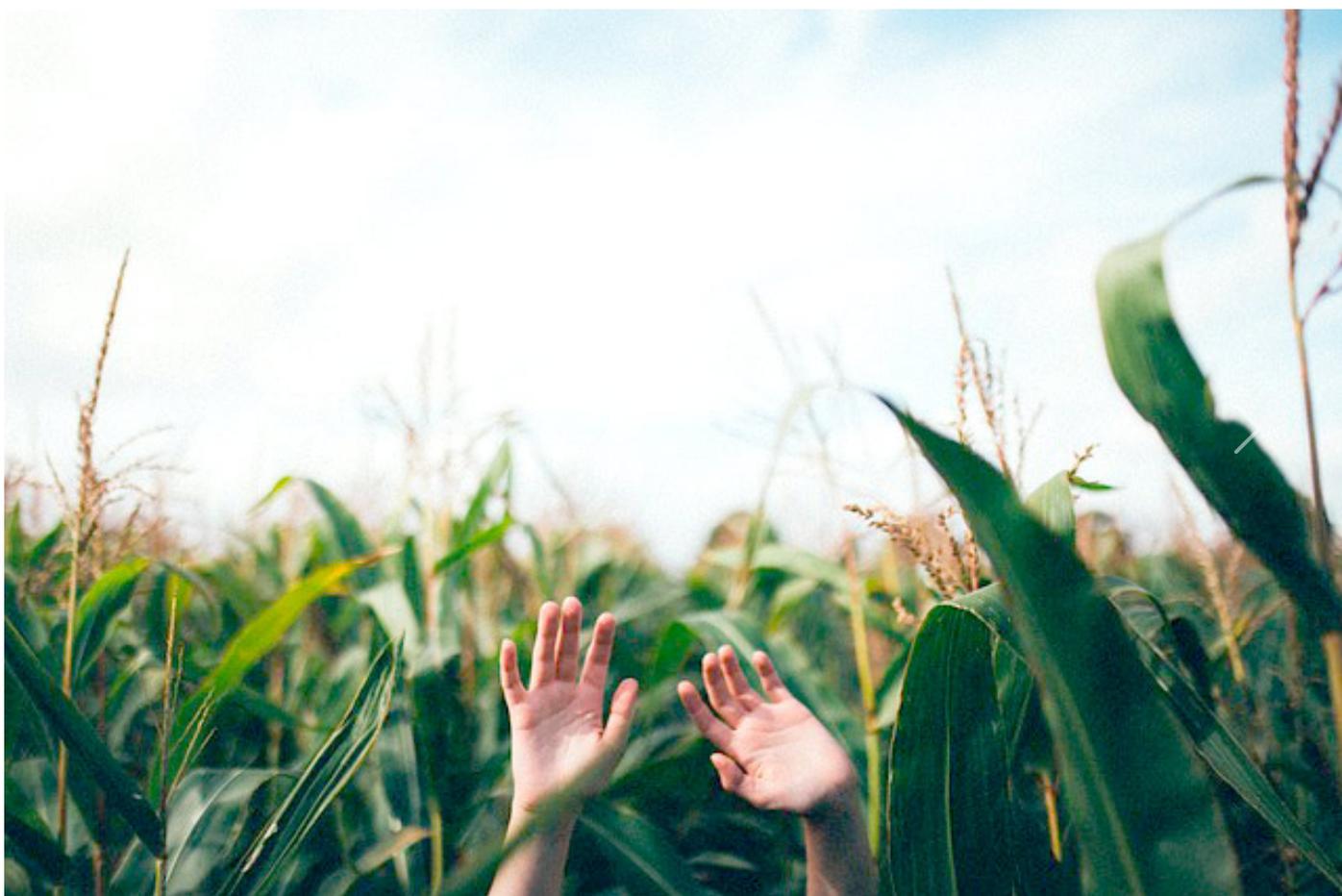


# Продължителната суша през юли спира развитието на царевичката, слънчогледа, трайните насаждения и зеленчуковите култури

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The extremely high temperatures in July, which in some places exceeded 40–41°C (Svishtov, Ruse, Sandanski, Stara Zagora, Elhovo), together with the moisture deficit, have cast doubt on the survival of part of the spring crops grown under rainfed conditions. The adverse agrometeorological conditions during the second ten-day period of July caused wilting and drying of the leaves in the lower layers of maize and sunflower plants (agricultural station Silistra), leaf scorch and premature leaf fall in some perennial crops, and sterility in vegetable crops from late production.

The situation is particularly critical for maize at the moment, because under these soil and atmospheric drought conditions, the probability of lack of pollination and grain set in medium-late and late hybrids is high. At the Maize Research Institute in Kneja, there are concerns that last year's scenario may be repeated, when, again due to the prolonged drought, the harvest was compromised.

It is becoming increasingly imperative for farmers to take into account the climatic conditions in the country and to grow maize under irrigated conditions. Another successful strategy would be to rely on early and medium-early hybrids, which shift tasseling and silking to lower temperatures, in the earlier months, advise the experts from Kneja.

Despite the severe climatic conditions, according to Assoc. Prof. Natalia Petrovska, Director of the Maize Research Institute – Kneja, the Bulgarian breeding material is performing well.

In sunflower, seed filling will take place, but the situation for this crop does not look good either. The leaves are scorching, and in a large part of the sown sunflower areas the heads will remain empty. The yield is expected to be low.

At the beginning of the third ten-day period, the milk stage of maturity will be observed in the earlier maize hybrids, while in the medium-late and late hybrids tassel flowering, silking and grain formation will be in progress – stages that are critical in terms of soil moisture.

After the dry and hot weather during the third ten-day period of July, a change in agrometeorological conditions is expected. The forecast rainfall at the end of the second and the beginning of the third ten-day period will be of extremely important significance for the recovery of agricultural crops that have fallen into heat stress. Against the background of the deepening drought in many places in the field regions, this rainfall will be insufficient to overcome the soil moisture deficit in the 50 and 100 cm layers, especially in the eastern regions. In the eastern regions, lower rainfall amounts are expected, which will require the application of an appropriate irrigation regime for the later maize hybrids, fruit trees and vines that are in the process of fruit enlargement.

*Source: NIMH and Maize Research Institute – Kneja*