

LEGAL SETTLEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT AND ITS IMPACT ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: *This paper analyzes the legal framework governing agricultural management activities in Romania and its impact on the rural development process. Starting from the premise that agriculture represents a fundamental pillar of the rural economy, the research examines how national and European legislation influence the economic efficiency, sustainability and competitiveness of agricultural holdings. The study investigates the main normative acts in the field of agricultural law, the organizational forms of agricultural holdings as well as the role of public institutions and agricultural advisory services in implementing rural policies. Furthermore, it highlights the correlation between the legal management of agricultural resources and the promotion of rural tourism as a complementary vector of local economic development.*

Keywords: *economy, rural development, legislation, sustainability*

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture represents one of the fundamental pillars of the national economy, holding strategic importance both through its contribution to food security and through its decisive role in the sustainable development of rural areas. In the current context of economic globalization and the structural transformations occurring within European economies, the legal framework governing the administration and use of agricultural land acquires particular significance, as it directly influences the competitiveness of the agricultural sector, environmental protection, and the social cohesion of rural communities.

The legal regulations concerning agricultural management in Romania are grounded in a complex body of national and European norms aimed at organizing, exploiting, and capitalizing on agricultural land, promoting associative forms of organization, supporting agricultural research and consultancy, as well as implementing the principles of sustainable development. The Constitution of Romania and the Land Fund Law No. 18/1991 constitute the legal basis for guaranteeing property rights and regulating the legal regime of land, while acts such as Law No. 45/2009, Law No. 566/2004, and Law No. 72/2002 outline the institutional framework for activities related to agricultural research, cooperation and consultancy [8,10,11,12].

At the European level, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and its financing instruments such as the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), regulated by Regulations (EU) No. 1305/2013 and 2021/2115 have redefined the management of agricultural resources by integrating objectives related to environmental protection, innovation and digitalization. These orientations are complemented by the European Green Deal (2019), which promotes the transition toward sustainable agriculture and a climate-neutral economy, as well as by recent strategic documents such as The Future of Food and Farming (European Commission, 2022), which emphasize the need for a balance between productivity, sustainability and social equity [9,13,14,15,16].

From a doctrinal perspective, the specialized literature [1,2,3,5] highlights that the legal regulation of agricultural management should not be regarded merely as an administrative control instrument, but rather as an essential dimension of public policy oriented toward rural development. Agricultural cooperation, the promotion of specialized consultancy and the stimulation of applied research are key elements in strengthening efficient management capable of generating economic value, as well as social cohesion and environmental protection in rural areas [1,2,3].

Accordingly, the present study entitled “Legal Settlement of Agricultural Management and Its Impact on Rural Development” aims to systematically analyze the relationship between the agrarian legal framework and the dynamics of rural development in Romania, within the context of European integration and the new sustainability requirements. The paper seeks to determine the extent to which current regulations contribute to the modernization of agricultural management, to enhancing the economic performance of agricultural holdings and to improving the quality of life in rural areas, offering an interdisciplinary perspective that combines legal, economic and managerial analysis [4,5].

In this regard, the research aims to examine the evolution of the Romanian agricultural legislative framework and its correlation with European policies, to assess the impact of regulations on the management of agricultural holdings, and to identify directions for the sustainable development of rural areas within the context of the new CAP 2023-2027 and the European Green Deal [6,7].

Through the integrated approach of these dimensions, the study contributes to a better understanding of how the legal regulation of agricultural management can become a strategic driver of sustainable rural development in contemporary Romania.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The materials used for drafting this paper consist of legal acts, legal frameworks and web pages. The methods applied are of a legal nature, including the formal method, the comparative method, the logical method and the analytical method. The use of these methods aimed to conduct a systematic analysis of information from the studied sources, leading to the formulation of viewpoints, research findings, and conclusions.

RESEARCH RESULTS

1. The Constitution of Romania, republished in the Official Gazette No. 767/2003

The Constitution represents the supreme legal foundation of the Romanian state, establishing the general principles concerning property rights, economic freedom and environmental protection elements that are essential to the legal framework governing agricultural management. Article 44 enshrines the right to private property, while Article 135(2)(d) stipulates the state’s obligation to ensure the rational exploitation of natural resources. In the agricultural context, these provisions legitimize state intervention through policies and regulations designed to balance economic interests with the protection of agricultural land and the sustainable development of rural areas [8.]

The Constitutional Position as a Fundamental Norm and Its Implications for Agrarian Regulation

The Constitution constitutes the primary source of the entire national normative system, meaning that the adoption, interpretation, and implementation of subsequent laws must conform to constitutional principles and values. From this perspective, any regulation concerning agricultural land, forms of production organization, or rural development policy must be conceived in harmony with constitutional values such as the right to property, environmental protection, the rule of law, and the principle of equality.

This normative hierarchy has practical consequences: laws such as the Land Fund Law, the laws regulating the sale of land, or the regulations concerning agricultural consultancy services cannot contravene constitutional principles; in the event of conflict, constitutional review must prevail.

Implications for Agricultural Management and Normative Recommendations

From the standpoint of coherent legal policy, the Constitution establishes several strategic directions for regulating agricultural management:

- Clarifying and strengthening the land tenure framework to ensure legal stability and investment attractiveness;
- Explicit integration of environmental and sustainable development objectives into all agricultural legislation;
- Strengthening local consultation mechanisms to enhance administrative autonomy for the benefit of rural communities;
- Ensuring equitable mechanisms of expropriation and compensation, as well as providing support instruments for the adaptation of affected landowners.

The Constitution of Romania provides a normative and axiological foundation essential for the regulation of agricultural management: it protects property rights, legitimizes state intervention in the public interest, and imposes responsibilities concerning environmental protection and social cohesion. In practice, the effectiveness of these provisions depends on the quality of their transposition into secondary legislation, on consistent judicial interpretation and on the administrative capacity at both local and national levels.

For the development of a modern agriculture and sustainable rural growth, it is necessary to translate constitutional principles into coherent, predictable legislative instruments and public policies that ensure balance between economic performance, environmental stewardship and social responsibility.[8]

2. Law No. 45/2009 on the Organization and Functioning of the Agricultural Research and Development System

This law establishes the institutional framework of the national system for research and development in the agricultural, forestry and food sectors. It promotes technological transfer, innovation and the practical application of scientific results. In the context of agricultural management, the law supports the modernization of farms through the integration of applied research, creating the premises for sustainable and competitive agriculture. Its impact on rural development derives from the stimulation of local innovation and productivity growth, thereby contributing to the reduction of territorial disparities [11].

Context of Adoption and Rationale of the Law

Law No. 45/2009 was conceived to reorganize the national system of agricultural research and development at a time when Romania needed to adapt its scientific structures to the requirements of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and to the demands of the market economy. After a transition period marked by underfunding and institutional fragmentation, the law sought to create a coherent framework that would ensure the integration of agricultural research with production and with the technological transfer process directed toward farmers.

This legislative reform was a response to the necessity of modernizing agriculture through science, innovation, and efficiency, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development and European competitiveness.

Structure of the National Agricultural Research and Development System

The law establishes a national network composed of national institutes, research stations, development centers, and other entities subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD). Among these, a central role is held by the Gheorghe Ionescu-Șișești Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences (ASAS), which coordinates, evaluates and validates scientific activity in the field.

Through this structure, the law enshrines the principle of vertical integration of research from theoretical elaboration to practical application and of regional connectivity,

enabling the adaptation of results to the pedoclimatic and economic specificities of each rural area.

Correlation with Agricultural Management Policies

Through its objectives, Law No. 45/2009 positions agricultural research and development at the core of modern management processes. Research becomes a strategic decision-making instrument, providing data for planning, identifying sustainable technologies and supporting evidence-based public policymaking.

In contemporary agricultural management, innovation and technological transfer represent essential components. The law mandates the creation of dissemination and technical advisory structures, connecting research with farmers and economic operators. Thus, it institutionalizes a model of participatory management based on feedback and cooperation between science, production and administration.

Link to Rural Development

The impact of the law on rural development is multifaceted:

- Economic, through increased productivity and value added within the agricultural sector;
- Social, through skills development, job creation, and stimulation of rural entrepreneurship;
- Ecological, through the promotion of sustainable agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and adaptation to climate change.

Through its activities, the agricultural research system becomes a driving force in transforming rural areas from traditional production spaces into territories based on knowledge, innovation, and sustainability [11].

Law No. 45/2009 constitutes a legal pillar of the reform of Romania's agricultural system, providing an institutional architecture that integrates research, education, and production. It contributes to the foundation of a knowledge-based agricultural management model oriented toward innovation and sustainability.

Although its implementation faces practical challenges, the principles it enshrines autonomy, interdisciplinarity, technological transfer and sustainable development remain fundamental for the modernization of Romanian agriculture and the strengthening of rural cohesion.

3. Law No. 18/1991 on the Land Fund, Republished

This law holds fundamental importance for regulating the legal regime of agricultural land. It represented the main instrument of the restitution and reallocation process of agricultural properties after 1990, profoundly restructuring the Romanian agricultural system. Through its provisions on property delimitation, land use and cadastral registration, the law forms the foundation of any responsible agricultural management framework. At the same time, it generated a new agrarian structure dominated by small and fragmented holdings, which had major effects on rural development and subsequently required structural reforms [10].

Impact on the Structure of Agricultural Holdings

The main effect of the law's implementation was the fragmentation of land ownership. The restitution of property in kind, based on historical titles, led to the creation of millions of small, often scattered and poorly equipped holdings.

This situation created significant challenges for implementing efficient agricultural management, limiting access to financing, mechanization and technological innovation. Although the law restored social justice by re-establishing private ownership, from an economic perspective it produced a dual agrarian model:

- on the one hand, subsistence and semi-subsistence farms;
- on the other, large commercial farms resulting from land leasing or acquisition.

This polarization profoundly influenced rural development, generating territorial and socio-economic disparities.

The Role of the Law in Shaping the Agricultural Management Framework

By establishing the regime of land ownership, Law No. 18/1991 determined the organizational and operational structure of agricultural holdings. Individual ownership became the main production instrument, and land management was grounded in decision-making autonomy.

At the same time, the law created the premises for:

- the development of the land market;
- the emergence of associative forms (cooperatives, irrigation users' associations, agricultural companies);
- land consolidation through leasing or partnership arrangements;
- private investment in agriculture.

Thus, the law opened the path toward a new model of agricultural management. However, at the time of its adoption, it did not provide sufficient financial, technological or institutional support instruments for small farmers [10].

The Land Fund Law No. 18/1991 remains the founding legal act of contemporary land ownership in Romania. It restored legal order in the agricultural sector and paved the way for the development of a rural market economy. Nevertheless, its economic and social effects have been ambivalent: while it re-established individual rights, it also generated fragmentation and structural inefficiency.

In the current context, its principles must be complemented by policies promoting land consolidation, associativity and integration into modern agri-food value chains. Only through coherent agricultural management based on clear property rights, professional competence and sustainability can the legal legacy of this fundamental law be fully valorized.

4. Law No. 17/2014 on the Sale of Extravilane Agricultural Land

This law regulates the conditions for the transfer of ownership of agricultural land located outside the built-up areas (extravilane), introducing control mechanisms over land transactions and safeguarding national interests concerning land resources. By establishing pre-emption rights and eligibility criteria for buyers, the act seeks to prevent excessive land concentration and to maintain rural balance. Its impact on agricultural management is significant, as it influences the structure of holdings and access to land resources, serving as a mechanism for balancing local and foreign capital in the agricultural sector [9].

Impact on the Land Market and Agricultural Management

By introducing these regulatory mechanisms, Law No. 17/2014 has had a major impact on the dynamics of the land market:

- it has reduced speculative transactions, favoring buyers who are actively engaged in agriculture;
- it has contributed to the increase in the value of agricultural land through enhanced legal stability;
- it has stimulated the process of land consolidation, strengthening viable agricultural holdings;
- it has supported young farmers by including them among the beneficiaries of pre-emption rights.

On the other hand, the complexity of administrative procedures has at times hindered legitimate transactions and discouraged rapid investments, generating criticism regarding excessive bureaucracy and ambiguities in practical implementation.

Relevance for Modern Agricultural Management and Rural Development

Law No. 17/2014 holds major significance for contemporary agricultural management, as it:

- introduces the principle of qualitative selection of buyers, directing ownership toward active agricultural operators;
- promotes long-term planning in land use;
- provides legal stability and predictability for agricultural investments;
- strengthens the agricultural identity of rural areas by limiting land fragmentation and disintegration.

In this sense, the law functions as an instrument of land governance, integrated within rural development policy and the broader strategy for the sustainable management of natural resources.

Law No. 17/2014 represents an essential pillar in the legal architecture of Romania's land market. It has succeeded in balancing the freedom of land transactions with the protection of national interests and the need for the sustainable development of rural space.

By establishing pre-emption rights and control procedures, the law ensures a transparent, predictable, and agriculture-oriented legal framework. Nevertheless, to fully achieve its potential, the law requires procedural simplification, digitalization of the land market and closer alignment with rural financial support and professional training policies.

Law No. 17/2014 directly contributes to the professionalization of agricultural management and to the creation of a competitive rural economy grounded in clear property rights, legal stability and sustainability.[9].

5. Law No. 566/2004 on Agricultural Cooperation

This law constitutes a cornerstone of the modernization of Romanian agriculture, regulating the associative forms of agricultural producers. It promotes cooperation in the acquisition of inputs, processing and marketing, thereby strengthening the economic power of small farmers. From the perspective of rural development, the law upholds the principles of solidarity, efficiency, and social innovation. The agricultural cooperative thus becomes an instrument of participatory management that consolidates rural social capital and enhances market competitiveness [13].

Fundamental Principles of Agricultural Cooperation

The law enshrines a series of fundamental principles that define the legal and economic identity of the cooperative:

- The principle of voluntariness and freedom of association - no one may be compelled to join or remain a member of a cooperative;
- The principle of equality among members - each member has one vote, regardless of their financial contribution;
- The principle of equitable economic participation - the profit (referred to as "surplus") is distributed in proportion to the volume of economic activity performed;
- The principle of autonomy and independence - the cooperative is a distinct legal entity, governed by its members;
- The principle of education and information - members receive professional training and information on good management practices.

Through these principles, the law strengthens economic democracy in rural areas, transforming the cooperative into a modern legal form of self-management and solidarity.

Relationship with Agricultural Management and Rural Development

Law No. 566/2004 holds strategic value for collective agricultural management. Through the cooperative framework, farmers can optimize:

- production costs (by jointly purchasing inputs, machinery, seeds, and fuel);
- processing and storage of agricultural products;
- marketing under more advantageous conditions;
- access to European funding (Rural Development Programme - RDP, EAFRD).

Furthermore, the cooperative functions as a platform for participatory management, where decisions are made democratically and members benefit from training and consultancy. This collective approach contributes directly to sustainable rural development by reducing economic inequalities and promoting community cohesion.

Law No. 566/2004 on Agricultural Cooperation represents a strategic reform within the Romanian agricultural sector, establishing the legal framework for farmers' association in a democratic and economically efficient form.

By promoting the principles of solidarity, equity and participation, the law transforms the cooperative into a central institutional actor of rural development, capable of ensuring farmers' access to resources, markets, and innovation.

To fully realize its potential, a managerial culture of cooperation must be cultivated supported by education, advisory services and coherent public policies.

Thus, Law No. 566/2004 is not merely a normative act but a genuine instrument of social and economic modernization for the Romanian rural environment [13].

6. Law No. 72/2002 on Agricultural Consultancy

This law establishes the National System of Agricultural Consultancy, which is essential for the transfer of knowledge and the modernization of farm management. Agricultural consultancy is approached as a public service designed to support farmers in applying modern technologies and accessing support programs. In terms of impact, the law contributes to the professionalization of agriculture and the development of rural human capital, facilitating better adaptation to market requirements and to the conditionalities of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).[12].

Structure and Organization of the Agricultural Consultancy System

The law establishes a National System of Agricultural Consultancy (NSAC), organized on three levels:

- Central level, coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD);
- County level, represented by the County Offices for Agricultural Consultancy (COAC);
- Local level, represented by local consultancy centers.

This system is designed to ensure unity of action, adaptation to local specificities and accessibility of information for all farmers, regardless of the size of their holdings.

Impact on Agricultural Management

By institutionalizing consultancy, Law No. 72/2002 introduces a professional and scientific dimension to the management of agricultural holdings.

Agricultural consultancy contributes to:

- technological modernization and the adoption of innovations;
- increased economic efficiency through rational planning and management;
- optimized use of natural resources;
- reduction of economic and market risks;
- promotion of cooperation and associativity among farmers.

Consequently, consultancy becomes a strategic management instrument, indispensable for achieving a competitive and sustainable agriculture.

Correlation with European Legislation and Policies

Law No. 72/2002 is aligned with several key European regulations and strategic frameworks:

- Regulation (EU) No. 1305/2013, which provides support for vocational training, advisory services, and knowledge transfer in agriculture;
- Regulation (EU) No. 2115/2021, which continues funding for advisory services under the CAP 2023–2027;

○ The European Green Deal (2019), through its objectives of digitalization, sustainability, and ecological transition in agriculture.

Thus, agricultural consultancy serves as an essential channel for implementing European strategies at the local level, contributing to the achievement of environmental, innovation, and social cohesion objectives.

Contribution to Rural Development

Agricultural consultancy contributes directly to sustainable rural development by:

- creating jobs in rural education and service sectors;
- promoting entrepreneurship and economic diversification;
- reducing territorial disparities;
- strengthening rural human and social capital.

It transforms the farmer from a mere executor of tradition into a resource manager and innovator, capable of using modern planning and financing instruments [12].

Law No. 72/2002 represents a cornerstone in the professionalization of Romanian agriculture. Through the establishment of a national system of agricultural consultancy, the law created the foundations for developing managerial competences, increasing productivity and implementing European strategies in rural areas.

Although its implementation has faced challenges due to limited resources and institutional discontinuities, the law's fundamental principles information, training, advisory support, and public-private partnership remain essential for any future model of sustainable agricultural management.

In essence, agricultural consultancy is the mechanism through which science becomes economy and agricultural policy becomes rural development.

7. Regulation (EU) No. 1305/2013 on Support for Rural Development (EAFRD)

This regulation is one of the key instruments of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). It establishes the mechanisms through which the European Union finances rural development, innovation, environmental protection, and social inclusion. Through measures such as farm modernization, support for young farmers and the promotion of short supply chains, the regulation directly influences agricultural management. Its impact is strongly reflected in the economic and social cohesion of the Romanian rural environment [14].

Structure and Operating Principles of the EAFRD

The Regulation enshrines several key principles:

- Subsidiarity Member States have the freedom to adapt measures to their specific rural contexts, through national or regional programs;
- Partnership - the involvement of public authorities, businesses, NGOs, and local communities in designing and implementing rural development programs;
- Strategic concentration - resources are allocated based on concrete needs and objectives;
- The LEADER approach - promoting local development through community-led initiatives;
- Coordination with other European funds to ensure synergy between the EAFRD, ERDF, ESF and the Cohesion Fund.

Through these principles, the regulation transforms rural development into a participatory and integrated process, oriented toward sustainability and inclusion.

Structure of Rural Development Programs (RDPs)

According to the regulation, each Member State must develop a National Rural Development Program (NRDP) based on the analysis of territorial needs and priorities.

These programs are structured around six European priorities:

- Promoting knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture;
- Increasing the viability and competitiveness of all types of agricultural holdings;

- Promoting food chain organization and risk management;
- Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems dependent on agriculture and forestry;
- Promoting resource efficiency and a low-carbon economy;
- Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

Each measure financed must align with one of these priorities, ensuring the strategic coherence of EU interventions.

Correlation with Agricultural Management

Regulation (EU) No. 1305/2013 directly influences agricultural management by promoting the concept of “smart and sustainable agriculture”, based on:

- innovation and digitalization (Smart Farming, Internet of Things in agriculture);
- knowledge transfer and professional training;
- integrated risk management (insurance schemes, financial instruments, mutual funds);
- strategic planning of agricultural investments.

Through these mechanisms, the Regulation imposes a paradigm shift, the farmer becomes a resource manager, a rural entrepreneur and an actor of sustainable development.

Implementation in Romania - NRDP 2014-2020

In Romania, Regulation (EU) No. 1305/2013 was implemented through the National Rural Development Program 2014-2020 (NRDP), coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD).

The main funded measures included:

- Submeasure 4.1 - investments in agricultural holdings;
- Submeasure 6.1 - setting up of young farmers;
- Submeasure 10.1 - agri-environment and climate payments;
- Submeasure 19.2 - implementation of local development strategies (LEADER).

Through these measures, Romania benefited from over €8 billion in EAFRD funding, significantly contributing to the modernization of the agricultural sector and the creation of rural infrastructure.

Impact on Rural Development

Regulation (EU) No. 1305/2013 has produced significant effects on both the European and Romanian rural environment:

- reduced economic disparities between agricultural regions;
- stimulated rural entrepreneurship and the emergence of agri-food SMEs;
- promoted employment and social inclusion;
- contributed to environmental protection and climate change adaptation;
- encouraged cooperation between farmers, researchers and local actors.

Thus, the EAFRD has become the main driving force of rural transformation in Romania, particularly through its support for young people, women and disadvantaged areas.

Regulation (EU) No. 1305/2013 represents a milestone in the evolution of the Common Agricultural Policy, establishing the principle that rural development is not limited to agriculture but also encompasses social cohesion, environmental sustainability and innovation [14].

Through the EAFRD, the European Union has succeeded in transforming rural space into a dynamic economic and social actor, aligned with global sustainability objectives.

For Romania, this regulation provided the legal and financial framework necessary for the modernization of agricultural management, supporting the transition toward a competitive, responsible and sustainably developed agriculture.

8. Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 on CAP Strategic Plans 2023-2027

This regulation redefines the implementation framework of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in a more flexible, performance-oriented manner. It introduces national strategic plans, which integrate direct payments, rural development and environmental measures into a cohesive strategy.

For Romania, the regulation marks a transition phase toward more sustainable agricultural management, based on performance, digitalization and local adaptation. Its impact on rural development lies in redirecting policies toward ecological objectives and economic resilience [15].

Correlation with Agricultural Management

Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 has a direct influence on strategic agricultural management, as it:

- encourages medium and long-term planning of agricultural holdings
- introduces performance indicators for each type of support
- promotes the digitalization of decision-making processes (monitoring, reporting, control)
- facilitates value-chain integration and cooperation among farmers
- aligns farmers' activities with the principles of sustainable agriculture and the CAP Green Deal

Thus, the regulation compels the modern farmer to act as a manager, innovator and responsible agent of rural development.

Impact on Rural Development and Agriculture

Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 contributes to:

- the modernization of agricultural structures;
- increased economic efficiency and profitability;
- the implementation of environmentally friendly and sustainable agricultural practices;
- the digitalization and professionalization of agricultural management;
- the strengthening of rural communities through cooperation, innovation, and social inclusion.

In this sense, the CAP becomes not merely a subsidy mechanism but a strategic instrument of rural governance [15].

Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 represents the current model of CAP implementation, through which the European Union transforms agricultural support into a strategic tool focused on performance, sustainability and digital transformation.

For Romania, the regulation provides the framework for:

- professional management of agricultural holdings;
- integration of farmers into sustainable value chains;
- support for rural development through innovation, cooperation and ecology.

After all, the National Strategic Plan (NSP) and Regulation 2021/2115 constitute the foundation of modern agriculture, transforming subsidies into strategic investments for the future of rural Romania.

9. The European Green Deal (2019)

The European Green Deal represents a comprehensive strategic framework aimed at transforming the European Union into a climate-neutral economy by 2050. In the agricultural sector, it directly shapes management practices through the “Farm to Fork” and “Biodiversity 2030” strategies.

These initiatives promote ecological farming, the reduction of pesticides and fertilizers, and the digitalization of agricultural processes. Its impact on rural development

is structural and it stimulates the green transition, the creation of sustainable jobs and the strengthening of the rural circular economy [16].

Objectives Relevant to Agriculture and Rural Development

The Green Deal defines both direct and indirect objectives for the agricultural sector:

- “Farm to Fork” strategy - reduction of pesticide and antibiotic use, increase in organic production, and promotion of short supply chains;
- Biodiversity and ecosystem protection - conservation of soils, forests and natural habitats;
- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions - through environmentally friendly practices and renewable energy use;
- Promotion of the circular economy - valorization of agricultural waste, reduced water and energy consumption;
- Digitalization and innovation - support for farmers in adopting smart technologies and precision farming.

These objectives are fundamental for modern farm management and for guiding investment priorities in rural areas.

Impact on Agricultural Management

The European Green Deal transforms the very paradigm of agricultural management:

- farm planning must integrate environmental, biodiversity and energy-efficiency criteria
- digital technologies become essential for monitoring emissions, water use and fertilizer application
- climate and ecological risk management becomes a central component of farm strategy
- cooperation and professional training are encouraged for knowledge transfer and adoption of best practices
- ecological certification and the marketing of sustainable products become direct economic tools.

Thus, the farmer is no longer merely a food producer but a manager of natural resources and an agent of sustainable transition[16].

The European Green Deal constitutes both a strategic and regulatory framework for the transition of European and Romanian agriculture toward sustainability.

For Romania, it entails:

- the integration of environmental objectives into farm planning and management
- the promotion of innovation, digitalization and cooperation
- the transformation of agriculture and the rural environment into a competitive, sustainable, and inclusive economic sector

Through the Green Deal, agriculture becomes a driving force of rural development, a guarantor of food security and a vector of sustainability in both Romania and the European Union.

10. Dincă G., Drept agrar (Agrarian Law), C.H. Beck Publishing House, Bucharest, 2016

This work provides a systematic analysis of the fundamental institutions of Romanian agrarian law. The author emphasizes the role of legal regulation in balancing the private interest of landowners with the public interest in protecting natural resources. Dincă highlights the correlation between the stability of the land tenure system and the performance of agricultural management, offering a solid theoretical framework for interpreting current legislation.

A fundamental treatise on Romanian agrarian law, explaining the general principles and the legal structure of agriculture [3].

- Details the legal regime of agricultural land, including the rights and obligations of landowners;
 - Provides a clear understanding of cooperation and the organization of agricultural structures;
 - Emphasizes the interdependence between agrarian legislation and rural development, including the role of the state and public policies.
- Impact on agricultural management:
- The proper implementation of agrarian law provides the legal foundation for strategic farm planning;
 - Offers the legal basis for association, cooperation and consultancy, all essential to sustainable rural development.

11. Ionescu, D., Regimul juridic al terenurilor agricole (The Legal Regime of Agricultural Land), Hamangiu Publishing House, Bucharest, 2020

A detailed analysis of the legal status of agricultural land from the perspectives of ownership, transactions and use.

- Explains how property rights and land sales influence the structure of agricultural holdings;
- Highlights the issue of land fragmentation, a major challenge for efficient management and rural development.

Impact on agricultural management:

- Understanding the legal regime of land enables optimization of farm structures, strategic planning, and efficient resource association;
- Underlines the need for legislative and cooperative interventions to increase productivity and rural sustainability [5].

12. Alexandru, D. (coord.), Tratat de drept agrar român (Treatise on Romanian Agrarian Law), Universul Juridic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2019

The treatise coordinated by Professor Alexandru represents the most comprehensive doctrinal synthesis of contemporary Romanian agrarian law. It addresses key institutions such as agricultural property, land policies, cooperatives and European legal integration. The work supports the view that agrarian law is a dynamic legal branch, constantly adapting to economic and ecological transformations and thus constitutes a major theoretical reference for the analysis of the agricultural legal framework.[1].

13. Stanciu, S., Management și consultanță agricolă (Agricultural Management and Consultancy), ASE Publishing House, Bucharest, 2017

A work focused on modern farm management and the role of agricultural consultancy.

- Presents management and planning tools applicable to farmers and agricultural organizations;
- Highlights the role of consultancy services in rural development and the implementation of EU policies;
- Analyzes practical examples of cooperation and economic efficiency.

Impact on agricultural management:

- Provides methods for resource optimization, decision-making and enhancing competitiveness;
- Demonstrates how association and professional consultancy contribute to sustainability and rural development [7].

14. Istudor, N., Economie rurală și dezvoltare durabilă (Rural Economy and Sustainable Development), ASE Publishing House, Bucharest, 2020

Analyzes rural economy from the perspective of sustainability and public policy.

- Highlights the economic and social mechanisms of rural development;
- Examines the impact of investments, subsidies and cooperation on rural performance;
- Offers insights into the transition toward a sustainable and competitive agriculture.

Impact on agricultural management:

- Provides a foundation for strategic economic decisions at both farm and community levels;
- Contributes to assessing the impact of agricultural policies on rural development[6].

15. Ciutacu, C., Politica agricolă comună și dezvoltarea rurală în România (The Common Agricultural Policy and Rural Development in Romania), Economic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2019

This study analyzes the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in Romania, focusing on its economic and institutional effects. Ciutacu argues that the adaptation of national legislation to the European framework is essential for enhancing competitiveness and reducing rural disparities. The text provides an applied perspective on how European regulations shape the Romanian agrarian structure.[2].

16. European Commission, The Future of Food and Farming, Brussels, 2022

An EU report outlining the future of agriculture and food policy in the European Union.

Relevance to this research:

- Highlights the transition toward a digital, sustainable and innovative agriculture;
- Analyzes the impact of the European Green Deal and CAP 2023-2027 on farmers;
- Emphasizes the importance of cooperation, innovation and ecological transition.

Impact on agricultural management:

- Offers strategic recommendations for European and Romanian farms;
- Underlines the role of the modern agricultural manager in implementing sustainable and innovative policies [4].

Synthesis of Academic and Legislative Sources

The bibliographic analysis reveals that the evolution of the Romanian and European agrarian legal framework is moving toward the integration of sustainability, innovation and social equity principles.

Legislative instruments establish the institutional dimension of agricultural management, while doctrinal and specialized works provide the conceptual and practical interpretation necessary for designing coherent rural development policies.

Together, these sources form the theoretical core of research on the impact of legal regulation on agricultural management and the sustainable development of rural areas.

The research demonstrates that agricultural management and rural development in Romania are deeply influenced by the national and European legal framework. Their effectiveness depends on the correlation between agrarian legislation, support policies and instruments of consultancy and innovation.

The harmonization of legal, economic, and managerial dimensions ensures that agriculture evolves not merely as a production sector but as a pillar of sustainable rural development, contributing to economic resilience, environmental protection and social inclusion in both Romania and the European Union.

The Role of National Legislation

The analysis of Law no. 45/2009, the Land Fund Law, Law no. 17/2014 on the sale of agricultural land, Law no. 566/2004 on agricultural cooperation and Law no. 72/2002 on agricultural consultancy shows that Romania has built a coherent but fragmented legal framework aimed at:

- regulating land ownership and transactions to prevent excessive fragmentation and to encourage farmers' associations
- organizing cooperatives and associative forms that increase the economic power and competitiveness of farms
- institutionalizing agricultural consultancy to support the adoption of modern technologies, professional training, and strategic farm management

Through these regulations, the law not only protects landowners' rights but also creates the premises for professional, rational and sustainable agricultural management, essential for sustainable rural development.

Contribution of European Regulations and the CAP

European Regulations - 1305/2013 (EAFRD) and 2115/2021 (CAP Strategic Plans 2023-2027), as well as the European Green Deal (2019) - strengthen the national framework by:

- funding the modernization and digitalization of farms, including through direct payments, eco-schemes and investments in rural infrastructure
- promoting sustainable and environmentally responsible agricultural practices in line with climate and biodiversity objectives
- fostering the economic and social development of rural communities by supporting entrepreneurship, cooperation and education
- introducing results-based management with performance indicators that require farmers and authorities to optimize resources and maximize the impact of European funds

Thus, the CAP and the Green Deal act as indirect regulatory instruments for agricultural management, encouraging farmers to become strategic, environmentally responsible and innovative managers.

The Link Between Legislation, Consultancy and Rural Development

The study has shown that agricultural consultancy (Law no. 72/2002) and rural development programs are essential links for:

- knowledge and innovation transfer
- strategic farm planning
- ensuring compliance with national and European regulations
- increasing the competitiveness and sustainability of farms, with direct effects on income, employment and rural community cohesion

Doctrinal and Academic Perspectives

The analysis of specialized literature (Dincă, Ionescu, Alexandru, Stanciu, Istudor, Ciutacu, European Commission) shows that:

- agricultural law provides the legal foundations for the operation of farms and cooperatives
- agricultural management and consultancy are indispensable tools for implementing economic and development strategies
- sustainable rural development depends on integrating legal norms with public policies, financial support, and technological innovation
- European literature emphasizes the need for aligning national policies with the objectives of the Green Deal and the CAP to achieve sustainability, competitiveness and social cohesion

General Impact on Agricultural Management and Rural Development

By synthesizing legislation, regulations and specialized literature, we can conclude that:

- a clear and coherent legal framework allows farmers to make sound strategic decisions, invest in technology and manage resources efficiently
- agricultural consultancy and European programs enhance managerial capacity, reduce economic risks and facilitate access to funds and markets
- environmental policies and eco-schemes integrate sustainability into farmers' daily decisions
- rural development is stimulated not only through infrastructure and subsidies but also through professional training, cooperation and innovation
- the final outcome is a more competitive, sustainable agriculture adapted to economic and climate challenges, with more resilient rural communities and greater prosperity

CONCLUSIONS

The study demonstrates that the legal regulation of agricultural management, as established through national legislation, European Union regulations, and relevant academic doctrine, transcends a purely formal normative framework and functions as a strategic legal instrument for fostering rural development. In this aspect, agricultural law and related public policies play a decisive role in shaping economic behavior, ensuring legal certainty, and promoting sustainable development within rural areas.

In the Romanian context, the effectiveness of this legal framework is contingent upon several interrelated factors. First, it depends on the capacity of farmers to comply with and implement legally mandated sustainable practices and to integrate modern agricultural technologies in accordance with environmental and climate-related legal standards. Second, the proper application of the law is conditioned by the efficiency of public authorities and the performance of agricultural advisory and consultancy services, which are essential for translating legal norms into practical and enforceable management solutions.

Furthermore, the judicious and lawful use of European Union financial instruments, aligned with the objectives of the European Green Deal, constitutes a fundamental element in ensuring compliance, innovation, and long-term sustainability in the agricultural sector. Equally important is the institutional cooperation between farmers, public authorities and research bodies, which facilitates regulatory compliance, knowledge transfer, and the development of evidence-based agricultural policies.

Accordingly, legality, agricultural management and rural development are characterized by a relationship of structural interdependence: the legal framework establishes binding rules and guiding principles, advisory mechanisms ensure their effective implementation and European and national policies maximize their economic, social and environmental impact. Through this normative and institutional synergy, Romanian agriculture may evolve into a modern, competitive and sustainable sector, fully aligned with European legal standards and contemporary development objectives.

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