

Standard-documentation Meta information

(Definitions, comments, methods, quality)

on

Survey on fruit plantations 2012

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Executive Summary

This survey on commercial fruit plantations, which is conducted at five-year intervals on the basis of an EU Regulation, provides comprehensive data on the production structure of certain types of fruit in Austrian commercial fruit farming. Besides detailed information on the size of the cultivated area and the number and age of the trees, the survey also records the most important varieties of fruit. The results of this survey enable the data to be differentiated by size categories and key production areas, and regional results to be presented according to political districts. Organic commercial fruit farming is also considered.

In terms of apples, pears, apricots and peaches (including nectarines), the survey was conducted as a primary statistical survey. In addition, the cultivated areas of dessert apples, dessert pears, quinces, peaches, nectarines, apricots, cherries, sour cherries, damsons, plums, bush berries, strawberries, nuts, sweet chestnuts, elderberries and other fruit from administrative data of Agrarmarkt Austria (AMA) were analysed as secondary statistics.

Commercial fruit farming is distinguished from extensive forms of agriculture (domestic gardens, mixed orchards) by its primarily commercial focus (>50%) and, usually, regular distances between the plants and a level of care suited to the production of high-quality dessert fruit. For this reason cider apple plantations with their corresponding structure are included in the survey.

The selection framework used for the 2012 survey included all holdings that had stated commercial fruit growing areas in the 2010 Farm Structure Survey. These were compared with data from Agrarmarkt Austria (analysis of multiple area applications 2011) and data from the Survey on Fruit Plantations 2007 in order to filter out solely those holdings with the relevant types of fruit (see Fig. 1). Where doubt existed, holding units were left in the survey population. In addition, the provincial chambers of agriculture were asked to look through their lists of holdings and, if relevant, to provide information about further holdings. By making this preliminary selection it was possible to reduce significantly the number of units that did not meet the survey criteria and therefore also reduce the burden on respondents as a result of non-responses.

The survey was conducted with the assistance of the provincial chambers of agriculture, as a result of which ongoing contact with their fruit growing experts was required during the course of the survey. In the federal province of Burgenland its own survey officials (trained staff from the district chambers of agriculture) were provided by the provincial chamber of agriculture for local data collection.

Central data logging and analysis were, however, carried out in their entirety by Statistics Austria (Crop Production Department of the Spatial Statistics Directorate).

The survey was conducted in the form of a concentration sample, which almost achieved the scope of a full survey. However, holdings considered not relevant in terms of commercial fruit growing were excluded by a survey threshold of 0.2 ha (total of surveyed types of fruit). By contrast with earlier surveys, the net area was no longer calculated from the number of trees and planting distance. Instead, the fully utilised area was directly surveyed in line with the administrative data. A comparison of the current results with those from the 2007 survey – as well as with those from earlier surveys in 2002, 1997, 1994 and 1989 – is thus only possible to a limited extent. The results from 2007 were, however, adjusted in accordance with the new definition and published in this manner in the 2012 publication.

When designing the 2012 survey questionnaire, particular attention was paid to the issue of uniformity with previous questionnaires. As in 2007, information about organic cultivation was requested in the 2012 survey as this is becoming an increasingly important aspect of commercial fruit farming.

To ensure the high quality of the results, comprehensive plausibility checks were performed when processing the data, including the use of data from previous surveys (2007 and 2002).

All types of fruit to be surveyed directly were stipulated by the relevant national legislation; as a result of this, commercial fruit growing areas with other crops such as cherries, damsons, berry fruit and nuts and elderberries etc. were not recorded as primary statistics. These were however added in accordance with statutory requirements by using administrative data (AMA 2012).

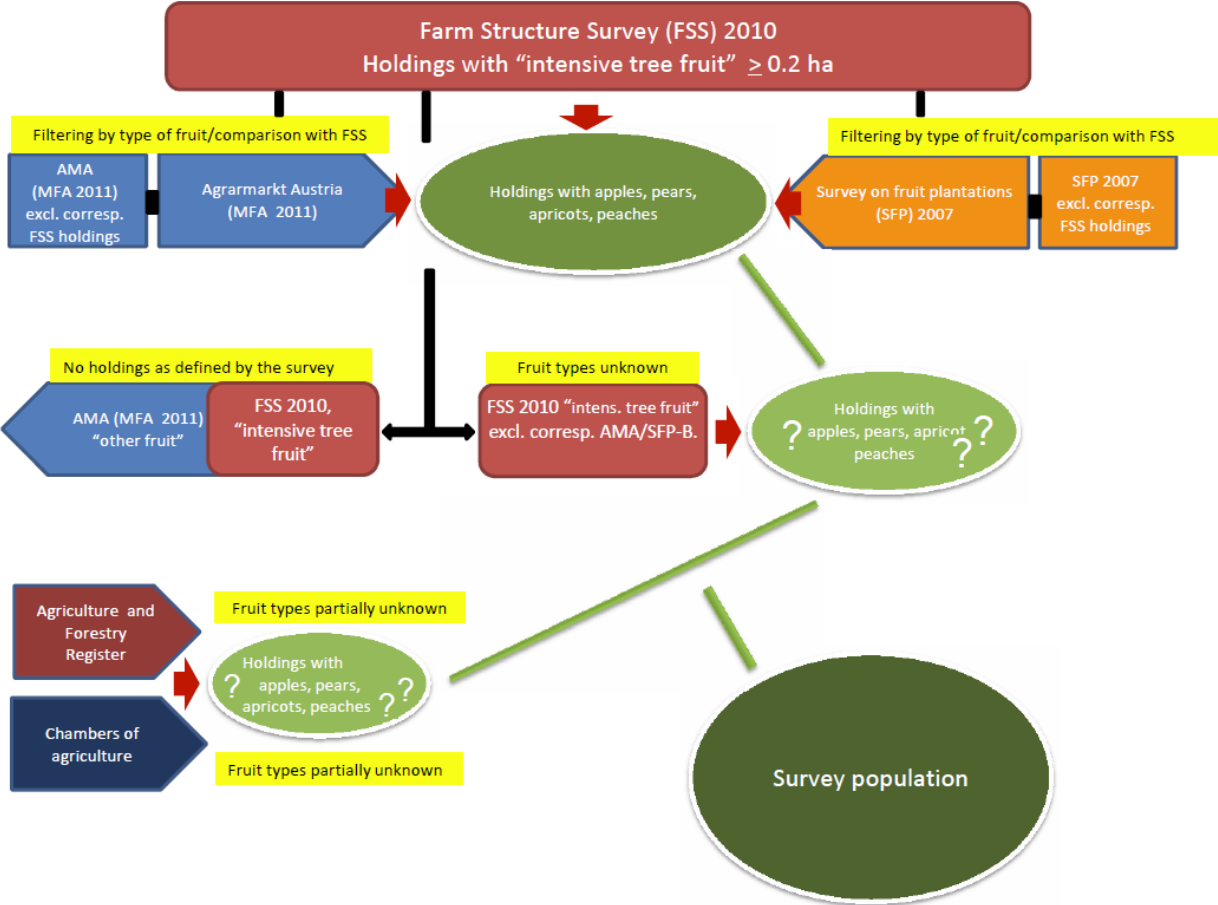


Fig. 1: Selection of the survey population – simplified diagram

Survey on fruit plantations 2012 – Main Features

Subject matter	Commercial fruit cultivation in Austria in 2012
Population	2 530 fruit holdings
Type of statistics	Primary statistical survey (concentration sample with the character of a full survey), secondary statistics (analysis of multiple applications from Agrarmarkt Austria)
Data sources/Survey techniques	Primary survey of fruit farmers Secondary statistics: multiple applications from Agrarmarkt Austria
Reference period or due day	1 June 2012
Periodicity	Every five years
Survey participation (in case of a survey)	Obligatory
Main legal acts	Federal Law Gazette II No. 164/2012 dated 18 May 2012 EU Regulation No 1337/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011
Most detailed regional breakdown	Municipalities
Availability of results	Preliminary data: t + 8 months Final data: t + 11 months
Other	Because the definition of areas has changed, a comparison of the current results with those from the 2007 survey – as well as with those from earlier surveys – is only possible to a limited extent. The results from 2007 were, however, adjusted in line with the new definition and included in the 2012 publication.