

Economic Indicators of Water Balance in Egyptian Agricultural External Trade

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ABSTRACT

The depletion of natural resources of developing countries in the context of international trade is one of the crucial issues encountering such countries due to their technological backwardness which force such countries to increase the rate of exploiting the natural resources with a view of scaling up its share of world trade which result in over exploitation of resources for stepping up exports . Water balance in the agricultural external trade comes down to the amount of water used to produce agricultural crops for export and import known as virtual water. Since the activities of external trade of agricultural produce represent a source of depleting the countries' water resource due to their reliance on the high water consumption crops which impact the other chances for development and food production .The research problem comes down to the exacerbated shortage of water resources required for the Egyptian agriculture due to the exasperated problem in the aftermath of constructing which entails inevitable change of the Egyptian crop pattern and the agricultural production map which will agricultural production especially the staple strategic ones for local consumption as well as the export crops that create foreign currency for encountering the high bill of Egypt's agricultural imports .The study was done to estimate the water balance in terms of the Egyptian agricultural external trade via assessing the amount virtual water for the most important export and import agricultural crops to determine the quantity of virtual water that are exported or imported, estimate its economic return to manifest the feasibility of agricultural external trade and the amount of wasted and depleted water to identify the two sides of water balance in the Egyptian agriculture foreign trade that help determine and develop the favorable Egyptian agricultural policies face up the serious shortage in water resources and the threat of the specter of water poverty. The study showed that the value of nation exports had a statistically general significant upward trend per year amounted to around 0.00003 million LE, the value of nation imports had a statistically general significant upward trend per year amounted to around 0.000012 million LE of the average study period that came to about 418706.4 million LE, the value of agricultural exports took a statistically general significant upward trend per year estimated at 0.00002 million LE of its average during the period of study which amounted to about 19331.6 million LE and the value of agricultural imports witnessed a statistically general upward per year amounted to around 0.00009 million LE from its average estimated at about 4179.22 million LE. The study indicated that the amount of rice exports had a statistically general significant downward trend per year estimated at around 0.009 study (2005 – 2007), whereas the amount of tomato exports took a statistically general significant upward trend per year estimated at around 0.10 thousand tons, orange exports had a statistically general significant upward trend per year estimated at around 0.008 thousand tons, the value of cotton exports had a statistically general significant upward trend per year estimated at around 0.005 thousand tons, the value of potato exports took a statistically general significant upward trend per year amounted to about 0.002 thousand tons, the value of onion exports witnessed a statistically general significant upward trend per year estimated at around 0.005 thousand tons, the value of tomato exports had a statistically general significant upward trend per year amounted to about 0.006 thousand tons, green beans witnessed a statistically general significant upward trend per year amounted to about 0.02 thousand tons, the value of grapes exports had a statistically general significant upward trend per year estimated at around 0.005 thousand tons, the value of strawberry exports indicated a statistically general significant upward trend per year amounted to about 0.01 thousand tons, the value of orange exports witnessed a statistically general significant upward trend per year amounted to around 0.001 thousand tons whereas the value of rice exports showed a statistically general significant upward trend per year amounted to around 0.004 thousand tons with an annual change rate of about 0.0003 % from its average amounted to about 1193.83 million LE. The study revealed that witnessed a statistically general significant upward trend per year amounted to around 0.0003 million LE, the value of corn imports showed a statistically general significant upward trend per year amounted to around 0.003 million LE, the value of dry beans imports had a statistically general significant upward trend per year estimated at about 0.002 million LE, the value of lentil imports took a statistically general significant upward trend per year amounted to around 0.01 million LE, the value of soya beans had a statistically general significant upward trend per year estimated at about 0.00 thousand tons and the value of apple imports took a statistically general significant upward trend per year amounted to around 0.002 thousand tons from its average estimated at about 1555.96 million LE. The study showed that the average quantity of virtual water that are exported via the exported quantities for export crops (cotton, rice, potato, onion, tomato, green beans, grapes, strawberry and orange) from (2014 – 2017) came to a round (208.6, 117.21, 153.32, 57.27, 15.12, 8.09, 58.69, 8.37 and 238.03) million m^3 respectively, equal to around 864.7 million m^3 exported water, the value of the economic return for the unit of the exported virtual water amounted to around (11.30, 2.20, 17.00, 34.00, 61.00, 57.00, 33.00, 117.4 and 16.13) LE / m^3 respectively, the highest return of the unit of the impliedly exported virtual water in the exported quantities of (strawberry, tomato, green beans and grapes). Economically, it is advised to expand the growing of such crops among the Egyptian crop structure for their substantial economic return in foreign currency. It was shown that the average imported virtual water via the imported quantities for the imported crops (wheat, corn, dry beans, lentil, soya beans and apple) during that period is close to (6389.10, 4348.31, 341,73, 323,31, 1955.12 and 1.73) million m^3 respectively which is close to 13356.57 million m^3 or around 13.4 billion m^3 of imported water, whereas the value of the economic return of imported virtual water unit for such crops during that period amounted to about (4.35, 4.24, 8.20, 3.33, 4.00 and 19.00) LE/ m^3 respectively, and the highest return of implied virtual water unit went for (apple, dry beans and wheat), so form the economic standpoint, it is advised that such crops be imported and the areas grown with such crops minimized in the Egyptian crop structure if possible. The study indicated that water balance for export and import crops from (2014 – 2017) was in favor of the Egyptian agricultural external trade via realizing surplus in the imported virtual water whereas there was a deficit in the agricultural trade balance not in favor of the Egyptian agricultural external trade. RecommendationsThe necessity to expand the areas grown with (strawberry, tomato, green beans and grapes) in the Egyptian crop structure if possible for their substantial economic returns in foreign currency besides the high economic return for the exported water. It is advisable to import apple, dry beans and wheat and minimize the areas grown with such crops in the Egyptian crop structure if possible due to the low economic return value from the import water unit.