31 and 302/12), was studied. The experiment was started after the perpendicular method of Shanin, the size of the experimental plot being 10 m<sup>2</sup>. The maize was grown according to the standard technology for the crop, after a wheat predecessor.

The phases of development and elements of yield and crop productivity were followed.

The objective of the study was to determine the influence of some baluricides on the productivity and

424

302/12 424 6

13%.

(Delchev, 2015; Georgieva, 1997; 1998).

(Yamakhova and Dimitrova, 2002; Trankov and Koleva, 2003). Valenciano Migulez, (2003a; 2003b)

Green and Ulrich (1993), Molnar et al. (2001) Milivojevic et al. (2003) 100

- structural elements of yield in Ruse 424 maize hybrid and its parental lines.

It was found that the values of the structural elements of yield when vegetation baluricides were applied were higher or close to those of the control.

Average for the period, a significantly higher yield compared to the control was reported in variants with double treatment with rimsulfuron – used at optimal dose in 302/12 line and Ruse 424, 6 and 13%, respectively.

**Key words:** maize, herbicides, rimsulfuron, nicosulfuron, productivity, structural elements

## INTRODUCTION

Long years of studies and the experience in production have shown that the best results in weed control were obtained via correct combining of agro-chemical and chemical activities, i.e. the implementation of an integrated pest control system. From an economic and ecological point of view, combining of chemical and mechanical weed control is very positive (Delchev, 2015; Georgieva, 1997; 1998).

The use of herbicides in the early stages of maize development is essential for obtaining high yield (Yamakhova and Dimitrova, 2002; Trankov and Koleva, 2003). Valenciano and Migulez (2003a; 2003b) in their study pointed out that the main herbicides used in maize stands are based on triazines and atrazines.

Green and Ulrich (1993); Molnar et al. (2001) and Milivojevic et al. (2003) studied more than 100 maize hybrids that showed resistance to rimsulfuron, nicosulfuron, primisulfuron and thifensulfuron. In mixed weeding of maize with cereal and broadleaf weeds with the highest herbicidal efficacy were Titus + Arat Titus + Harmoni products, used in



(Kopmanis and Gail, 2008; 2010).

(2008) Waligora et al.

MCPA + 2.4-D,

10

3-4

( )

+ 2.4-D,

S-

Ivanovic et al. (1998)

Stefanovic et al. (2001 2006)

424

2008-2010

(1.98%), %, N (10.75 mg.1000 g<sup>-1</sup>

P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub> (6.31 mg.1000 g<sup>-1</sup>)

combination (Kopmanis and Gail, 2008; 2010).

In a study, Waligora et al. (2008) studied the herbicides: atrazine, formosulfuron + iodosulfuron, S-metolachlor, MCPA + dicamba, fluroxypyr + 2.4-D, florasulam + 2.4-D, rimsulfuron, bromoxynil, isoxaflutole + flufenacet, pentoxamid and flumioxazine on 10 sweet maize hybrids. The herbicides were applied both individually and in combination, at the recommended by the manufacturers doses, in phase 3-4 leaf of the crop, showing high selectivity, except rimsulfuron.

The highest yield (ears) was obtained from the variant with the combination formasulfuron + iodosulfuron and fluroxypyr + 2.4-D, and the lowest yield was reported after the use of the herbicides: S-metolachlor and MCPA + dicamba. Ivanovic et al. (1998) reported that folic herbicides: rimsulfuron, primesulfuron-methyl, prosulfuron + primesulfuron-methyl and nicosulfuron had a retardant effect - they increased grain yield but also decreased the height of the plants. However, Stefanovic et al. (2001 and 2006) in a study reported an increase in maize height under the influence of nicolluforon, rimsulfuron and prisulfuron-methyl.

The objective of the present study was information to be obtained about the influence of some baluricides on the productivity and structural elements of yield in Ruse 424 maize hybrid and its parental lines.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

During the period 2008-2010 in the experimental fields of IASS "Obraztsov chiflik" - Rousse on a soil type of highly leached chernozem, with low humus content (1.98%), slightly stocked with mineral N (10.75 mg. 1000 g<sup>-1</sup> soil) and mobile P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub> (6.31 mg. 1000 g<sup>-1</sup> soil) and

mg.1000 g<sup>-1</sup>) K<sub>2</sub>O (22.50 0-40 cm., 10m<sup>2</sup> (Shanin, 1977). 424 61/31 302/12. 5500 da (Popov and Pavlov, 1966). N<sub>10</sub> P<sub>8</sub> K<sub>8</sub>, 20 l.da<sup>-1</sup>, 4-5 14 20 (1).

well stocked with K<sub>2</sub>O (22.50 mg. 1000 g<sup>-1</sup> soil) in the layer 0-40 cm., field experiment with maize was started after Shanin's perpendicular method, with plot size of 10m<sup>2</sup> (Shanin, 1977). Ruse 464 hybrid and its parental forms - 61/31 and 302/12 lines were studied. The sowing was conducted in the optimal period (in first ten days of April), at a density of 5500 plants da<sup>-1</sup> (Popov and Pavlov, 1966).

Maize has been grown without cultivation between rows after wheat predecessor, fertilized with N<sub>10</sub> P<sub>8</sub> K<sub>8</sub>, as phosphorus (superphosphate) and potassium (potassium chloride) fertilizers were applied with the main autumn soil cultivation, and the total amount of nitrogen fertilizer (ammonium nitrate) – presowing. The application of herbicides rumsulfuron and nicosulfuron was done with sprayer pump at a working solution of 20 l da<sup>-1</sup>, in phase 4-5 leaf of the crop, at optimal doses, once and twice at an interval of 14 to 20 days (Table 1). For the whole vegetation period of maize, a control plot was maintained weed-free, with two intercultivations.

### 1.

**Table 1. Variants of the experiment**

| Variants |  | Doses - herbicides, g.da <sup>-1</sup> (ml.da <sup>-1</sup> ) | Doses - active substance, g.da <sup>-1</sup> |
|----------|--|---|--|
| 1        | Control - untreated  | -   | -  |
| 2        | 25 (250 g.kg <sup>-1</sup> ) Titus 25DF (250 g.kg <sup>-1</sup> rimsulfuron) | 3+2   | 0.75+0.50                                    |
| 3        | 25 (250 g.kg <sup>-1</sup> ) Titus 25DF (250 g.kg <sup>-1</sup> rimsulfuron) | 5   | 1.25   |
| 4        | 4CK (40 g.l <sup>-1</sup> ) Mistral 4S (40 g.l <sup>-1</sup> nicosulfuron)   | 100+50  | 4+2  |
| 5        | 4CK (40 g.l <sup>-1</sup> ) Mistral 4S (40 g.l <sup>-1</sup> nicosulfuron)   | 150   | 6  |

In order to determine the elements of productivity, the plants in the technical maturity phase have been evaluated. They were characterized by 20 plants of

hybrid and lines taken from the middle of the experimental plot from 3 (three) replications. Yield of maize ( $\text{kg}\cdot\text{da}^{-1}$ ); number of rows in the maize ear (pcs); number of grains in the ear (pcs); weight of the maize ear (g) weight of the grain per 1 ear (g) were reported.

A statistical processing of the experimental data was carried out by dispersion analysis method, and the differences between the variants were determined by Duncan's multiple range test. Correlation and path-coefficients were calculated based on the mean values of the traits of three-year study. Statistical data processing was performed using SPSS 19.0 software.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Climatically the experimental field of the Institute belongs to an area of temperate continental climate. Agrometeorological conditions during the period of study (2008-2010), in terms of temperature sums and precipitation by month differed both - in the individual years and compared to the multiannual average values (climatic norm) for the period 1896-2005.

2008 and 2009 were moderately favorable for the maize (Figure 1). The sum of precipitation in 2008, in April (51.6 mm) and May (58 mm) were close to the climatic norm (51.1 mm and 66.2 mm). In 2009 the amount of monthly precipitation for the same period was 12.7 mm (April) and 29.8 mm (May), below the multiannual rate (51.1 mm and 66.2 mm), respectively by 25% and 45%.

Average monthly air temperature for the period April - September varied from 12.79 to 25.03 °C (2008) and from 12.37 to 25.13 °C (for 2009) at a multiannual rate from 11.39 to 23.86 °C. The extremely high temperatures and the significant water stress did not have a negative impact on the development of

(3)

(br);

(g)

(g)

path-

SPSS 19.0.

(2008-2010),

(1896-2005)

(2008)

(51,6 mm)

(58 mm)

(2009)

(12,7 mm)

(29,8 mm)

(25% 45%)

(51,1 mm 66,2 mm).

(12,79)

(25,03 °C (2008))

(12,37)

(25,13 °C (2009))

(11,39 23,86 °C).

2010  
(81,7 mm)

(38,4 mm)

(81,5 mm),

2009

(589.6 °C)

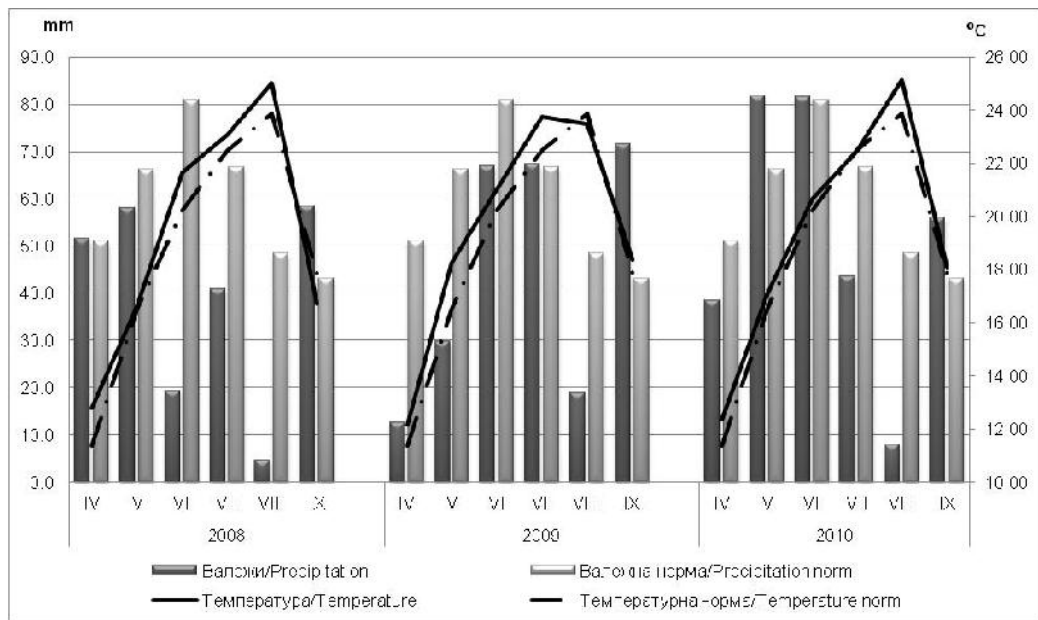
(572,2 °C).

(25,13 °C)

23,86 °C,

maize. 2010 was characterized with higher soil moisture. Data about precipitation in April (38.4 mm) and May (81.7 mm) created favorable conditions for emergence, growth and development of maize plants.

Precipitation in June (81.5 mm) was crucial for yield formation. Regarding temperatures, 2009 (for the whole maize vegetation period) was characterized with temperatures (589.6 °C), about the norm (572.2 °C). In August temperature sums of 25.13 °C were higher than the multiannual norm – 23.86°C, typical for the global warming observed in recent years.



. 1.

2008-2010 .

**Fig. 1. Average monthly air temperatures and precipitation by month for period 2008-2010**

Maize realized its productive potential by the amount of grain yield to varying degrees under the influence of the factors studied (climate and herbicides).

The negative influence of the herbicides on the number of plants, their growth and development affected the

( 2 3).  
 -  
 -  
 21%  
 29% , 61/31,  
 -  
 -  
 61/31,  
 267 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>.  
 302/12,  
 283 kg.da<sup>-1</sup> ( ),  
 267 kg.da<sup>-1</sup> ( ), 338  
 kg.da<sup>-1</sup> ( ).  
 ,  
 6%  
 ,  
 302/12

yield of seeds (Table 2 and 3).

The greatest decrease in yield was observed when using herbicides - twice, with a decrease of 21% and 29% in line 61/31, compared to the control variant. The negative effect was most pronounced after the using of nicosulfuron. Average for the period, grain yield of line 61/31 of the entries treated with rimsulfuron and nicosulfuron was 267 kg da<sup>-1</sup>. The yield obtained of line 302/12, averaged over the period, was 283 kg da<sup>-1</sup> (rimsulfuron) and 267 kg da<sup>-1</sup> (nicosulfuron), up to 338 kg da<sup>-1</sup> (control variant). Percentages of yield obtained from the baluricidal variants were close to those obtained from the control, as a 6% yield exceedance was registered only in line 302/12, treated with rimsulfuron.

2.

424,

, kg.da<sup>-1</sup>

**Table 2. Grain yield of maize inbred lines and hybrid Ruse 424, treated with herbicide rimsulfuron and nicosulfuron, applied twice, kg.da<sup>-1</sup>**

| Inbred lines   | Treated with herbicide |      |      |                        | / ontrol |      |      |                        | %   | significance |
|----------------|------------------------|------|------|------------------------|----------|------|------|------------------------|-----|--------------|
|                | 2008                   | 2009 | 2010 | Avarage for the period | 2008     | 2009 | 2010 | Avarage for the period |     |              |
| / rimsulfuron  |                        |      |      |                        |          |      |      |                        |     |              |
| 61/31          | 165                    | 250  | 221  | 212                    | 105      | 427  | 269  | 267                    | 79  | n.s.         |
| 302/12         | 248                    | 339  | 311  | 299                    | 88       | 423  | 338  | 283                    | 106 | n.s.         |
| 424/Ruse 424   | 760                    | 718  | 600  | 693                    | 492      | 760  | 583  | 612                    | 113 | n.s.         |
| / nicosulfuron |                        |      |      |                        |          |      |      |                        |     |              |
| 61/31          | 48                     | 360  | 161  | 190                    | 105      | 427  | 269  | 267                    | 71  | n.s.         |
| 302/12         | 128                    | 398  | 258  | 261                    | 88       | 423  | 338  | 267                    | 92  | n.s.         |
| 424/Ruse 424   | 561                    | 626  | 439  | 542                    | 492      | 760  | 583  | 612                    | 89  | n.s.         |

: gDp (5,1 0,1%),

61/31: gDp5% = 264,9 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp1% = 401,3 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp0.1% = 645,1 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; n.s. -

302/12: gDp5% = 259,8 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp1% = 393,6 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp0.1% = 632,6 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; n.s. -

424: gDp5% = 214,14 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp1% = 324,4 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp0.1% = 521,4 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; n.s. -

Legend: gDp (5,1 0,1%), as follows:

Line 61/31: gDp5% = 264,9 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp1% = 401,3 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp0.1% = 645,1 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; n.s. - had no significant differences with the control

Line 302/12: gDp5% = 259,8 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp1% = 393,6 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp0.1% = 632,6 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; n.s. - had no significant differences with the control

Hybrid Ruse 424: gDp5% = 214,14 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp1% = 324,4 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp0.1% = 521,4 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; n.s. - had no significant differences with the control

61/31 302/12 ( 3).  
 127 kg.da<sup>-1</sup> 362 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>  
 26% , 2%  
 ( ).

- The pointed trends in seeds yield were kept also in data about the influence of the once used baluricides on the lines 61/31 and 302/12 (Table 3). The yield obtained by entry varied in the range from 127 kg da<sup>-1</sup> to 362 kg da<sup>-1</sup> depending on the herbicide used. As a result of the chemical treatment, the yield was reduced an average from 2% to 26% compared to the control variant (K).

3.  
 424,

**Table 3. Grain yields of maize inbred lines and hybrid Ruse 424, treated with the herbicides rimsulfuron and nicosulfuron, applied once, kg.da<sup>-1</sup>**

| Inbred lines   | Treated with herbicide |      |      |                        | / ontrol |      |      |                        | % compared to control | significance |
|----------------|------------------------|------|------|------------------------|----------|------|------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
|                | 2008                   | 2009 | 2010 | Avarage for the period | 2008     | 2009 | 2010 | Avarage for the period |                       |              |
| / rimsulfuron  |                        |      |      |                        |          |      |      |                        |                       |              |
| 61/31          | 201                    | 336  | 148  | 228                    | 105      | 427  | 269  | 267                    | 86                    | n.s.         |
| 302/12         | 247                    | 355  | 228  | 277                    | 88       | 423  | 338  | 283                    | 98                    | n.s.         |
| Ruse 424       | 662                    | 729  | 439  | 610                    | 492      | 760  | 583  | 612                    | 100                   | n.s.         |
| / nicosulfuron |                        |      |      |                        |          |      |      |                        |                       |              |
| 61/31          | 127                    | 362  | 104  | 198                    | 105      | 427  | 269  | 267                    | 74                    | n.s.         |
| 302/12         | 180                    | 357  | 136  | 224                    | 88       | 423  | 338  | 267                    | 79                    | n.s.         |
| Ruse 424       | 653                    | 747  | 314  | 571                    | 492      | 760  | 583  | 612                    | 93                    | n.s.         |

: gDp (5,1 0,1%),  
 61/31: gDp5% = 272,2 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp1% = 412,4 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp0.1% = 662,9 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; n.s. -  
 302/12: gDp5% = 254,5 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp1% = 385,6 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp0.1% = 619,9 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; n.s. -  
 424: gDp5% = 352,7 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp1% = 534,4kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp0.1% = 858,9 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; n.s. -

Legend: gDp (5,1 0,1%), as follows:  
 Line 61/31: gDp5% = 272,2 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp1% = 412,4 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp0.1% = 662,9 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; n.s. - had no significant differences with the control  
 Line 302/12: gDp5% = 254,5 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp1% = 385,6 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp0.1% = 619,9 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; n.s. - had no significant differences with the control  
 Hybrid Ruse 424: gDp5% = 352,7 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp1% = 534,4kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; gDp0.1% = 858,9 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>; n.s. - had no significant differences with the control

61/31  
 302/12  
 ,  
 424 -

Treatment of lines 61/31 and 302/12 with rimsulfuron and nicosulfuron did not have a negative impact on seed productivity because significant differences were not found in the values of that trait.

Ruse 424 hybrid exhibited a higher degree of resistance to the herbicides applied than the examined lines. On average, for the period the highest yield of

424, -  
 693 kg.da<sup>-1</sup> ( 2 3).  
 (612 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>) 13%,  
 61/31, 302/12  
 424,  
 1,  
 ( 4, 6, 8). 4  
 61/31  
 =0,05 =0,01.  
 1  
 ( ) ( 1 ),  
 r=0,714 r=0,604.  
 (r=0,194).  
 (r=-0,689),  
 5 1  
 path- 61/31.  
 1

Ruse 424 was obtained as a result of the treatment with rimsulfuron baluricide twice applied – 693 kg da<sup>-1</sup> (tab.2 and 3). The increase in yield vs. economic control (612 kg.da<sup>-1</sup>) was 13%, which was not statistically proven.

In all the variants, there was a positive or negative difference registered in seeds yield which was minimal and there was no statistically significant difference between the variants, treated with herbicides and the control variants.

Yield of lines 61/31, 302/12, and Rs 424 hybrid depended on the traits: number of rows in the ear maize, number of grains in a row, weight of the ears and weight of the grains in an ear maize, where the correlations found were weak to strong and statistically significant (Table 4, 6, 8). Table 4 presented results of the found correlations between yield and some related traits in 61/31 maize line with a confidence level of =0.05 and =0.01. The yield of the line correlated positively with “number of the rows in the ear”, “ear the weight” and “grains the weight per 1 ear”.

The correlation of yield with 2 (two) of the values (ear weight and grains weights per 1 ear) was strongest, closely related to the productive capabilities of the line, with correlation coefficient r=0.714 and r=0.604. The lowest was the correlation between yield and number of rows in the ear (r = 0.194). In terms of the trait “number of grains in a row”, a strong negative correlation (r=-0.689) was found, suggesting that the line was with high productivity but with less number of grains in a row.

Table 5 showed the results of the direct and indirect effects of the elements of productivity on grain yield in 61/31 line. According to path-coefficient analysis, the trait “grains weight per 1 ear” had the highest direct and total indirect effect on yield.

4.

61/31

2008-2010

**Table 4. Correlations between yield and some traits associated with the productivity of 61/31 maize line for the period 2008-2010**

| /Traits |                             | 1 | 2     | 3        | 4      | 5       |
|---------|-----------------------------|---|-------|----------|--------|---------|
| 1       | /Grain yield, kg/da         | 1 | 0,194 | -0,689** | 0,604* | 0,714** |
| 2       | Number of rows in the ear   |   | 1     | -0,219   | 0,429  | 0,418   |
| 3       | Number of grains in the row |   |       | 1        | -0,322 | -0,394  |
| 4       | , g Ear weight, g           |   |       |          | 1      | 0,978** |
| 5       | Grain weight per 1 ear, g   |   |       |          |        | 1       |

\*Sufficient evidence for the reliability =0.05; \*\* Sufficient evidence for the reliability =0.01

5.

61/31,

2008-2010

**Table 5. Direct and Indirect effects of the elements of productivity on grain yield in 61/31 maize line for the period 2008-2010**

| Traits                      | Direct effect | /Indirect effect |        |        |        | Total indirect effect | Total effect | Correlation coefficient (r) |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
|                             |               | 1                | 2      | 3      | 4      |                       |              |                             |
| Number of rows in the ear   | -0.112        | -                | 0.024  | -0.048 | -0,047 | -0.071                | -0.183       | 0.194                       |
| Number of grains in the row | -0.367        | 0.008            | -      | 0.118  | 0,145  | 0.343                 | -0.024       | -0.689                      |
| Ear weight, g               | -1.605        | 0.688            | 0.516  | -      | -1,569 | 0.635                 | -0.97        | 0.604                       |
| Grain weight per 1 ear, g   | 2.187         | 0.914            | -0.862 | 2.138  | -      | 2.190                 | 4.377        | 0.714                       |

6

302/12.

(r=0,679), (r=0,826); (r=0,623), (r=0,785); Path- (r=0,905); 1 1 1 ( 7).

Table 6 showed the correlations between yield and elements of productivity in 302/12 line. Positive significant correlation was proven at = 0.01, between “number of rows in the ear and “number of grains in 1 row” (r=0.905); ear maize weight (r=0.679), grain weight of 1 ear (r=0.826); number of grains in the row and ear maize weight (r=0.623), grain weight of 1 ear (r=0.785); grain weight of 1 ear and ear weight (r=0.950).

Path-coefficient analysis of “number of rows in the ear” and grain weight of 1 ear showed the highest direct and total coefficient on yield and totally for the whole group (Table 7).



6.

302/12

2008-2010

**Table 6. Correlations between yield and some traits associated with productivity of 302/12 maize line for the period 2008-2010**

|   | /Traits                    | 1 | 2      | 3       | 4       | 5       |
|---|----------------------------|---|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1 | /Grain yield, kg/da        | 1 | -0,047 | -0,269  | 0,250   | 0,157   |
| 2 | Number of rows in the ear  |   | 1      | 0,905** | 0,679** | 0,826** |
| 3 | Number of grain in the row |   |        | 1       | 0,623*  | 0,785** |
| 4 | / Ear weight, g            |   |        |         | 1       | 0,950** |
| 5 | Grain weight per 1 ear, g  |   |        |         |         | 1       |

\* =0.05; \*\*

=0.01

\*Sufficient evidence for the reliability =0.05; \*\* Sufficient evidence for the reliability =0.01

7.

302/12,

2008-2010

**Table 7. Direct and indirect influence of the elements of productivity on the grain yield in 302/12 maize line for the period 2008-2010**

| Traits                      | Direct effect | /Indirect effect |        |        |        | Total indirect effect | Total effect | Correlation coefficient (r) |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
|                             |               | 1                | 2      | 3      | 4      |                       |              |                             |
| Number of rows in the ear   | 0.557         | -                | 0.504  | 0.378  | 0.460  | 1.342                 | 1.899        | -0,047                      |
| Number of grains in the row | -1.456        | -1.317           | -      | -0.907 | -1.143 | -3.367                | -4.823       | -0,269                      |
| Ear weight, g               | -0.189        | -0.128           | -0.127 | -      | -0.179 | -0.434                | -0.623       | 0,250                       |
| Grain weight per 1 ear, g   | 1.019         | 0.842            | 0.799  | 0.968  | -      | 2.609                 | 3.628        | 0,157                       |

8,

424

( =0,01),

1

424

9.

In Table 8, in Rs 424 hybrid, it was obvious that there was from a significant to high positive correlation with good significance ( =0.01), between ear weight and the number of rows in the ear, grains number in the row; grain weight per 1 ear and number of grains in the row, weight of the ear.

The direct and indirect effects of the elements of productivity on grain yield in Rs 424 were presented in Table 9. "Ear weight" showed the highest direct and total indirect effect on yield totally for the group.

2008-2010 .

**Table 8. Correlations between yield and some traits associated with productivity of Ruse 424 hybrid for the period 2008-2010**

| /Traits |                             | 1 | 2     | 3     | 4       | 5       |
|---------|-----------------------------|---|-------|-------|---------|---------|
| 1       | /Grain yield, kg/da         | 1 | 0.449 | 0.027 | 0.537*  | 0.001   |
| 2       | Number of rows in the ear   |   | 1     | 0.503 | 0.859** | 0.555*  |
| 3       | Number of grains in the row |   |       | 1     | 0.648** | 0.753** |
| 4       | / Ear weight, g             |   |       |       | 1       | 0.655** |
| 5       | Grain weight per 1 ear, g   |   |       |       |         | 1       |

\*Sufficient evidence for the reliability =0.05; \*\* Sufficient evidence for the reliability =0.01  
 =0.05; \*\* =0.01

**Table 9. Direct and indirect effects of the elements of productivity on grain yield in Ruse 424 maize hybrid, for the period 2008-2010**

| Traits                      | Direct effect | /Indirect effect |        |        |        | Total indirect effect | Total effect | Correlation coefficient (r) |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
|                             |               | 1                | 2      | 3      | 4      |                       |              |                             |
| Number of rows in the ear   | -0.125        | -                | 0.016  | -0.112 | -0.007 | -0.103                | -0.228       | 0,449                       |
| Number of grains in the row | -0.322        | 0.061            | -      | -0.140 | -0.184 | -0.263                | -0.585       | 0,027                       |
| Ear weight, g               | 1.135         | 0.782            | 0.253  | -      | 0.119  | 1.154                 | 2.289        | 0,537                       |
| Grain weight per 1 ear, g   | -0.431        | -0.039           | -0.248 | -0.088 | -      | -0.375                | -0.806       | 0,001                       |

\*Sufficient evidence for the reliability =0.05; \*\* Sufficient evidence for the reliability =0.01  
 =0.05; \*\* =0.01

## CONCLUSIONS

The grain yield obtained from the two maize lines 61/31 and 302/12 treated with the baluricides of rimsulfuron and nicosulfuron was lower of the control variant. 6% higher yield compared with the yield of the control was reported in line 302/12 in the variant, treated with rimsulfuron.

RS 424 maize hybrid showed a high degree of resistance to the baluricides used once and twice.

Only in 61/31 line between yield and ear weight, grain weight of 1 ear,

|           |         |
|-----------|---------|
| 1         |         |
| (r=-0,689 | 0,714). |
| Path-     |         |
|           |         |
| 1         |         |

number of grains in the row statistically significant medium to strong correlations (r=-0.689 to 0.714) were proven.

Path-coefficient analysis showed that in "number of rows in the ear", "ear weight" and "grain weight per 1 ear" had the highest direct effect on yield.

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