

Higher education in agriculture sciences in Albania - current situation, challenges and the future.

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Agriculture and food sector remains the most important sector of the Albanian economy, accounting for about 21% of GDP. Higher education in agricultural sciences trains the qualified workforce, experts, as well as the next generation of scientists for this sector and consequently plays an almost crucial role in the current and future development of this sector in the country. Higher education in agricultural sciences in Albania faces major challenges related to numerous factors, some of which can be mentioned: development of the agri-food sector and the related labor market, implementation of the Bologna reform in higher education in Albania, demographic trends and migration of young people, especially high school graduates and university graduates from Albania. In this paper, the current status, the main challenges and the future of higher agricultural education in Albania, are presented. In this context, all levels of higher education, i.e., post-secondary or higher professional diploma, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs, as well as their main characteristics in the Albanian higher education system are discussed. In addition, the trends in enrollments and graduation in recent years are presented. Based on the development of the agricultural sector and its labor market, the challenges and future of higher education in agriculture and food are also discussed.

Key words: Higher education; tertiary study cycles in agriculture.