The recent Sericultural situation in Greece Aspects and prospects

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The today situation of Sericultural activities in Greece
A brief Introduction

- Sericulture in the last decades had faced a dramatic declining worldwide and in Greece as well
- Recently a regain tendency has been observed in the country as a result of some critical factors

Main factors affecting the today's sericultural situation in Greece

- The last changes in the agricultural policy within the European Union which reflect directly to changes in the up to date structure of the crops
- The changes in the EU subsidising mechanisms, which in many cases lead to replacement of traditional annual crops, like the industrial ones, and push the farmers to seek other options for their activities
- The promotion and subsidising of the replacement of traditional annual crops by perennial ones, like trees, including mulberry
- The promotion and subsidising of Silkworm rearing in the European Union countries
- The observed increasing demand for raw cocoons in the international markets

Main advantages for sericultural development in Greece

- Silkworm rearing, is restricted, due to its climatic and environmental demands, only in the south temperate part of Europe
- From this point of view Greece can be considered as one of the most suitable for rearing European regions, gaining from the advantage of EU subsidies for Sericulture
- Silk reeling and processing industry can be subsidized as well within the European and national development programs
- The demand for silk products both, in Greece and Europe, appears steadily growing and is mainly covered by imports
- The above factors create opportunities for the development of silk product processing and distribution centres, activate the local production of silk products, give additional reasons for the development of the local sericulture and create connections with other countries where such activities exist
- All Balcan countries due to their geographic position and their membership in the E.U. could develop such centres being concerned in processing local and imported raw materials and distributing their and other imported silk products either locally or within the E.U.

National strategy for sericulture revival and development in Greece

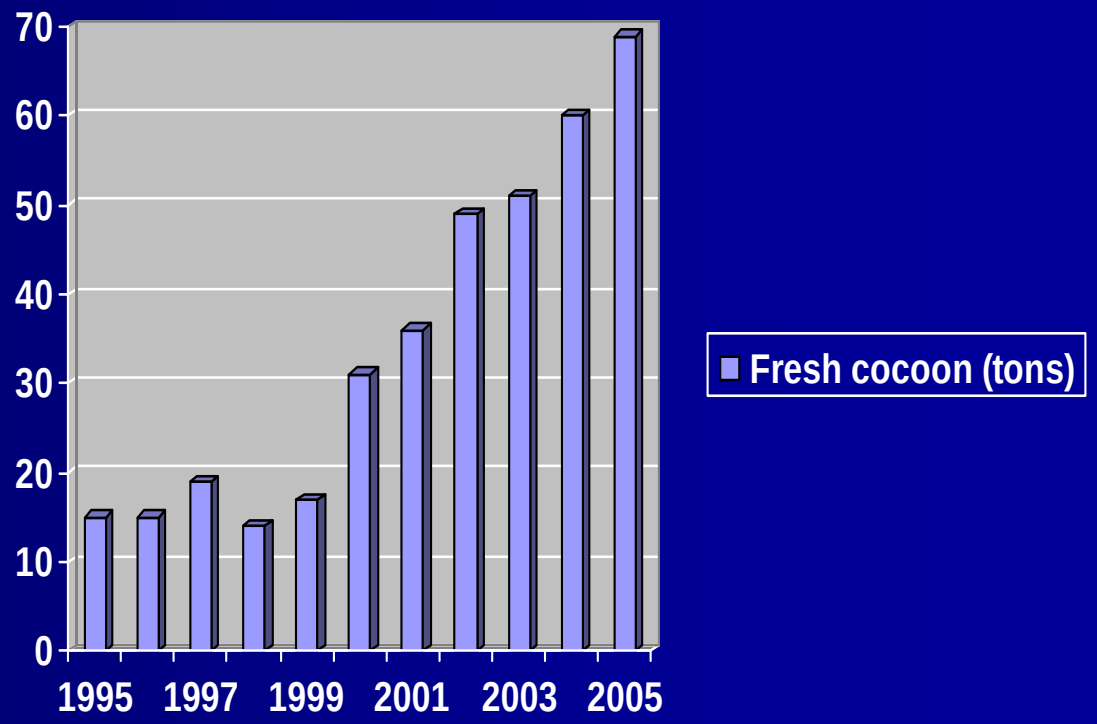
- The hole national strategy of Greece, concerning the sericulture revival and development, has to be based upon the rules of the free market and trait competition and the general European Union directions
- <u>So this strategy, within this frame, can be mainly directed to:</u>
  - The E.U. subsidies for primary silkworm rearing
  - The E.U. subsidies for mulberry field installation
  - Promotion and distribution of new technology application
  - National or E.U. subsidies for any sort of new plants either for primary production or for industrial processing
  - Financial support of trait through beneficial banking arrangements

All the above actually can be considered as side actions giving an aid to the field around sericulture, silk processing and silk product trait, under the strict condition of the actual competitiveness and the capability of survival of them under the rules of the free market.

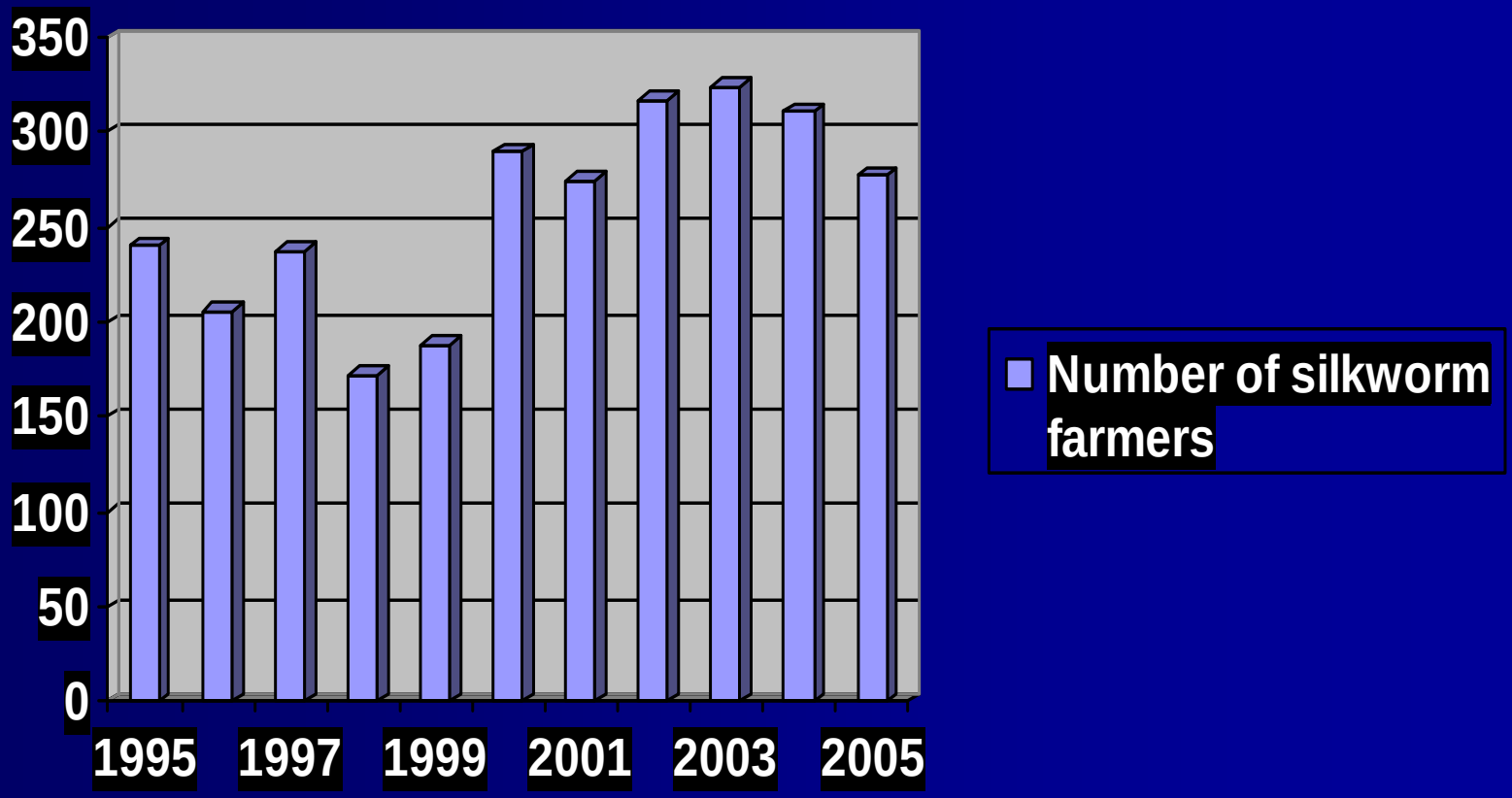
Of course, and especially for the silkworm rearing part, it is obvious that these actions, for the time being, could create excellent conditions for the sericulture development in the country.

Brief description of the present situation of sericulture in the country

- By means of fresh cocoon production Greek sericulture for the period 1995-2005 had followed the beside figure



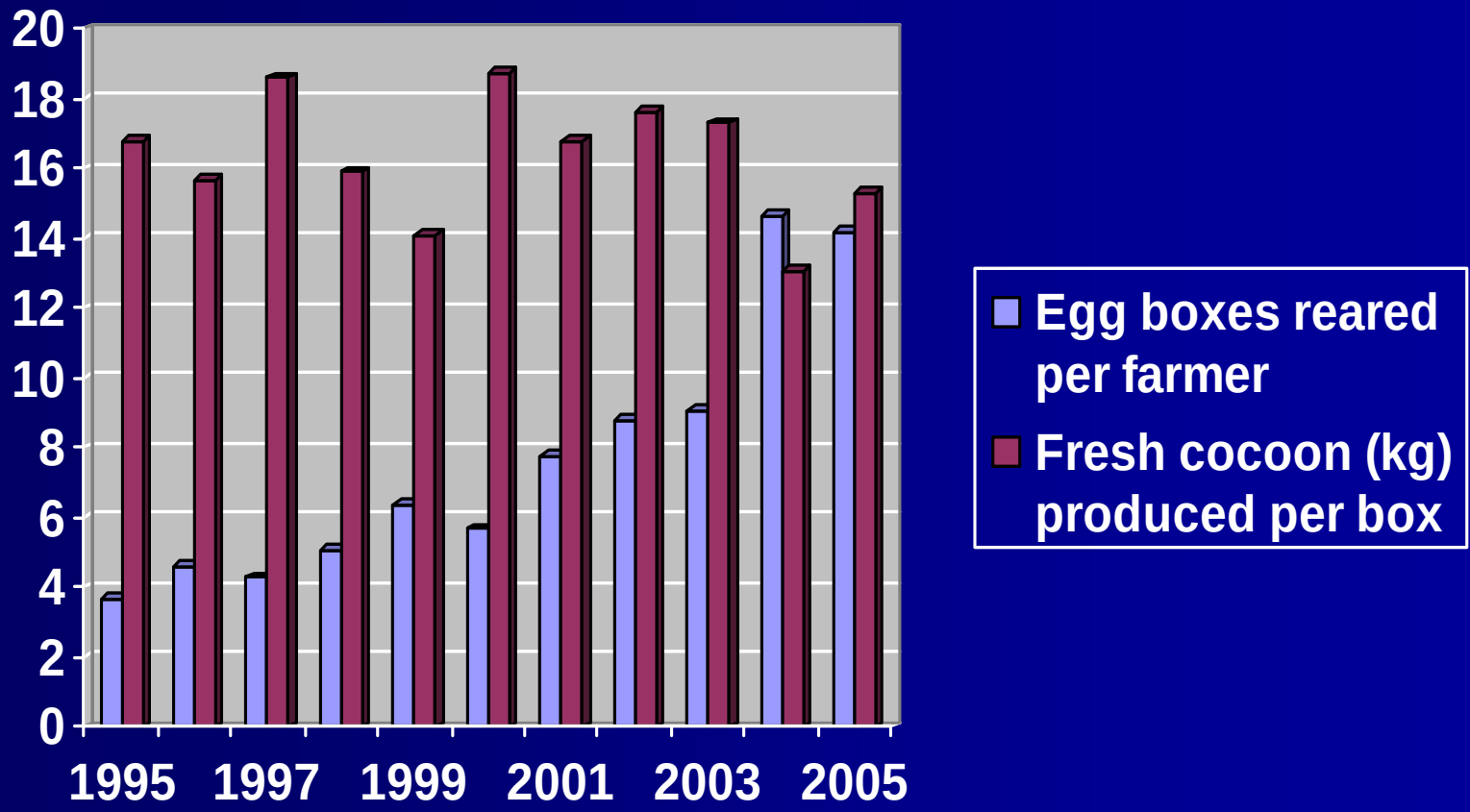
Number of silkworm farmers for the period 1995 – 2005



Fresh cocoon production in combination to farmers involved and silkworm egg boxes reared for the period 1995-2005

Year	Number of silkworm rearing farmers	Total silkworm egg boxes reared	Silkworm egg boxes reared per farmer	Total fresh cocoon produced tons	Fresh cocoon per silkworm egg box kg
1995	240	890	3.70	15	16.8
1996	206	950	4.61	15	15.7
1997	238	1.020	4.28	19	18.6
1998	172	880	5.11	14	15.9
1999	188	1.200	6.38	17	14.1
2000	290	1.650	5.68	31	18.7
2001	275	2.140	7.78	36	16.8
2002	317	2.778	8.76	49	17.6
2003	324	2.943	9.08	51	17.3
2004	311	4.549	14.63	60	13.1
2005	277	3.920	14.15	69	15.3

Fresh cocoon produced per box in comparison to number of boxes reared per farmer



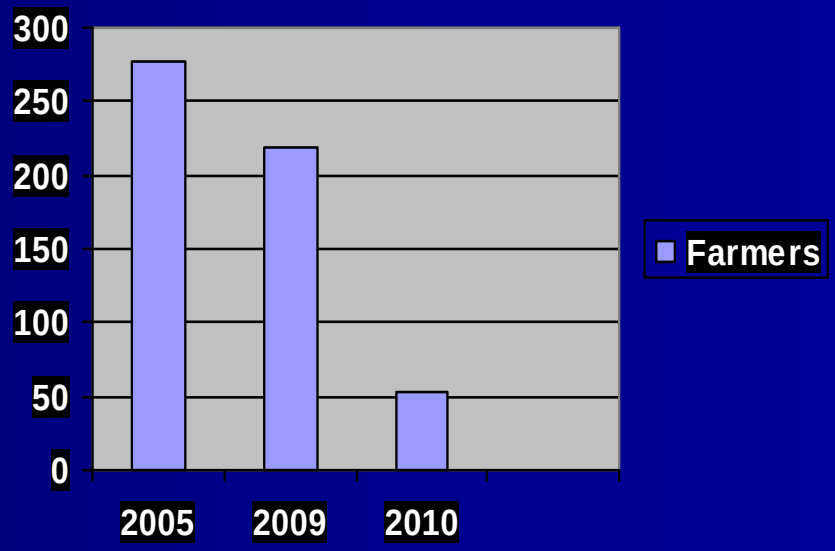
Changes in the of the Ministry of Agriculture policy in relation to the silkworm egg provision.

- In the last two years the whole Greek sericultural situation faced a sudden change, derived from very simple changes in the policy of the Ministry of Agriculture in relation to the silkworm egg provision.
- Up to year 2009 the Ministry of Agriculture was holding centrally the provision of the silkworm eggs to the involved in sericulture farmers, purchasing the necessary amount through an international tender and distributing them, under a very low – almost symbolic price, to the farmers.
- It has to be emphasized in this point that there does not exist local silkworm egg production in Greece and the whole country needs are covered by imports.

In 2009 it was announced that the farmers had to cover their silkworm egg need by themselves, covering all the costs.

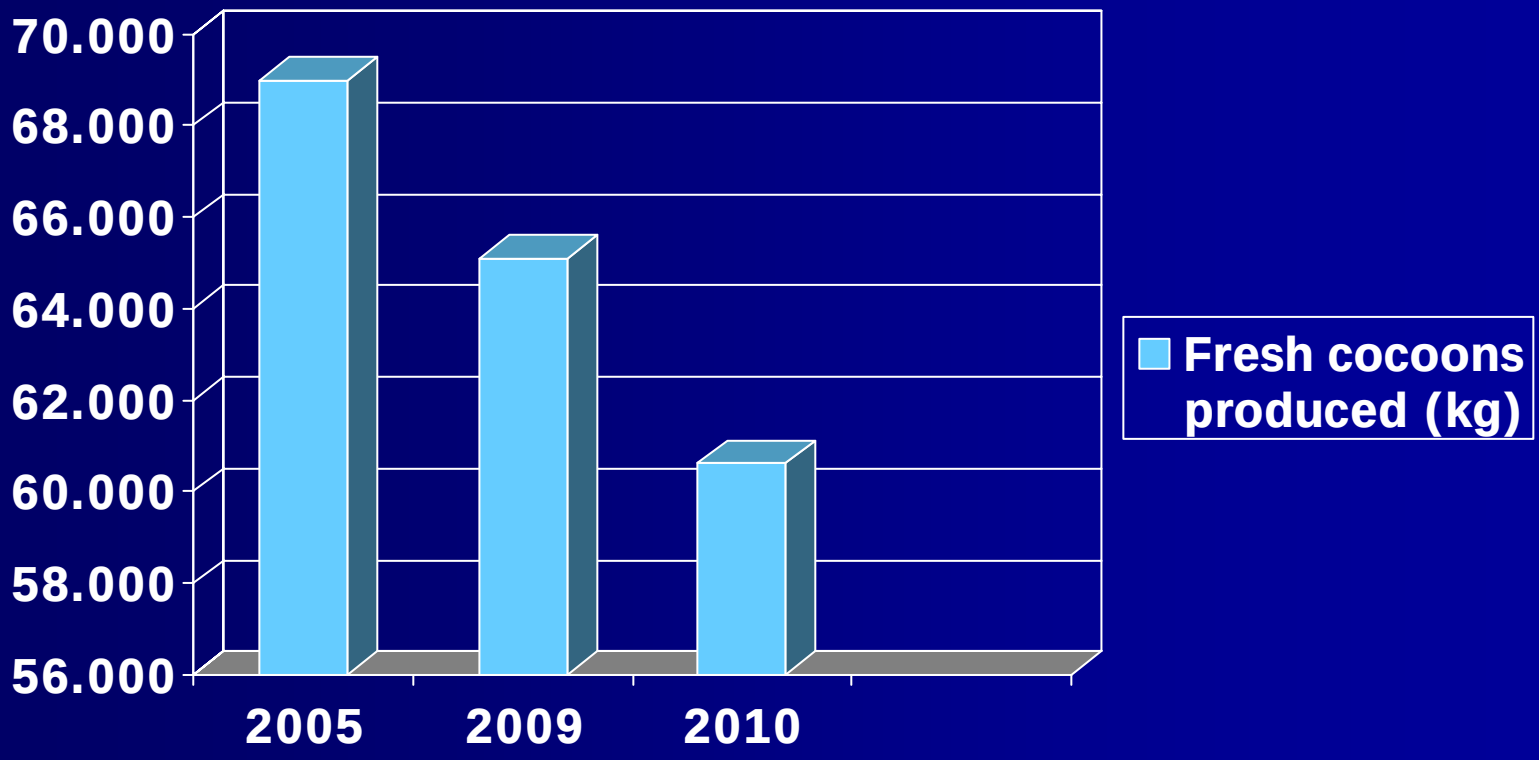
- **This decision directed the Greek sericulture's structure, including the complete disappearance of the small scale silkworm farmers**

- **Silkworm farmer numbers between reference year 2005 and year 2009-2010**

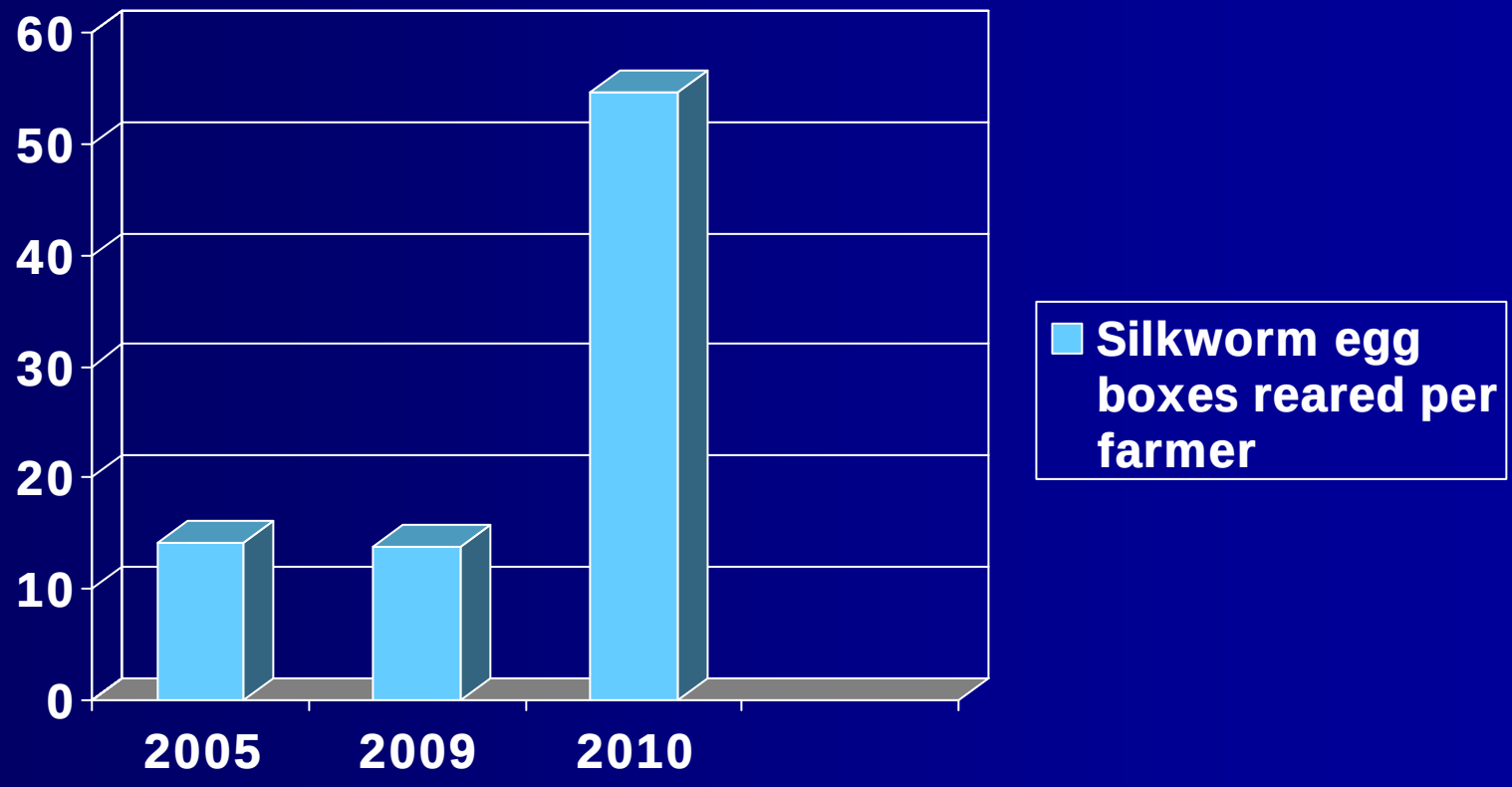


Area of the country	Number of farmers involved in sericulture		Total Number of silkworm egg boxes reared		Mean Number of silkworm egg boxes reared per farmer		Total amount of fresh cocoons produced (kgs)		Mean amount of fresh cocoons produced per box of eggs (kgs)	
	Year 2009	Year 2010	Year 2009	Year 2010	Year 2009	Year 2010	Year 2009	Year 2010	Year 2009	Year 2010
Creta island (Chania)	34	0	54	0	1.58	0	1.108	0	20.51	0
North Greece (Orestiada)	8	10	549	527	68.62	52.7	10.980	13.200	20.0	25.04
North Greece (Evros)	33	28	902	897	27.33	32.03	18.550	18.000	20.56	20.06
North Greece (Kavala)	3	3	300	345	100.0	115.09	6.000	6.600	20.0	19.13
North Greece (Serres)	13	12	929	1130	71.46	94.16	23.089	22.828	24.85	20.20
Central Greece (Evia)	1	0	20	0	20.0	0	415	0	20.75	0
Greek islands (Lesvos)	126	0	248	0	2.96	0	4.960	0	20.0	0
Totals	218	53	3.002	2.899	13.77	54.69	65.102	60.628	21.68	20.91

Total amount of fresh cocoons produced between reference year 2005 and year 2009-2010



Silkworm egg boxes reared per farmer between reference year 2005 and year 2009-2010



From the above data it comes out clearly that a balance was maintained through the well organized, modern and with technology investment, few silkworm farmers.

Major constraints for sericulture revival and development.

- Lack of sufficient governmental technical support given by specialized personnel and Institutes
- Lack of sufficient information to the farmer level concerning the benefits of sericulture
- Slow application of adapted modern technology for silkworm rearing and breeding
- Lack of sufficient well established and organized mulberry fields
- Absence of well organized state, cooperative or private mechanisms for the absorption and processing of the produced cocoons
- Absence of sufficient own mulberry and silkworm genetic resources
- Absence of relevant technologies on effective preventive and successful control of various infectious diseases.

Of course the lack of reeling facilities is maybe the biggest disadvantage for the further development of the Greek sericulture.

Strategy for the Greek sericulture revival and development in the future.

- Development of governmental technical support mechanisms given by specialized personnel and Institutes
- Support to specialized Institutes in order to develop own silkworm and mulberry genetic resources
- Provision of sufficient information upon modern technology for silkworm rearing
- Promotion of the further establishment of organized mulberry fields
- Support of cooperative or private mechanisms for the absorption and processing of the produced cocoons
- Activation of the existing reeling facilities
- Development of mechanisms for the effective preventive and successful control of various infectious diseases.
- Development of a detailed and continuously informed data base – most possibly based upon the BACSA efforts – in order to provide continuous and relevant information to people from industry and trait.
- Active support to all BACSA activities

A short look to our role.

Individual cages for silkworm breeding purposes.

Some of our pure lines

Thank you very much for your attention.