

Current situation in Lithuanian Sea Buckthorn cultivation: problems and trends



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Lithuania

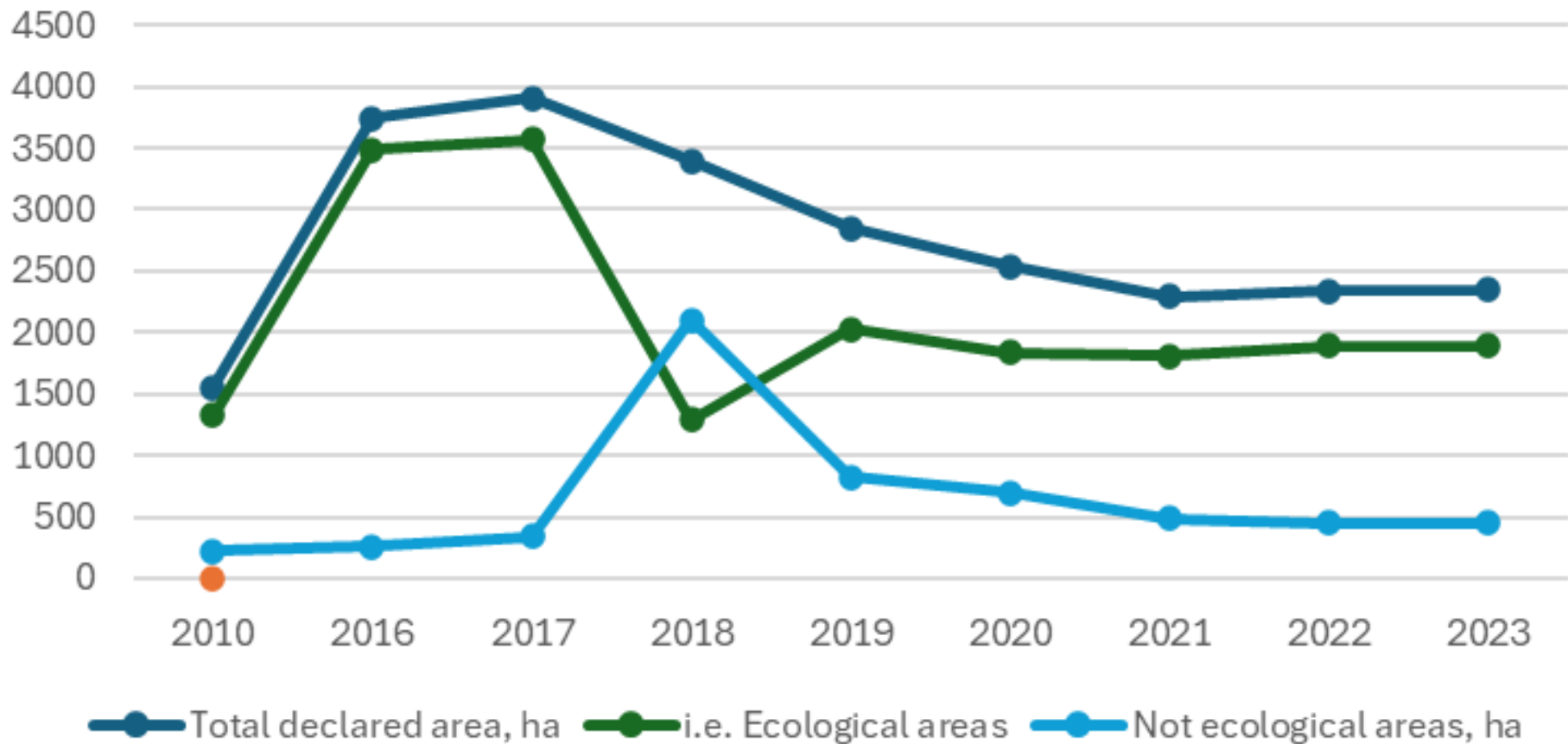
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Sea buckthorn in Lithuania

- Sea buckthorn has been grown in Lithuania since 1965.
- Cultivated by plantation method since 2005-2006.
- Main varieties:
 - Maria (since 2010) – 10-15 percent.
 - Botanicheskaya - 20-25 percent.
 - Botanicheskaya Lyubitelskaya - 20 percent,
 - Trofimovskaya - 15-25 percent.
 - Other varieties - 20-30 percent.



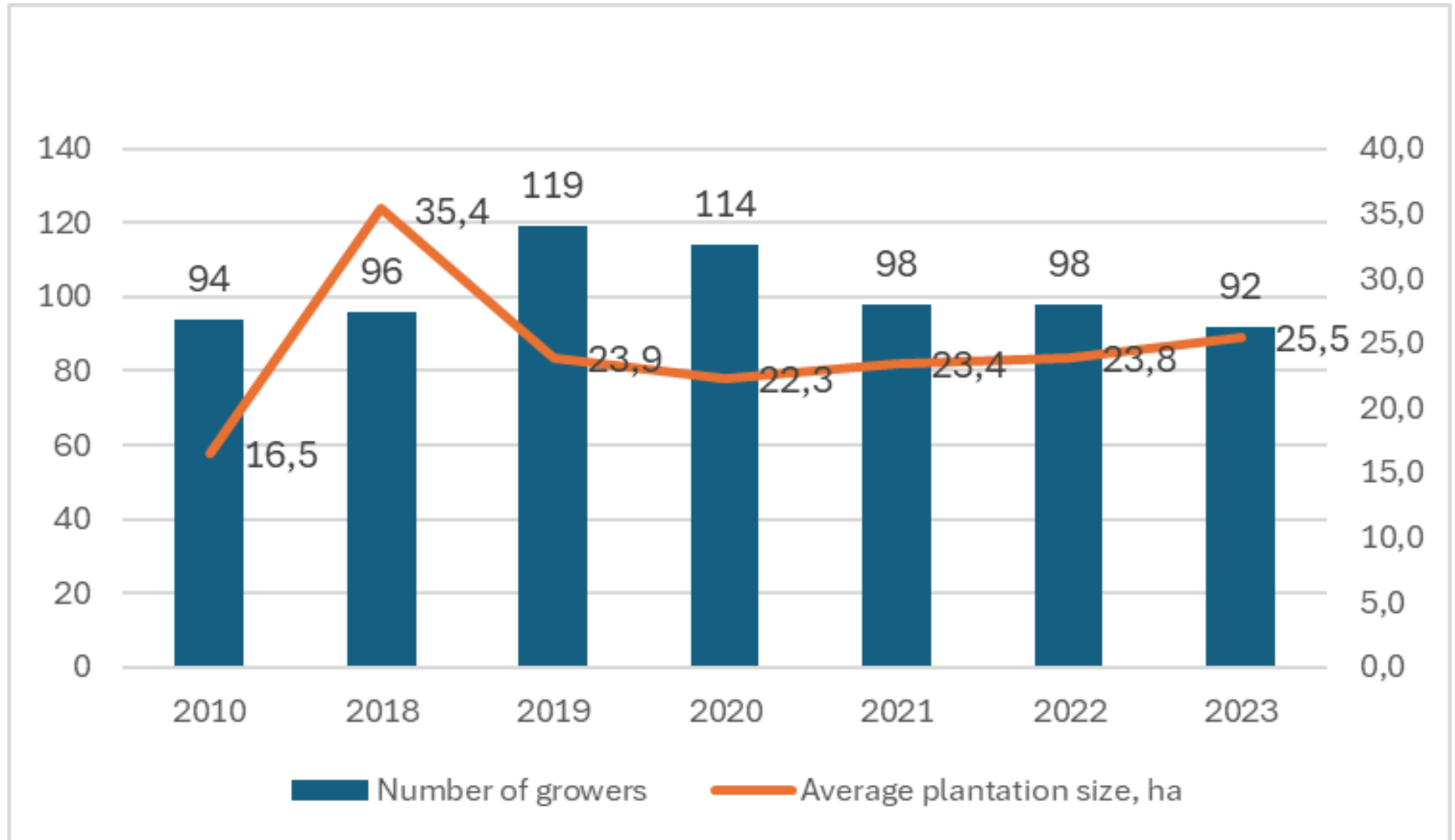
Sea Buckthorn cultivation trends in Lithuania



Reasons for change

1. The growth of the area of sea buckthorn up to 3400 ha in 2018 was balanced by a relatively high income and a relatively low requirement for plant density, planted plant varieties and yield
2. From 2019 the requirements for growers have been greatly strengthened:
 1. the area maintenance control has been strengthened,
 2. the minimum required yield is determined,
 3. not less than 1000 of seedlings per ha
3. In 2023, an area of 2300 ha was established. A trend is being observed that an increase of 15-20 ha is expected in the next year

Number of growers and average plantation size, ha



Problems:

- 1. Most of the plantations **are planted with seedlings of different varieties** (a mixture of varieties), which causes many problems for the current plantation owners due to the different ripening times of the berries, the different characteristics of the berries obtained from different fields, etc.
- 2. There is no reliable way to protect yourself from damage caused by **sea buckthorn flies**. In individual years, the damage can reach as much as 70-80 percent from the total possible yield.
- 3. **Climate changes**: long-term droughts and severe frosts during flowering have a direct impact on crops and economic viability (Plant weakness, diseases, low yield).

Problems:

- **4. Treatment and processing.** In Lithuania, there are only 3 processors of industrial-level of sea buckthorn berries, which have their own freezers, berry cleaning and processing equipment.

5. Most of the sea buckthorn berries with branches are bought directly from the field by **middlemen-traders** who have freezing skills. As a rule, they pay minimum prices to growers.
- **6. Instability in the berry buying market and prices.**

There is a very slight difference in the price of berries grown in organic orchards and traditional orchards, although it is much more difficult to get a good harvest in organic orchards (the difference is only 10-15 cents).

Positive Trends

- Steady growth in demand for sea buckthorn berries (sales in the domestic market increase every year);
- Expanding recognition of sea buckthorn as a product that is especially beneficial to human health;
- Farmers' perception of sea buckthorn as a source of additional income in the farm;
- Establishment of sea buckthorn plantations of highly productive varieties;
- Development of technologies for harvesting and processing sea buckthorn fruits.

What are we doing

- **1. Installation of an irrigation systems:** (more stable harvest, stronger plants, bigger plants, less diseases);
- **2. Renovation of old “mix varieties” plantations** by breeding seedlings of high productivity varieties. The big problem is renewal in organic farms.
- **3. Fighting with a sea buckthorn fly** (traps, selection of harvesting method, scientific research)
- **4. Marketing activities** informing consumers about the health and environmental benefits of sea buckthorn (Internet, TV, Radio, exhibitions, tastings, etc.)



Thank you
for your attention

