The Polish Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture enchanted by the flavour of Polish food

The Polish Presidency in the EU Council

Calendar of meetings
Priorities of the Polish Presidency
Direct payments under the CAP 2020
TRENDS AND FORECASTS

14 Export of Polish agricultural and food products in 2004-2010

In the first years of Poland’s membership in the European Union (after 2004), the turnover of Polish foreign trade in food and agricultural products was increasing very fast. Poland has transformed from a net importer of agricultural and food products into their important net exporter.

Most of the food is exported from Poland to the EU countries. Increase of the share of these countries from 72.0% in 2004 to 78.9% in 2010 has been observed. The second important recipient of Polish agricultural and food products is the Commonwealth of Independent States.

18 The Polish agricultural sector as compared to the UE

In terms of arable land, Poland is the fifth in Europe, after France, Spain, the United Kingdom and Germany. Poland is an important producer of agricultural, garden and animal origin products in the world and in Europe, and that it enjoys favourable natural conditions for agricultural production, which is reflected in production of high quality safe food.

In terms of agricultural production Polish crops are generally lower than those in the EU-15, still the low use of chemical substances in agriculture and a high quality of offered raw materials result in a greater demand for Polish agricultural products.

Poland is the largest producer of apples, cherries, cranberries and raspberries in the EU. We are ranked second in the Community in production of strawberries, northern highbush blueberry and cabbage. Poland is also an important country when it comes to the EU crops of onions and carrots.

GOVERNMENT

21 Implementation of the EU programmes

Since the beginning of ARMA’s activities until 31 May 2011, PLN 129.5 billion were paid to aid beneficiaries, of which PLN 116.6 (90%) during the period of Poland’s membership in the EU. Under the EU programmes, ARMA has paid PLN 111.9 billion.

In the years 2004-2011, ARMA paid to beneficiaries PLN 111.1 billion under the funds co-financed from the EU, of which the largest amount falls on 2010 (PLN 19.8 billion).

Thanks to the funds from the EU programmes, the Polish agri-food sector got a chance to implement the investments needed for its development and enhancement of its competitiveness.

The EU funds also allowed provisionally admitted fruit and vegetable producer groups to make costly investments approved in the phased recognition plan.
### PROMOTION OF POLISH FOOD

**26 Polish strawberry flavored Presidency**

Polish Presidency in the European Union Council was the perfect moment to undertake another activities promoting Polish food. On 6 July 2011, in the seat of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, a presentation and tasting of Polish Kashubian strawberries (kaszëbskô malëna) was organized.

**27 Polish cuisine Days in Tallinn**

**28 Discover Great Food on SIAL Canada fair**

**29 International Fair in Madrid**

### REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**30 Pearls of the Polish soil conquer Europe**

**33 Tiger from Pińczów**

**36 Regional product: truskawka kaszubska/kaszëbskô malëna**

“Truskawka kaszubska” or “kaszëbskô malëna” is one of 14 Polish products registered by the European Commission under the Protected Geographical Indication category and thus participating in the Community high quality food scheme.

### UNFORGETTABLE HOLIDAYS

**38 Hospitable lands – Pomorze, Mazury and Warmia**

Tourists who wish to visit those regions may spend their time bathing in the sea and walking along beautiful beaches with fine white sand, or they can set off by bike to explore the forests abundant with undergrowth (mushrooms, blackberries, blueberries and cranberries). Numerous lakes are a paradise for those keen on sailing and fishing. Pomerania, Warmia and Masuria have also numerous tangible culture monuments located on those areas.

### PRODUCERS-EXPORTERS

**43 “Discover Great Food” Picnic**

Polish, delicious, aromatic and healthy products were presented on Saturday, 18 June 2011 in the gardens of the Warsaw University of Life Sciences in Warsaw during the “Discover Great Food” Picnic organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. This year, the honorary guest of the event was Prime Minister Donald Tusk, who visited the stands, tasted products presented there and also talked to exhibitors and journalists.

### FOOD SAFETY

**46 The market of regional products in Poland**

With 28 products included in the EU system of protected designations of origin (PDO), protected geographical indications (PGI), traditional specialities guaranteed (TSG), Poland occupies the 9th place among all the EU states in terms of the number of registered products’ names. The registration of the first Polish name - bryndza podhalańska as PDO - took place in 2007. In 2008-2009, 14 names were registered and in 2010 - 8 names. In 2011, 5 Polish products’ names were registered.

**50 Control in the market of fresh fruit and vegetables**

### TRADITIONAL POLISH CUISINE

**52 Strawberries on Polish table**

Currently, Poland is the second, after China, supplier of strawberries in the global market and belongs to the largest global producers of this fruit. Strawberries appeared in Poland in the 18th century and started enjoying greater popularity in the 1st half of the 20th century.

**54 Flavours of Poland**

Polish cuisine is extraordinarily rich, interesting and full of delicious flavours. It is an additional attraction for tourists to discover them while visiting the particular parts of Poland. So, we invite you to a culinary journey around our country!

We will start with the regions located in the north of Poland: Pomorze (Pomerania – western and eastern part) and Warmia and Mazury (Masuria).

**59 Statistics**
Dear Minister, this year, Poland, from July to December, is taking the EU Presidency, is this challenge difficult for you with respect to the issues of agriculture?

For more than seven years, we have been the member of the European Union, so we have got to know the mechanisms operating within the Community. Of course, holding the Presidency is a new challenge in many aspects. First of all, the Presidency must ensure the continuity of the current work in the Council, which is also a great logistic challenge. In my opinion, we are well prepared. We have clear priorities.

Since the first days of my tenure as a minister of agriculture I have considered activity in European forums as one of my priorities. I take part in almost every meeting of the EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council and participate in many bi- and multilateral discussions with my counterparts, both at home and abroad. Therefore, I do not regard the time of the Presidency as a difficult challenge, even if it is though without any doubts, but I perceive Presidency as the time of greater responsibility.

Let us take, for example, E.coli bacteria. A simply irresponsible behavior of German inspection services followed by thoughtless statements of certain politicians induced lack of trust to some vegetables and caused panic on the market. The situation led to imposing an embargo by the Russian Federation and caused a significant loss to all vegetable growers throughout the European Union. Preliminary estimates of losses incurred by Polish farmers account for more than PLN 160 million. In the past, we dealt with the so-called dioxin affair. We must all be aware that challenges facing agriculture in Europe have increased.

The EU politicians perceive you as a strong and assertive partner, does it help you in the negotiations you conduct?

The Common Agricultural Policy, as every policy in general, needs compromises. Sometimes I have an impression that some people tend to forget about it. The changes in the CAP after 2013 require an approval of 27 countries. For obvious reasons, it is not easy to reach a full agreement but we cannot say it is impossible.

Am I strong and assertive? Yes, I use strong and substantive arguments. First of all, I listen to and I analyze proposals for solutions that appear in the debate. At the same time I persuaded that the new Common Agricultural Policy shall, in fact, determine a way of development of European agriculture for the next ten years, for the generation of young farmers. Today, there exist 27 different versions of the CAP. That is why I strive for developing a comprehensive approach towards European agriculture. The EU agricultural policy must be given a truly Community nature.

After nearly four years of acting as the minister, participating in numerous meetings and talks, I observe a change in the approach of many politicians. There are no opinions against giving up the historical payment entitlements any longer. It is a significant change in comparison to the moment when I acceded to the office. However, this process is still interpreted in many different ways.

I am convinced that substantive talks and arguments, seeking different solutions is the best way to find good partners and allies. The ex-
change of views and substantive discussions bring our positions closer and allow us to better understand each other. Today, Polish views are supported not only by the countries which acceded to the European Union together with us but also by some of those that have been Members of the EU for a long time.

What are the Polish priorities in the field of agriculture and rural areas?

The lessons learned from the first seven years of the functioning within the European Union has given us a good experience to build position on the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013. Poland has a clear vision of the changes in the mechanisms of the EU agricultural policy. During our Presidency we want to focus on three priorities for agriculture: reform of direct payments system under the CAP, rural development policy after 2013 and promoting biomass and renewable resources as an element of improving the energy security and economic development of the EU.

The reform of the Common Agricultural Policy should be deep and real. The new CAP must correspond to the modern challenges. This means on one hand, ensuring the food security, on the other hand – responding to the requirements related to the environmental protection, ecology and climate change. Increasing burdens related to environmental protection, ecology and animal welfare raise the costs of production. At the same time, some existing CAP mechanisms distort the competition conditions. How can we speak of the fair competition in a situation where some states allocate more than 80 per cent of funds for direct support and the other – 20 per cent? Therefore, unification and simplification of the rules is necessary. The current method of distributing direct payments has to be replaced by new fair and equal rules for all. The new criteria should take into account such issues as the area of agricultural land, the implementation of the requirements with respect to the environmental protection, employment and support for less-favored areas.

We also postulate the equal distribution of funds between the 1st and 2nd pillar, in other words, allocation of 50 per cent of funds for direct support and 50 per cent of funds for rural development. Our experiences show clearly that system with roughly equal distribution of funds between the two pillars, which we adopted in Poland under the CAP, works well. This is where the strength of our position regarding the reform of this oldest EU policy comes from. The new objectives and criteria for financial allocation has to be linked to the tasks faced by the CAP. The first pillar should be fully financed from the EU sources. Under the second pillar, domestic support in favour of the beneficiary’s own contribution should be limited. Only clear division of functions and shifting the focus towards pro-growth activities will ensure development of European agriculture. The CAP shall stop supporting stagnation and start promoting innovation and improving the competitiveness.

Will the changes in the CAP after 2013 be agreed upon during the Polish Presidency?

During the Polish Presidency, at the end of October, the legislative proposals of the European Commission are to be presented. We regret that the Commission cannot present it earlier, as it was planned. However, I believe we shall manage to establish the lines of discussion on this issue by the end of our Presidency.

We also have to take into account the risks arising from the European Parliament position on the CAP towards 2020. In my opinion, the content of resolution adopted in June by the European Parliament (so called ‘Dess report’) is incompatible with the interests of Polish agriculture as it does not reform the Common Agricultural Policy to the extent corresponding to the current challenges. Generally, the resolution rather maintains the status quo. First of all, it rejects the concept of flat rate which I believe would be the best in implementation of the new objectives of the CAP, as well as would ensure the necessary alignment of support levels between the Member States. According to the report, distribution of the CAP funds, both among the Member States and among farmers, would take place according to the objective criteria, but in accordance with the so-called „pragmatic approach”. This means that abandoning the adverse and inequality-friendly system of direct payments, based on outdated historical criteria,
The new criteria should take into account such issues as the area of agricultural land, the implementation of the requirements with respect to the environmental protection, employment and support for less-favored areas.

Will the decisions on the future of the Common Fisheries Policy be made at this time?

During our Presidency, the finalization of the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is to take place. We will be striving for developing the potentially most effective mechanisms because they will determine the rules of the functioning of the fisheries sector in the EU after 2012. This will also mean definition of the scope of financial support for the industry.

The discussion has been conducted since 2008. We wait for the Commission projects that will introduce the reform, which I think, should be profound. The EU needs sustainable fisheries at the MSY (maximum sustainable yield) level which means fishing at the maximum high level, bringing high profits to fishermen, while maintaining the self-renewability of resources, i.e. without disturbing the balance between man and nature.

The reform of the Common Fisheries Policy will be strictly bound to the form and scope of the future fisheries fund in the new financial perspective after 2013. It is important for the Polish Presidency to maintain the principle of convergence in granting aid at least at the existing level.

The changes will also cover the reform of the common organization of the fisheries products markets. One of the important issues will be putting a greater emphasis on strengthening the role of aquaculture in the European market. Increasing the fishermen’s responsibility for management of resources will enable adjusting production to demand as well as strengthening their position in the market.

Which event of this period will be most important, in your opinion?

What comes to the fore is, of course, an informal meeting of the EU Ministers for Agriculture and Fisheries which will be held in September in Wrocław. However, we cannot forget about a series of other meetings chaired by the Presidency.

And how will the ministry of agriculture promote Polish food during the Presidency?

Promotion of Polish food is one of the priorities of the ministry for this year. We started with the „Green Week” in Berlin. We were also in Canada, the United Arab Emirates, China. Presently, we conduct a number of initiatives promoting Polish food. The Polish Presidency will participate in events in Paris and Madrid. On July 6, we promoted truskawka kaszubska in Strasbourg. In September, the EU Ministers of Agriculture participating in the Wrocław meeting will visit the Polagra Food Fair in Poznań, where they will have an excellent opportunity to become familiar with Polish traditional and regional products. They will also visit the best Polish farm animals.

We also prepared small ‘tasty’ gifts for the delegations visiting Poland - traditional and regional products, for example, honeys or jams.

Thank you for the interview.
Ewa Woicka-Bekas
“Polish Food” Editor-in-Chief
Calendar of meetings planned by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development during the Polish Presidency in the Council of the European Union
1 July–31 December 2011

**JULY**
16 Conference: “Energy use of biomass from agriculture as an important element of the Common Agricultural Policy”, Sopot
18 Agriculture and Fisheries Council (AGRIFISH), Brussels
24–26 Meeting of Directors (-General) for Fisheries, Sopot

**SEPTEMBER**
5 Seminar: “Functioning of institutions managing public agricultural lands in the EU Member States”, Warsaw
8–10 Meeting of EU Member States Fisheries Attaché, Gdańsk
11–13 Informal Agriculture and Fisheries Council (AGRIFISH), Wrocław
11–13 Special Committee on Agriculture (SCA), Wrocław
17–24 Annual Scientific Conference of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES ASC), Gdańsk
19–20 Agriculture and Fisheries Council (AGRIFISH), Brussels
26–29 Extraordinary meeting of EU Chief Veterinary Officers, Kraków

**OCTOBER**
11 Conference: “Legal protection of plant varieties in the EU in the 21st century”, Brussels
19–20 European Congress of Rural Communes, Warsaw
20–21 Agriculture and Fisheries Council (AGRIFISH), Luxembourg
26–28 Ministerial conference: “Bringing the regulations of the countries included in the Eastern Partnership initiative closer to the EU law in the framework of veterinary, phytosanitary and the food quality and safety issues”, Kraków
26–28 Conference: “Water resources management in agriculture”, Warsaw, Falenty

**NOVEMBER**
14–15 Agriculture and Fisheries Council (AGRIFISH), Brussels

**DECEMBER**
15–16 Agriculture and Fisheries Council (AGRIFISH), Brussels
Reforms for meeting common challenges

Priorities of the Polish Presidency in the Council of the European Union as regards agriculture and rural development

- Reform of the direct payment system within the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013
- Complex and complementary rural areas development policy after 2013
- Biomass and renewable resources as an element of improving the energy security and EU economic development
- Reform of the Common Fisheries Policy after 2012

Reform of direct payment system

Reform of direct payment system is one of the main sectoral priorities of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development during the Polish Presidency in the EU Council. It is related to the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy post-2013, which will enter a decisive phase in the second half of 2011. The ongoing debate represents an unique opportunity to align future policy instruments with its new objectives. Poland as the Presidency, will strive for creating a basis for an agreement between Member States on a new system of direct support.

The CAP was originally created under different circumstances and its instruments, including direct support system must undergo further evolution to adapt to future challenges. Support based on the level of production in the past cannot be continued, because it does not reflect the objectives set for the reformed CAP. Thus, the current method of distributing direct payments, which is derived from historical levels of agricultural production, needs to be replaced by new objective criteria. At the same time, the necessity to ensure appropriate resources for direct payments in the new financial perspective is indicated.

In October 2011, the European Commission will submit to the EU Council and the European Parliament a legislative proposal regarding new direct payment system. The Polish Presidency will start work on this proposal to enable successive Trio countries to work out a common position of Member States and to conduct effective negotiations between the Council and the European Parliament.

Rural Development Policy after 2013

The ongoing debate on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy has shown that the justification for the rural development policy increases. The role of the 2nd pillar of the CAP in the process of structural transformation and modernization of the rural areas as well as in agriculture, including its impact on the acceleration of the catching-up process, particularly important
for new Member States, is to be emphasized. Maintaining the significant function of the rural development policy after 2013 should be favoured. The rural development instruments are more and more important for the performance of tasks connected with new challenges (such as climate change mitigation, use of renewable energy, water management, maintaining biodiversity or supporting innovations) which the Community has to face, and which require the involvement of European agriculture. The main objective of the Polish Presidency is to strengthen the role of the rural development policy with the consideration of the cohesion policy instruments. The Polish Presidency will start work on new legislative proposal on the support for rural areas that is expected in October 2011.

**Biomass, renewable resources**

The EU obligations concerning mitigation of the effects of climate change presume a dynamic growth of the renewable energy share in the energetic balance. The EU climate and energy package assumes a limitation of the greenhouse gases emission and an increase in the energetic effectiveness, renewable energy share in the overall energy consumption, as well as the share of biofuels in the transport fuels market. Implementation of such ambitious goals requires from Member States to develop different renewable energy resources, which is related to all the EU policies, including the environmental, energy, agricultural, trade and financial ones.

According to Polish Presidency, it is important to promote activities aimed at increasing the energy production mainly from the by-products and residues produced in agriculture when producing food. Such trend of the renewable energy development does not pose a threat to the food security and, simultaneously, contributes to the implementation of all objectives of the EU climate and energy package, including the environmental, economic and social ones. Additionally, it creates possibilities of improving the competitiveness of EU agriculture through the utilization of raw materials which are not present in the traditional trade, such as food products, but these are not a source of income.

During the Presidency, in the course of the discussion on the new financial perspective, Poland will stress the necessity to strengthen the role of the CAP as regards the implementation of objectives resulting from the adopted climate and energy package, concerning in particular support for renewable energy sources investments in rural areas and simplification of the rules of allocating grants for such investments.

**Reform of the Common Fisheries Policy**

Since 2008 discussion concerning the evaluation of the applicable principles of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the reform aimed at establishing the rules of functioning of the EU fisheries sector after 2012 has been conducted at the EU forum. Polish Presidency will strive for developing possibly most effective mechanisms of the CFP which will establish functioning principles of the EU fisheries sector after 2012 and, simultaneously, will be reflected in the financial support for it.

On 13 July 2011, the European Commission presented the first proposal of the reform package – proposal of a new basic regulation as regards new frames and the most important principles of the CFP.

The Presidency will aim at maintaining the principle of relative stability in the current form.
It is the fundamental principle of the CFP functioning since its establishment in 1983. It relates to the division of the fishing capacities between the Member States, upon consideration of historical laws and the predetermined allocation key. There is a need to carry out a thorough reform of the Common Fisheries Policy in compliance with the realization of the obligations resulting from the Earth Summit in Johannesburg organized in 2002. The final aim is to achieve sustainable fishery at the maximum sustainable yield, meaning fishing at the highest possible level which brings profits to the fishermen upon simultaneous maintenance of the resources self-revolving, i.e. without causing the imbalance between human and nature.

Polish Presidency faces the necessity to solve the problem of excessive fishing capacity whose reduction is essential to improve the situation of the European fishery. The Presidency will also strive for the regionalization of the decision process and increase in the role of fisheries and scientific circles in decision-making process. The regionalization should provide local societies with real influence on decisions regarding them. Regional bodies associating administrations, fishermen and scientists should develop recommendations as to technical issues. The Presidency will also point out the external dimension of the CFP because managing the long distance fleet has completely different background than the management of community waters – it is subject to global competition.

The CFP reform will be closely connected with the form and scope of the future fisheries fund in the new financial perspective after 2013. During the forthcoming negotiations with the European Commission as regards future framework of support from the new fisheries fund after 2013, Polish Presidency will strive, in the first place, for:

- maintaining the strong financial instrument in favour of the fishery sector, simultaneously dividing the financial support into convergence and other regions as well as ensuring the support for the population dependant on the fishery;
- clear distinction between the sea and inland fishery, as well as between the large and small scale activities due to their different features and needs;
- development of mechanisms within the framework of the new fund, aimed at mitigating the effects of serious natural disasters regarding the sector, such as floods, storms and mitigating the impact of predators fed with fish;
- the priority will be to maintain the support for the fishery fleet modernization in a changed form and to increase the scope of support for the aquaculture in sweet water.

During the Presidency of the EU Council, the reform of the common organization of the markets of fishery and aquaculture products as an element of the CFP reform package will be discussed. One of the assumptions is the withdrawal from the direct support for the price interventionism and emphasizing the improvement of producers’ organization activities. An increase in the responsibility of fishermen for managing the resources will enable the production to be adjusted to the demand, as well as will serve the strengthening of their position on the market.

The future CFP should support the initiatives of producers towards the certification and marking of the fishery products coming from fishing carried out sustainably. Such activities will contribute to an increase of traceability in raw materials and their transparency in the distribution chain.

Anna Pieniążek
President Spokesperson for the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
International high level conference

Direct payments under the CAP 2020

On the 16th June 2011, an international high level conference on Direct payments under the CAP 2020 took place in Warsaw. The meeting was organized by the Polish Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Representatives of the EU Member States, the European Parliament, the European Commission as well as the Polish MEPs, government officials, experts from scientific communities and agricultural associations came together to discuss the future shape of direct payments after 2013 under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Discussions were based on the Commission Communication „CAP towards 2020: Meeting the food, natural resources and territorial challenges of the future”, published early in November 2010.

The debate was divided into three panel sessions. The first panel session concerned so called ‘greening’ of the CAP. One of the Commission’s proposals assumes the introduction of a mandatory, „green” component of direct payments to improve the efficiency of the CAP in the implementation of environmental objectives throughout the European Union. According to the Commission proposal, the „green” component of payments would require one year activities going beyond the requirements of the cross-compliance principle – the Commission proposes activities such as: maintenance of permanent grassland, green cover, crop rotation and ecological set-aside.

During discussions, most Member States expressed the opinion that greening of direct payments after 2013 might effectively contribute to the implementation of the Community environmental objectives which at the same time would increase the public legitimacy of direct support as the remuneration for environment-related public goods delivered by EU farmers. Many countries, however, pointed out that the environmental features of direct payments have been already implemented through the standards of the Good Agricultural Practices compliant with the environmental protection under the cross-compliance requirements. Member States also stressed the significance of the second pillar of the CAP in fulfilling the environmental goals as well as the possibilities of implementing similar measures under the first pillar of the CAP.
pillar, i.e. so-called „special support”. It was underlined that the potential introduction of the pro-ecological element of direct payments should not be in contradiction with the existing agri-environmental actions and should not duplicate the existing standards of the Good Agricultural Practice and environmental condition consistent with the environmental protection.

The participants agreed that the „greening” should not complicate the EU agricultural policy or impose additional burdens on the administration or farmers. Moreover, the actions implementing greening should be flexibly adapted to the conditions of the individual countries and cannot obscure the primary purpose of agriculture which is food production.

The second panel session was dedicated to support for areas with specific natural handicaps (current LFAs). In the Communication the Commission proposes to increase the importance of support for areas with natural handicaps to agricultural production, as a mandatory element in the first pillar (direct payments) with complementary support under the second pillar (as it is now). This instrument is to ensure the sustainable land management in areas where it is necessary to maintain extensive production methods as well as to maintain the agricultural production potential in the entire EU. The discussion on the role of this instrument is also relevant as works on objective criteria of designation of areas with natural handicaps are concurrently going on in the EU.

In the course of this debate, certain Member States have opted for allocating support for areas with natural handicaps in the first pillar of the CAP, as a mandatory component of the new system of direct payments, which would be fully financed from the Community funds. This would allow to simplify, improve transparency and efficiency of the CAP.

There were also opinions that the currently applied instruments are effective thus supporting LFA areas should be maintained in the second pillar as it enables better adaptation of the support system to the specific needs of the Member States. Some participants stated that regardless of locating this support in the CAP structures (1st or 2nd pillar), its form should not lead to increased bureaucracy.

Most Member States stressed that new criteria of designation of areas with natural handicaps, prepared by the EC, should properly refer to the existing biophysical limitations. Therefore, further works are needed so that LFAs could be designated in a way which is objective and comparable in all EU countries.

The third panel session related to the criteria of distribution of direct payments. In the Communication, the Commission points out that new distribution of direct payments should be linked with the current objectives of the CAP and made more understandable to the taxpayer. The distribution criteria should be both economic, so that direct payments could meet a basic function of income support, and environmental to support delivery of public goods.
The Commission emphasizes the issue of the fair distribution of funds which both economically and politically, and in a pragmatic and realistic manner, would reflect the declared objectives of payments, while avoiding serious disturbances which could have far reaching consequences for certain regions and/or production systems.

In Poland’s opinion, it is necessary to adapt the payment system to the newly-defined objectives of the CAP. Departure from the existing based on historical production criteria of allocation of funds among the Member States under the first pillar and application of the objective criteria is crucial to ensure the consistency of the new distribution of support with the CAP objectives. In Poland’s opinion, the real challenge of the present CAP reform is to equalize the level of direct payments which has not been adequately reflected in the Commission Communication. The redistribution of direct payments should not however be a main objective of the CAP reform but only a consequence of the long-awaited changes towards greater coherence of the CAP.

During the Conference, different models of distributing direct support were discussed, including the distribution of funds according to the objective criteria (e.g. agricultural area, environmental conditions). The debate in Warsaw confirmed the diversity of views on this matter. Member States presented various approaches and arguments with regard to the designation of objective criteria for distribution of direct payments. As the basic or exclusive criterion for the distribution of these payments, the use of agricultural areas was discussed. In addition, attention was drawn to the following criteria: area today eligible for payment, gross added value, the purchasing power parity, or the number of people employed in agriculture. The proposals also included taking into account the net payer’s position, the GDP rate per capita or the costs associated with maintaining agricultural land in the individual EU member countries. The discussion confirmed how difficult it would be to reach a compromise on that issue. The publication of legislative proposals with regard to the reformed CAP together with Impact Assessment report to the proposed CAP changes is expected at the end of October 2011.

The conference was held by Poland just before taking the EU Presidency. In the course of the debate, many new arguments concerning the reform of direct payments system appeared. Participants found this meeting as an important element of the ongoing debate on the future of the CAP after 2013. The conference enabled exchange of arguments and better understanding of positions both of the Member States and the other parties of the decision-making process such as the European Commission and the European Parliament.
Opening of the European market for Polish products was of significant importance to our producers, because earlier, the market had been protected by customs and non-tariff systems. The EU market is a large one, with nearly 0.5 billion consumers which are over twofold wealthier than the Polish consumers. For Polish food producers and farmers, it was very important that the production costs and prices of the majority of the agricultural and food products in the economically developed EU countries were higher than in Poland. It created additional possibilities of developing the Polish food sector, even the more so that its stand of adaptations to integration was better than it had been expected.

Poland’s EU accession caused significant animation in Polish foreign trade in agricultural and food products. It also revealed large competitive advantages of producers of these products. This animation was noted directly prior to Poland’s accession to the EU (Chart 1, page 59). In 2003, the agricultural and food export increased by 23%, and the turnover balance changed from the negative (EUR - 0.51 billion) to positive (EUR + 0.45 billion). For the next five years, the export was developing at the pace of 23% per year and, in 2008, its level (EUR 11.4 billion) was 2.8 times higher than in 2003, and 3.7 times higher than in the years 2000-2002. The import was increasing at the same pace (at average 21%), while, until 2006, it was slower than the export pace, and faster in the years 2007-2008. Therefore, the positive exchange balance improved in the first years of integration and next, decreased from EUR 2.1 billion in 2006 to 1.3 billion in 2008. The tendencies changed (rather temporarily) due to the global crisis, whose result in the food trade was the decrease in export, in 2009, by around 2%, in import around 10% and next improvement of the turnover balance (up to around EUR 2.1 billion).

In 2010, as a result of the upturn in economy, Poland’s turnover of foreign trade in agricultural and food products both in EUR and PLN increased significantly in comparison to the previous year. The export value of these products amounted to EUR 13.26 billion and was 17.6% times higher than in 2009, whereas the import value amounted to EUR 10.69 (increased by 17.4%). The excess in foreign trade in agricultural and food products amounted to EUR 2.56 billion. In 2010, the export - import coverage ratio in agricultural and food products trade amounted to 124% and was significantly higher than in trade in general (90%).

Joining the Single European Market caused that the foreign trade became an important element of the food industry and agriculture development, because, at the relative stable national demand, it absorbed a substantial part of the national production increase. The import’s share in the production sold in 2010 amounted to 25% against 16.5% in 2004 and 10.5% in 2000.
The share of agricultural and food products in Polish total export value is significant and in 2010 amounted to 11.3%, whereas the import value amounted to 8.2%. In foreign trade structure of agricultural and food products, food industry products play the dominant role in value approach and create the excess in trade. In 2010, the inflows from the sale of them accounted for 83.7% of Polish agricultural and food sector’s export.

In 2010, the main fields of Polish food export, did not change in comparison to 2004 (Table 1, page 59). Most of the food is exported from Poland to the EU countries. Increase of the share of these countries from 72.0% in 2004 to 78.9% in 2010 has been observed. The second important recipient of Polish agricultural and food products is the Commonwealth of Independent States. However, its share decreased from 13.0% in 2004 to 10.4% in 2010. The group of developing countries with the share amounting to 6.0% in 2004 and 5.5% in 2010 takes the third place.

First of all, the export was increased and the balance improved in trade with new EU Member States. In the years 2003-2010, the agricultural and food export to the “old” Union increased 3.7 times, and to the new EU Member States nearly 4.4 times (Table 2, page 59). Positive balance of trade with these countries increased from EUR 0.44 billion to EUR 2.2 billion, which means a fivefold improvement. The share of other EU Member States in Polish agricultural and food export increased from 65% to 80%. The increase in trade with other countries was several times slower. In the years 2003-2008, the agricultural export to the CIS grew by ¼, and to other developed countries by 60%, whereas in the case of developing countries it amounted to 37%. Among these recipients’ groups, the positive balance improved in the case of trade with the CIS, but several times less than the one with the EU Member States. Simultaneously, the negative balance in trade with other developed countries (7.5 times) and the negative balance with developing countries (from EUR -0.46 billion to EUR -1.4 billion) increased multiple. The last phenomena is the result of a great increase in import of products that are not being produced in our climatic zone (from EUR 1.5 billion to EUR 2.6 billion), improving the diversity of national food supply and processing potential of Polish food industry. It is also connected with characteristic features of Polish trade in agricultural and food products.

Polish foreign trade in agricultural and food products after 2004 were changing also in terms of its commodity structure which is depicted in Diagram 4. and 5.

In 2004, the greatest share in export was recorded in the case of gardening products, mushrooms and mushroom products – 22.0%. Next places were taken by animals, meat and meat products -19%, whereas the share of milk and milk products as well as sugar and sugar products accounted for 11%. After 6 years of trade in the EU membership conditions, the export’s share of the products from animals, meat and meat products group grew significantly and amounted to 21.3% (1st place). On the other hand, in 2010, the significance of the export of gardening products, mushrooms and mushroom products decreased, and their overall share amounted to 15.2%. A decrease of up to 8.9 – 8.8% in the share of products from following groups: sugar and sugar products as well as milk and milk products was recorded. The importance of export of oil plants and oil plants products grew significantly from the share amounting to 2% in 2004 to 8.9% in 2010. A substantial change was also recorded in the tobacco and alcohol export - from the share of 4% in 2004 to 11.0% in 2010.

The changes of the export structure are even more dynamic when the value of agricultural and food products from particular commodity groups (Table 3, page 59) exported from Poland is compared.

First of all, the general export value increased from EUR 5 242.2 million in 2004 to EUR 13 263.1 million in 2010 (253% of the value of 2004). A more significant increase could be ob-
served in the group of animal products (about 267%), and a slightly less significant one in the case of the value of export of vegetable products (by 247.5%). The increase in the value of animal products exported from Poland in 2010, in relation to 2004, was influenced, first of all, by the dynamic growth of the sales value of meat and meat products, fish and fish products, as well as dairy products. The value of meat and meat products export increased from EUR 752.8 million in 2004 to EUR 2618.4 million in 2010, fish and fish products from EUR 345.4 million to 1 022.3 million, and dairy products from EUR 560.9 million to EUR 1 166.6 million. Such a significant increase in export was possible due to the production development and Polish food being compliant with quality standards. The export of live animals from Poland definitely lost its value and importance.

The value of export of vegetable products after Poland’s accession to the EU grew dynamically and its structure as regards the value was changed. In 2004, the highest value was recorded in the case of foreign sale of Polish fruits and vegetables (EUR 737.3 million) as well as sugar and sugar products. In both groups, the value of export, after 6 years, grew, however, within the limits of 160-200%, reaching EUR 1 165.2 million (fruits) and EUR 1 184.0 million (sugar), respectively. On the other hand, in 2010, in relation to 2004, the highest increase in value of exported products was observed in the group including tobacco and cigarettes (from EUR 128.4 million to EUR 1 197.4 million), whereby, simultaneously, these products moved towards the first place in the export structure of vegetable products. Another group whose export gained importance in the last period includes oil plants and oil plant products. The value of export increased by 429%; from EUR 116.3 million to EUR 498.7 million.

The results of foreign trade attest to great competitiveness of Polish food producers on foreign markets and indicate that our export offer is safe and good in terms of quality as well as attractive for foreign consumers as regards the prices.

The relation of the value of export of selected food industry products to its value of sales is the evidence of a particularly strong export orientation after Poland’s accession to the EU, which was reflected in such food industry branches as: fish processing, production of starch and potato products, production of fruit and vegetable juices and beverages as well as remaining fruit and vegetable products, production of pets’ feed, production of stable confectionery bread, chocolate and other confection, coffee and tea processing, as well as production of spices and dietetic food.

In the years 2004-2010, the fundamental sectors of food industry were characterized by the competitiveness similar to the average one in the entire food industry.

The competitiveness of Polish food producers results mainly from the fact that they have the competitive advantage of cost and price nature. We have significant price advantage (lower prices) on numerous markets of basic agricultural products. Price advantages which, prior to Poland’s EU accession, amounted, at the agriculture level, to around 20%, processing industry – around 30%, and at the consumer’s level – around 40%. After Poland’s accession to the EU, these advantages have been maintained despite the advancing of prices convergence process.

Labor-consuming products dominate among the groups of products of relatively highest competitive position on the Single European Market. The fundamental determinant of the competitiveness of Polish agricultural and food sector on the Single European Market are the cost and price advantages resulting from lower production and processing costs, including the lower labor fees and processing margins. The inclusion of Polish agriculture in the principles of the CAP resulted in the process of making the agricultural products prices resemble the EU prices. It was a quick process merely as regards the sectors in which, in the EU, the quoting of production is applicable, i.e. in the dairy and confectionery sector, and lately also in the corn one.

We have also an evident price advantage on the market of the majority of the basic food in-
industry products. It is the evidence of not only a stable, quick increase in export of these products, but also an, even slower than in the case of agricultural products, advancing process of making the national prices of food processing products resemble the EU prices. The diversity of these prices is a natural consequence of large differences at the economic development level between more and less developed EU countries.

The competitiveness on the EU and global markets is not based merely on competing in terms of prices. The factors of the competitiveness increase include also: entrepreneurship development, improvement of the local environment quality, rationalization of organizational and proprietary structures as well as the competition policy to be implemented by the state.

Consumers from other EU countries approve Polish food and its quality values, which is attested by the increase in the indicator of export orientation of particular food industry branches. The growing sale on demanding foreign markets being subject to rigorous quality control rules is the indirect evidence of the high quality of our food.

Undoubtedly, the strong point of Polish food producers is the quality and dissemination of food quality assurance systems and the efficiency of seeking and filling the niches on the European market. In these fields, a significant progress was made in the first years of the membership.

In the period of Poland’s EU membership, Polish share in the EU export increased twofold – from 1.7% in 2003 to 3.4% in 2010 (Chart 2, page 59), but despite the significant growth, Poland has not been among the EU biggest exporters. However, it is to be mentioned that in the framework of some of the products, Poland is one of the leaders on the EU market (e.g. strawberries, apple concentrate).

Summing up, it should be stated that:

* the source of the high competitiveness were mainly the cost and price advantages. These advantages have been decreasing, but the role and ability of using other competition sources has been growing. These sources include: quality (quality and uniqueness of products, creating the trust-based image of the company), innovativeness, entrepreneurship, as well as knowledge and intellectual capital;
* Polish producers of basic products of agriculture have been achieving greater price advantages in relation to EU-15 producers, whereas the smaller ones towards producers from new Member States;
* taking into consideration the production’s trend, the level of price competitiveness is higher on the markets connected with the animal production than on the markets related to the vegetable production;
* in conditions of progressing liberalization of the global trade, Poland will maintain the competitive advantages on the European Single Market in such products groups as: fruits, vegetables, meat and meat products. The products of the highest competitiveness’s position will include higher processed and labor-consuming products, which results from lower labor costs and lower processing margins. Due to a great number of cheap labor force, Polish agricultural sector will maintain advantages in the labor-consuming directions of production.

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On the other hand, the impact of agriculture on macroeconomic indicators, including primarily the share in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is relatively small. In 2009, the share of the Polish agriculture in the GDP was at the level of 2.1%. Since 1989, (i.e. the beginning of the system transformation in Poland), this share decreased from 11.8% to 2.1% in 2009. Just to compare - in 2009 this share in the EU-27 was at the average level of 1.1%, and it was the highest in Romania (5.4%), Bulgaria (3.8%) and Greece (2.4%), while the lowest share was recorded in Luxembourg (0.2%), Sweden (0.3%), the United Kingdom and Germany (0.5%).

Those employed within the sector constituted in 2009 13.3% of the total number of individuals employed in Poland. When compared to other European countries, that percentage is relatively high, comparable to that recorded in Greece (11.9% in 2009), Portugal (11.2%) and Lithuania (9.2% in 2009).

According to the Central Statistical Office rural areas cover over 93% of Poland (291 000 sq. km.) That area was in 2009 inhabited by 14.9 mln people.

According to the European Commission arable land covered in 2009 15.6 mln ha, which is equivalent to approximately 50% of the total area of the country (Chart 3, page 59). In terms of arable land, Poland is the fifth in Europe, after France, Spain, the United Kingdom and Germany. As compared with other EU countries, Poland has significant resources of agricultural land. Its area per one inhabitant of rural areas is over 1 ha.

In 2007, the total number of agricultural holdings in all the EU Member States was 13.7 mln. In Poland, according to the Central Statistical Office, the total number of individual holdings in 2009 was slightly over 2.5 mln.

In accordance with the preliminary results of the Agricultural Census of 2010 the average area of arable land per 1 individual holding with an area of over 1 ha was in Poland nearly 10 ha. The average area of holdings in the EU-27 was 11.9 ha of arable land.

The area structure of agricultural holdings in Poland (Chart 4, page 59) is extremely varied. There is both a group of very large holdings, as well as very numerous small ones. According to the findings of the agricultural census of 2010, the share of smaller holdings with an area of 1-5 ha was 56%, while that of holdings with an area of 5-10 ha was equivalent to 22% of the total number of holdings.

Within the European Union, holding with an area up to 5 ha accounted for 70.4% (Chart 5, page 59). The greatest percentage of small
holdings with an area up to 5 ha was recorded in Bulgaria – 95%, Greece – 76%, Italy – 73% and Portugal – 72%. Holdings with an area of 5-10 ha accounted for 11% of all holdings.

The productivity of work in agriculture measured through gross added value allocable to an annual work unit is not very high, and is equivalent to 14% of that factor in the European Union. This low factor results from, among others, significant fragmentation of agriculture, continuous unfavourable agricultural structure, low economic power of agricultural holdings.

In most EU-15 countries the productivity of work in the food industry is higher by approximately 50% than in Poland. In several countries (Ireland, Holland) it is even 3 times higher. As far as the new EU Member States are considered the productivity of work in the food industry is higher than the average one and is at a level similar to that in Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. An increase in that factor results from ongoing restructuring of enterprises consisting in, among others, reduction of manufacturing costs and employment, increased investments and modernization of technological processes.

In terms of agricultural production Polish crops are generally lower than those in the EU-15, still the low use of chemical substances in agriculture and a high quality of offered raw materials result in a greater demand for Polish agricultural products.

As compared to 2009, the total cereal crops in the EU-27 amounted to 293 mln tonnes, which meant a decrease by 6.5% as compared with 2008. In Poland, according to the Central Statistical Office the total cereal crops amounted to 27.3 mln tonnes (almost 10% less than in 2009).

Cereals occupy in Poland approximately 70% of the total area under crop. In 2010, the area under wheat accounted to over 28% of the total area under cereal. In 2010, the area under wheat was 2 406 000 ha, whereas the production amounted to 9 487 000 tonnes. This made Poland come third as compared with the other EU countries, after France (4 733 000 ha) and Germany (3 215 000 ha). In terms of the wheat crops volume (Chart 6, page 60) Poland was fourth, after France – 36.2 mln tonnes, Germany – 225.1 mln tonnes and The United Kingdom – 14.3 mln tonnes.

Wheat crops are definitely lower in Poland than in the majority of EU countries (Chart 7, page 60). In the period from 2006 to 2009 the average wheat crops amounted to 38.6 dt/ha, while in 2010 these were at the level of 39.4 dt/ha. Just to compare, the average crops in the EU-27 amounted in 2009 to 51.9 dt/ha. Relatively low wheat crops in Poland result undoubtedly from lower usable value of Polish soils, as well as from a lower level of fertilizing and lower use of crop protection products.

In terms of production of fruits and vegetables the Polish agriculture is important among the EU countries. Poland is the largest producer of apples, cherries, cranberries and raspberries in the EU. We are ranked second in the Community in production of strawberries, northern highbush blueberry and cabbage. Poland is also an important country when it comes to the EU crops of onions and carrots. We are the largest producer of concentrated apple juice, concentrated juices made of soft fruits, as well as frozen fruit in the EU-27, and the second largest EU producer of frozen and pickled vegetables.

The pork market is the largest and the most important meat market in Poland, both for producers and consumers. Poland is a fully self-sufficient country as far as pork production is concerned. In 2010, pork production in Poland
amounted to 1 775 000 tonnes, which made Poland come fourth among the EU countries (Chart 8, page 60). This meat production market is led by Germany (5 254 000 tonnes), Spain (3 291 000 tonnes) and France (2 400 000 tonnes). In Poland, pork is dominant in the structure of meat consumption, with its share accounting for 58% and consumption per capita amounting to 43 kg, i.e. over 10-times more than beef consumption and almost 2-times more than poultry consumption.

Pig livestock (Chart 9, page 60) in Poland at the end of 2010 amounted to approximately 14.8 mln animals and was higher by almost 4% as compared to the pig livestock recorded in 2009. In the terms of quantity of livestock in the European Union countries Poland was overtaken in 2010 only by Germany (26.6 mln animals) and Spain (25.3 mln animals).

Cattle livestock in the European Union has been systematically decreasing since 2008. According to the European Commission, in December 2010 it was by 1.7% lower than in the previous year. Since Poland’s accession to the EU, an upward tendency has been observed in the country as far as the domestic cattle livestock, except for cows, is concerned. At the end of December 2010, this livestock amounted to 5.5 mln animals, including a dairy cow livestock of 2.6 mln animals. In terms of cattle livestock in 2010 Poland came seventh (Chart 10, page 60) among 27 European Union countries.

Beef production in Poland, since the moment of market transformation, had been systematically decreasing, only accession to the EU inhibited this tendency. In 2010 production of cattle for slaughter amounted to approximately 730 000 tonnes. Poland comes fifth as far as production of beef in the EU is concerned (Chart 11, page 60). Changes in production of cattle for slaughter depend to a large extent on the current price situation on the meat, milk and feed market. The higher the prices of cereals are, the smaller interest in growing cattle for slaughter is.

In terms of cow milk production, Poland—with production in 2010 amounting to almost 12 mln tonnes—comes fourth (Chart 12, page 60) after Germany (29.2 mln tonnes), France (23.3 mln tonnes) and the United Kingdom (13.5 mln tonnes). Still in terms of the volume of milk quota (9.38 mln tonnes) Poland comes only sixth. Unfortunately, Poland shows significant difference as compared with the EU-15 countries in terms of cow milk yield (Chart 13, page 60), although cow milk yield has been increasing every year. In 2010, the yearly cow milk yield was almost 4 810 kg, while those in Sweden or Denmark were almost 2-times higher—8 280 kg and 8 386 kg, respectively (Chart 13, page 60).

Summarizing, it should be stated that Poland is an important producer of agricultural, garden and animal origin products in the world and in Europe, and that it enjoys favourable natural conditions for agricultural production, which is reflected in production of high quality safe food. Furthermore, Poland is one of European countries with the highest biological diversity indicator. In comparison with other EU countries, in which there is high productive agriculture, the condition of preservation of natural environment in Poland is very good. Poland is also a special example of a country in Central Europe in which owing to fragmented agricultural economy, endogenous species of domesticated plants and endogenous species of farm animals have been preserved in traditional holdings.

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Percentage of individuals employed in agriculture in 2009

Source: SAEPR (Agricultural Policy Analysis Unit of the Polish Ministry of Agriculture)/FAPA (Foundation of Assistance Programmes for Agriculture) based on data provided by EC.
Implementation of the EU programmes

Modernization and development of rural areas and the agri-food sector are one of the priorities for the use of EU funds in Poland. Of particular importance for agriculture and rural areas are support instruments offered under the common agricultural policy and structural policy in the area of agriculture. A key role in their distribution, for almost a decade, has been played by the Agency for Restructuring and Modernization of Agriculture (ARMA).

In the pre-accession period, ARMA was entrusted with the role of the SAPARD Agency, and after Poland’s accession to the EU – with the role of an implementing body and a paying agency under the programmes co-financed from EU funds allocated for agriculture and rural development.

The SAPARD programme supported the transformations in the EU candidate countries and its main purpose was institutional and legal preparation of candidate countries to benefit from the structural funds after accession. It may be considered as the first programme for development of Polish agriculture and rural areas co-financed by the EU. In addition to preparation of public institutions, it played a key role in preparation of beneficiaries themselves to benefit from EU aid. It was translated into good management of EU funds and proper absorption of funds available after Poland’s accession into the EU. During the SAPARD programme implementation, more than 22.7 thousand projects were completed for which PLN 4.5 billion were paid to beneficiaries.

In the first period of Poland’s membership in the EU (2004-2006), ARMA participated in transmitting financial aid from:

- **European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund Guarantee Section**, playing the role of the paying agency for the common agricultural policy instruments: direct payments, all measures of the Rural Development Plan 2004-2006, the fruit and vegetable market and the instruments of the common fisheries policy;
- **Special Pre-accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (SAPARD)** - payments to projects initiated before EU accession.

Since 2007, Polish beneficiaries have used the instruments of the common agricultural policy for the full 7-year programming period. In relation to the years 2004-2006, both the scale of granted aid and the number of available support...
instruments increased. Currently, ARMA is the implementing authority and the paying agency for aid instruments financed by the new EU funds:

- **European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)**, which finances all measures relating to rural development under RDP 2007-2013,
- **European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF)**, under which the implementation of aid instruments of the first CAP pillar is continued (direct payments, common organization of the fruit and vegetable market, common organization of the fish market),
- **European Fisheries Fund** financing measures under the Operational Programme “Sustainable development of the fisheries sector and coastal fishing areas for 2007-2013”.

Main beneficiaries of aid implemented by ARMA are farmers, entrepreneurs in the agri-food sector, rural residents, agricultural producer group and representatives of the fisheries sector. The projects co-financed within the framework of the EU funds are used by broad social groups and their effects may be seen and measured at the level of both the local and national economy. For villages, communes and local communities, projects aimed at the diversification of activities, mobilizing local communities and developing the infrastructure constitute a source of jobs, affect the attractiveness of the area, attract tourists and sometimes investors. Investments in agricultural holdings are of great importance in terms of the food consumer. They guarantee an increase in the food safety and hygiene and thereby an increase in the quality of agricultural products.

Polish agriculture properly uses the development opportunities arising from access to the Community market and the use of the common agricultural policy instruments. Since the beginning of ARMA’s activities until 31 May 2011, PLN 129.5 billion were paid to aid beneficiaries, of which PLN 116.6 (90%) during the period of Poland’s membership in the EU. Under the EU programmes, ARMA has paid PLN 111.9 billion, including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument/Programme</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Period</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct support schemes</td>
<td>PLN 62.7 billion</td>
<td>2004-2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDP 2007-2013</td>
<td>PLN 23.7 billion</td>
<td>2007-2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDP 2004-2006</td>
<td>PLN 10.9 billion</td>
<td>2004-2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOP “Restructuring…”</td>
<td>PLN 6.6 billion</td>
<td>2004-2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOP “Fisheries…”</td>
<td>PLN 1.0 billion</td>
<td>2004-2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAPARD Programme</td>
<td>PLN 4.5 billion</td>
<td>2002-2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common organization of the fruit and vegetable market</td>
<td>PLN 1.6 billion</td>
<td>2004-2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OP „Sustainable development… 2007-2013“</td>
<td>PLN 0.9 billion</td>
<td>2007-2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Fisheries Policy</td>
<td>PLN 1.4 million</td>
<td>2004-2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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From among the programmes co-financed from EU funds, the largest amounts were allocated for direct support schemes (56%), rural development instruments (31%, of which 21% for RDP 2007-2013 and 10% for RDP 2004-2006), structural funds (7%) and SAPARD (4%) (Chart 14, page 61).

In the years 2004-2011, ARMA paid to beneficiaries PLN 111.1 billion under the funds co-financed from the EU, of which the largest amount falls on 2010 (PLN 19.8 billion). Per the entire period of membership, PLN 14.8 billion fall on one year, on average (Chart 15, page 61).

From among all the regions, the biggest support from the funds co-financed by the EU from ARMA received beneficiaries from the following voivodeships: Mazowieckie (PLN 15.4 billion), Wielkopolskie (PLN 13.9 billion), Lubelskie (PLN 10.3 billion), Kujawsko-Pomorskie (PLN 8.4 billion), Podlaskie (PLN 8.4 billion) (Chart 16, page 61).

The amount of granted aid per 1 holding over 1 ha (CSO 3) on average for the whole country was PLN 63.2 thousand.

Thanks to the funds from the EU programmes, the Polish agri-food sector got a chance to implement the investments needed for its development and enhancement of its competitiveness. From the standpoint of support for development of agricultural production and food processing, of the greatest importance was initially the use of the funds from the measures under SOP 2004-
2006 and RDP 2004-2006: “Investments in agricultural holdings”, “Setting up of young farmers”, “Improving processing and marketing of agricultural products”, “Adaptation of agricultural holdings to the EU standards”. Continuation of this aid under RDP 2007-2013 are the measures: “Modernization of agricultural holdings”, “Increasing the added value to basic agricultural and forestry production”, “Setting up of young farmers”, “Agri-environmental programme, “Agricultural producer groups”. The EU funds also allowed provisionally admitted fruit and vegetable producer groups to make costly investments approved in the phased recognition plan.

How those funds were used by farmers and food processors, we can see on a basis of a few examples.

In the vicinity of Przasnysz (Mazowieckie voivodeship), Mr Jarosław Krzykowski runs a holding oriented towards milk production, he has a herd composed of 110 dairy cows. This 38-year-old farmer, who graduated from the Agricultural University in Olsztyn, modernises his holding in a very systematic and well-thought way. He has already benefited from the funds of SOP “Restructuring and modernization of the food sector and rural development 2004-2006”, under the measure “Investments in agricultural holdings”, thanks to which he developed a cowshed and purchased cattle collars with transponders and actinometers, built a garage for agricultural machinery and equipment and a storage building; bought a baling press and a bale wrapper.

The experience gained due to applying for the funds from SOP 2004-2006 was used by Mr. Krzykowski during submitting an application for co-financing further modernization of the holding from RDP 2007-2013. Under the measure “Modernization of agricultural holdings”, he planned and bought several devices important for the type of production he conducted. A major investment was a very modern, self-propelled diet feeder, the use of which would shorten preparation and administration of feed to the animals. Another purchase was a milk cooler. This device proved necessary because of the increasing milk performance of the cows in the holding and a change in the system of milk collection by the dairy (from daily collection to collection carried out every other day). A minor but also necessary purchase was the purchase of a rubber mat to be laid onto the passage in the cowshed which would improve the health of the cattle hooves. Mr. Krzykowski will receive PLN 300,000 of co-financing i.e. almost 40% of the total amount of PLN 764,000 of the eligible costs of purchases made.

The young farmer plans to develop the holding further and to modernize its equipment by buying milking robots and equipping other passages with rubber mats. Mr. Krzykowski would also like to install the system for irrigation of agricultural land to prevent the loss of yields caused by drought which is an important problem for his holding with nearly 84 ha of agricultural land.

Another beneficiary – a producer of Northern highbush blueberry from Janów in the Podlaskie voivodeship who cultivates this fruit in the area of 134 ha decided to protect his plantations against hail in an unconventional way. Northern highbush blueberries are resistant to frost but seasonal hailstorms during the flowering time may, within a few seconds, destroy the flowers.
and the cultivation will not yield. Thus, the farmer bought special hail installations. They are three cannons whose function is to send high-energy shock waves in the direction of the upper layers of the atmosphere. The waves reach height of approximately 15 km, i.e. the level of clouds where hail is formed. As a result of the ionization process, hail falls to the Earth in a form of rain or wet snow. One cannon protects the area of approximately 80 ha against hail. These installations are successfully used in France, Spain, Austria and Belgium. The producer purchased and installed the cannons thanks to co-financing of PLN 225,000 from RDP 2007-2013 under the measure “Modernization of agricultural holdings”.

The investment in modernizing equipment of the holding and, at the same time, support for the young farmer beginning work in his own holding has been the purchase of the cleaning and shaking apparatus for picking stone fruit. The beneficiary from the Łódzkie voivodeship, from the Dmosin commune, running an agricultural holding oriented towards cultivation of cherries, plums and currants, making use of the premium for young farmers under RDP 2007-2013, bought such a device for PLN 37,500. Fruit picking takes place by way of a fruit shaker mounted on the apparatus, onto the screen lying on the ground. Fruits are moved onto the transporter and transported to cleaning (removing stalks and separating leaves). Cleaned fruits fall down into boxes or pallet cases. Using the apparatus, picking fruit from one tree takes from 1 to 1.5 minutes, from about 0.5 to 0.7 ha per day.

Modernization or development processing plants of the agri-food industry are very expensive investments. In many Polish companies, it would be difficult to implement them without co-financing from the EU funds.

In Zakroczym, the Mazowieckie voivodeship, there is a company engaged in processing and wholesale sale of fruit and vegetables. Iceberg lettuce, onions, carrots, tomatoes, cucumbers, spinach, chicory are mainly processed there. In the past, by benefiting from co-financing under the SAPARD Programme, the following were done in the plant, inter alia: reconstruction of the production rooms, installation of a water treatment system and installation of a sewerage system. Currently, as a part of support from RDP 2007-2013, under the measure “Increasing the added value to basic agricultural and forestry production”, further investments were made. The production hall was developed by equipping it with the cooling systems and chambers for storing apples and tomatoes. A manufacturing line for processing lettuce with a capacity of 1,500 kg per hour was purchased. The line consists of a three-level table with 12 workstations. The upper conveyor is intended for receiving a semi-product. The central conveyor is used for transporting the raw material and at this level, there are also installed working tables for removing waste parts from vegetables as well as chimneys for production waste. The lower level is used for transporting waste to a storage place. The line also includes the lettuce washing and drying systems. The plant was also equipped with a weighing and packing line for various types of cut leaf vegetables. The investments made have been co-financed from the EU funds with an amount of more than PLN 875,000 and contributed to streamlining the processing plant’s production process, increased its productivity and affected favorably improvement in the quality of manufactured products.

Significant aid from the EU funds under the common organization of the fruit and vegetable may also be granted to provisionally admitted agricultural producer groups. To cover a part of the eligible investment costs associated with collection, storage, warehousing or preparing fruit and vegetables for sale, included in the approved phased recognition plan, they may be reimbursed 75% of incurred investment costs. And these are often quite large amounts.

The producer group WILGA FRUIT Sp. z o.o. was established in 2003. Gaining the status of the provisionally admitted producer group in 2005 and the implementation of the phased recogni-
tion plan, allowed the group to get the infrastructure related to storage and preparation of products for sale. Currently, the group brings together 61 fruit and vegetable producers who, in the area of about 700 hectares, produce nearly 20,000 tons of table apples and about 4,000 tons of celery cabbage. Produced fruit and vegetables are delivered primarily to the wholesale markets, retail chains and exported (mainly to Russia).

Within the framework of the implementation of the approved recognition plan, in June 2008 the group WILGA FRUIT Sp. z o.o. launched a logistic centre, equipped with a modern apple sorting line with a water unloading system which prevents fruit damage during the sorting process as well as a machine packing apples in plastic bags.

The sorting line purchased by the group WILGA FRUIT Sp. z o.o., ensures preparation for sale of all apples produced by its members and allows meeting the quality requirements set by consumers, in particular by large commercial chains.

Received financial aid allowed the producer group to get its own storage room for fruit with the technology of controlled atmosphere and reduced oxygen content where it is possible to store about 23,000 tones of fruit and vegetables. Storage rooms with this capacity allow completing orders from customers all year long.

The group also purchased specialized platforms designed for fruit picking (apples and pears), which, similarly to the infrastructure related to storage and preparation of fruits and vegetables for sale.

The producer group WILGA FRUIT Sp. z o.o., while implementing the approved phased recognition plan, benefited from financial aid intended for provisionally admitted fruit and vegetable producer groups, for a total amount of PLN 48.81 million. This January, after the completion of the five-year phased recognition plan, the group achieved the status of the recognized producer organization.

The use of the funds within the EU programmes available for the Polish agri-food sector contributes to strengthening its competitiveness and market position.

These few examples show that the funds paid to Polish farmers and processors from the EU aid programmes have been used in a well-thought and effective manner.
The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development conducts active policy aimed at promoting agricultural and food products in order to present them as specific and high quality products.

Polish Presidency in the European Union Council was the perfect moment to undertake another activities promoting Polish food. On 6 July 2011, in the seat of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, a presentation and tasting of Polish Kashubian strawberries (truskawki kaszubskie/kaszëbskô malëna) was organized.

These fruits, famous for their flavor and aroma, were entered in the Register of Protected Geographical Indications in 2009. Kashubian strawberries are sweet, aromatic, firm and juicy. They are dark red and are covered with shiny skin. These advantages are indebted to the composition of soil and the specific microclimate of the Kashubian Lakeland.

The event was attended by the representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Marshal Office of the Pomeranian Voivodeship and the members of visitors to the European Parliament, members of the European Parliament and the officials had the possibility of tasting and being given Polish strawberries in a half kilogram-package labeled with the “Polish tastes good” (“Polska smakuje”) mark. Kashubian strawberry enjoyed great interest, 3.5 tones of these fruits were dispensed in total.

Polish strawberries won the hearts not only of the members of the European Parliament, but also of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland – Donald Tusk, the European Parliament President – Jerzy Buzek and the European Commission President – José Manuel Barroso who participated in the plenary session of the EP.

From the left: Donald Tusk – Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland, Jerzy Buzek – European Parliament President and José Manuel Barroso – European Commission President

The Kashubian Strawberry Association who presented the fruits in regional Kashubian costumes, informed on the kaszëbskô malëna variety and the method of their cultivation.

In the seat of the European Parliament, Polish stands were arranged in four places, where the
From 28 May – 5 June 2011 in Tallinn (Estonia), the Polish Cuisine Days were held, which accompanied the 30th celebrations of the Old City Days „Tallinn – a city with an open heart.” The Polish presentation was composed of two parts: „Polish Food Days” and „Polish Cuisine Days”. During the „Polish Food Days”, Polish products were promoted in one of the largest Estonian commercial chains – RIMI and business workshops were organized in the Meriton Hotel. The workshops were intended for Polish and Estonian businessmen, including commercial chains and food industry companies as well as the representatives of the Polish Business Club in Estonia. During the „Polish Food Days”, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development organized the information and promotional stand where materials on Polish agriculture and food economy as well as products marked with the „Discover Great Food (PDŻ)” quality mark were presented while the Association of Organic Product Processors and Producers „Polish Ecology” presented delicacies of Polish organic cuisine.

The Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Andrzej Butra and the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Estonia, Grzegorz M. Poznański opened the „Polish Cuisine Days”. Presentation of Polish specialties was held in the Meriton Hotel and lasted from 27 May to 12 June 2011. For two weeks, during the event at the hotel, the Polish menu, prepared under the guidance of Jacek Szczepański, was offered.

Polish presentation was very well received by the people of Estonia and the Polish products enjoyed tremendous interest of Estonian consumers.
From 7–14 May 2011, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Marek Sawicki, paid a visit to Canada. The visit was connected with the participation of the Ministry in the SIAL Canada fair that took place in Toronto as well as with talks with Canadian partners on the possibility to strengthen Polish-Canadian cooperation in the field of agriculture, including solutions to veterinary problems, intensification of scientific cooperation and trade in the agri-food sector. The visit’s objective was to make the optimum use of the Minister’s stay in Canada for promotion of Polish agriculture, both in terms of solving the current problems in access to the market, stimulation of export and development of long-term scientific, expert and institutional collaboration.

The programme of the visit included meetings with the Canadian Minister of Agriculture, Gerry Ritz, President of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency CFIA, Mrs Carole Swan, President of the Canadian Association of Trade in Agricultural Goods, Mrs Kathleen Sullivan, as well as the representatives of business communities including the representatives of the Polish-Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

During the SIAL Canada fair, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development organized the information and promotional stand, where products marked with the „Discover Great Food (PDŻ)” quality mark were presented. In addition, during the fair a seminar entitled „Prospects of development of commercial cooperation in the agri-food industry between Poland and Canada – characteristics of the Polish export offer” was held, organized by the Agricultural Market Agency.

During his visit to Canada, Minister Marek Sawicki stressed the interest of the Polish party in the fastest possible elimination of existing barriers to access of Polish food to the Canadian market and emphasized its high quality and safety. He expressed satisfaction with the completion of the procedures enabling access of Polish pork and its products to the Canadian market.
The 25th International Fine Food Fair – SALON GOURMETS – was organized on 11-14 April 2011 in Madrid. The fair in Madrid is addressed to producers, distributors and consumers of high quality food products both from Spain and from abroad. More than 1,000 exhibitors presented their trade offer on 18,000 sqm.

Poland took part in the fair for the fifth time, but this year, it featured as an invited guest of honor.

The Vice-Minister, Tadeusz Nalewajk participated in the fair opening ceremony and, subsequently, welcomed at the Polish stand the official Spanish delegation managed by the Minister of Environment, Rural Areas and Sea – Rosa Aguilar. Tadeusz Nalewajk represented also Poland at the ceremony of the 25th anniversary of the Salon de Gourmets Fair.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development prepared an informational-promotional stand. There were presented fine products labeled with the “Discover Great Food” (PDŻ) quality mark of 17 companies participating in the Program of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, among others: SM Lazur, SM Jana, SDM Wieluń, OSM Krasnystaw, Mlekpols, Sokołów S.A., Cedrob S.A., ZM Mościbrody, ZM Skiba, Sądecki Bartnik, Browar Amber, Virtu s.j., Bracia Urbanek, Hortino Leżajsk, Akwawit-Brasco, Mokate, Solidarność S.A.

Guests visiting Polish stand had the opportunity to try delicious diary and meat products, fruit and vegetable preserves, bakery and confectionery products, honey, beer and different types of flavored tea and coffee presented by the above-mentioned companies.

During the next days of the fair, there were organized numerous shows aimed at tasting Polish cuisine, for example, demonstrations of cooking and preparing drinks from Polish alcohol products with the participation of the famous Polish cook – Mr. Karol Okrasa and the European Master in Bartender Shows – Mr. Krzysztof Drabik. Polish dishes and cocktails were very popular among the visitors.

The huge interest in fine Polish food was also visible in the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, where the Agricultural Market Agency organized a tasting of traditional Polish food. After the tasting, the visitors invited by the Embassy, mainly the representatives of Spanish agricultural sector and agricultural and food industry, expressed their positive impressions of the Polish products.
The Polish mushroom industry is growing rapidly and is successful on the European market. One of the best examples is a Private Enterprise BIEGPOL in Chorzemin near Wolsztyn (Wielkopolska Voivodeship), belonging to Marian and Grażyna Biegańscy. It was established in 1989. In 2001 mushrooms were produced in five halls with an area of 320 sqm each. After four years, further 10 halls were established with a total area of 7,900 sqm. In 2008 10 new production facilities were built, and since the last year the next 5 halls have been in use. Thanks to these investments, production area has increased to over 20 thousand sqm, so almost 15-fold within ten years. What a pace! Mr and Mrs Biegańscy try not only to maintain consistently a high quality of their products, but they also think about the future of the company. They plan to expand 6 production facilities and to introduce modern packaging technology. The company also produces other types of cultivated mushrooms - oyster, and shiitake.

Today it is still a family company. Together with Mr an Mrs Biegańscy works their daughter - Magdalena, who is the managing director. Mushrooms are grown on the surface of 10,000 sqm. Brown mushrooms are produced in 5 halls, white mushrooms in 10 halls. The company employs 130 people, mostly women, because mushrooms harvest requires delicacy and precision, not to damage these pearls of the earth.

The monthly production amounts to 220 tonnes, 98% of which is exported overseas. The main export destinations are Germany and Scandinavian countries. The mushrooms are exported under the company’s brand name and logo on the retail packaging, which are already well known signs, identified by foreign customers.

PP BIEGPOL company stands out against other Polish companies producing mushrooms, since its products, fresh mushrooms, acquired in 2011 the “Discover Great Food” (PDŻ) quality mark. The award was given to this type of products for the first time.

BIEGPOLs mushrooms are unique products. They are true gems mined from the earth - round, white and brown, firm, soft and satin to the touch. And what a smell! Its appearance and aroma simply encourage to conjure up wonderful dishes out of them. Brown mushrooms are more aromatic and intense in flavour, though they are rarely on sale.

BIEGPOLs mushrooms fully deserve “Discover Great Food” (PDŻ) quality mark. It rewards over twenty-year efforts of business owners to maintain high standards of the production.

The most important thing is that this rapid development of mushroom industry in Poland was accompanied by tremendous technological advances in the recent years. We adopted from the Dutch the best practices of cultivation and organization of modern mushroom family farms and we came off well. Growing mushrooms is not a piece of cake. It requires the knowledge of the profession in an every
Summer 2011 31

If the humidity or temperature is not adequate, the mushrooms may become subjects to attacks of all sorts of diseases. What’s important, in the Polish mushroom industry the chemistry is not applied. The pathogens are eliminated only by steam at a precise temperature. The industry requires great skills from the manufacturer, the exact observance of all technological regimes, as well as the investment of large amount of money. The production is energy-intensive and uses modern software and specialist automation from the Netherlands.

The Dutch technology is not cheap, but it works well and is reliable - says Wojciech Pestka from Doręgowice near Chojnice, one of the most important mushrooms' producer in Pomerania region, who has been using the Dutch technology for almost 20 years. First, he brought used air conditioning and heating systems to his production facilities, and when he obtained the EU subsidies, first from the SAPARD then RDP programmes, he built further halls and equipped them in the latest generation of automatic lines, which control very precisely the humidity and temperature. Last year, using funds from the EU Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 for the modernization of farms, he bought modern, Dutch line to exchange the substrate and to irrigate. He also purchased more machines to control the microclimate in the mushroom halls.

In spite of the fact that using the prepared substrate is much more expensive, it pays off - explains Mr. Pestka. It shortens greatly the production cycle, as a result of which we can harvest more often and we get better crops. Thanks to air conditioning and heating systems, mushrooms ceased to be seasonal products in Poland. A new production cycle begins in our halls every eight weeks. Every year I burn 60,000 liters of oil to heat our facilities and to produce the necessary quantity of steam. But 85-90% of our harvest is a top class export commodity that sells well everywhere.

Progress in the cultivation of mushrooms in recent years is unprecedented in Poland - says Dr. ing. Krystian Szudyga, president of Cultivated Mushroom Industry Association. Every year increases by 10-15%. Thus, Poland has become undisputed leader in Europe, with the production of 250 thousand tonnes per year. The Dutch are just behind us (about 225 thousand tonnes). Through decades we learned from them about modern cultivation of these mushrooms. Within the last seven years the Polish growers of mushrooms are the best in export and take the first place in Europe. Our fresh mushrooms are second to none. In recent years, we have sold to foreign contractors approximately 60-70% of the production. It goes mainly to connoisseurs from the Netherlands, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia and Russia, so to almost all countries in Europe and it is gaining new markets on other continents. Our mushrooms enjoy an excellent reputation with foreign customers. They contain significantly more dry matter than the Dutch or German mushrooms. They are tastier and more aromatic.

According to experts in mushrooms cultivation, over the last 10 years there was a veritable revolution in our country. There was a rapid concentration of production, and we implemented the most advanced science and the best elements of leading practices in mushrooms production. Major achievements in this field has the Cultivated Mushroom Industry Association, bringing together more than 100 of the largest mushroom producers from different regions of our country. It may seem to be little, because in Poland there are about 370 large-scale growers and yet nearly 3000 hobby producers of the mushrooms. But members of the organization gather more than 70% of mushrooms produced in Poland, and their share in exports is even larger and amounts to about 80-85%. Because the Association is a member of the World Association of Mushrooms Growers and the European Association of Mushrooms Growers it participates

Regional development

Fresh mushrooms produced by PP BIEGPOL obtained the „Discover Great Food” (PDŻ) quality mark in 2011
in international congresses and symposia, as well as in the most important food fairs. It certainly helps to establish cooperation with major centres associated with the cultivation and disposal of the mushrooms in the world.

In the most of the operating facilities in Poland the production of mushrooms is based on the latest European and global technologies. Production rooms are of a high standard, which ensures the maintenance of sanitary parameters at the highest level. They are equipped with excellent electronic devices that provide optimal conditions for obtaining the highest quality crops and ensure proper temperature, proper circulation of air, the most appropriate humidity, as well as the best level of carbon dioxide. The substrate for the cultivation of mushrooms is in 90% produced in the country, but according to the German or Dutch technologies and only with natural ingredients such as cereal straw, peat and perfectly fermented poultry manure. Thanks to the full and constant control of the production process as well as manual collection, sorting and packaging, the consumers acquire from Poland fresh, healthy, natural product of the best taste, aroma and quality – real pearls of the earth. Cultivated Mushroom Industry Association ensures that every six months its members perform the study of the mushrooms in the Laboratory of Contamination and Pesticide Residues Research of the Institute of Horticulture in Skierniewice, and check whether the production is conducted in accordance with the system GLOBAL GAP Standard Fruit and Vegetables, which guarantees consistently high quality of the product. Thanks to this, the Polish mushrooms became our export hit.

Antoni Radzewicz
Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture
Fruits and Vegetables Processing Enterprise GOMAR in Pińczów owned by Michał Górniak is a family firm. Managerial posts are occupied, apart from the owner, by: Michał Górniak’s wife – Irena, daughter Małgorzata and son Marcin. GOMAR is one of the most dynamically developing firms of the sector. On the other hand, in Świętokrzyski Region, the firm is deemed the potentate in the production and sale of food and vegetable products, as well as in export of frozen fruits, vegetables and concentrates. It disposes of freezers with the capacity of 11 thousand tones, and of one of the most modern Fruits and Vegetables Processing Plant “Pińczów”. The plant employs more than 400 highly qualified employees who have experience in the processing industry. In season, this number increases almost two-fold.

Cooool chief!

GOMAR has many assets, but the most significant one is its chief and, simultaneously, the owner – Michał Górniak who says outright: „GOMAR is my life” and further explains: „Whenever somebody asks me what GOMAR means, I answer...these are the first letters of my children’s names. It is an obvious symbol of all that I have come through in my professional life. I can always count on my wife – Irena, and, since few years, also on our children – Małgorzata and Marcin who co-create the most modern life of GOMAR.

It should be added that Mr. Michał is an agricultural engineer by profession (he graduated from the Warsaw University of Life Sciences-SGGW), and has always been connected with the garden industry. He first worked in the Seed Head Office in Lipsk where he cooperated with gardeners, and, subsequently, worked in the Garden Co-operatives in Starachowice and Zwoleń, where he was responsible mainly for the fruit and vegetables export. He has been managing his own fruit-growing holding since 1978. After the HORTEX company had been liquidated, he decided to bring the arisen gap into cultivation by launching the fruits and vegetables purchasing centre and apples export (to the East) as well as frozen cherries and blackcurrants to the West European markets. In 1992, he and his wife founded the GOMAR company. Two years later, he leased a refrigerator with the capacity of 2000 tones in Radom. In 1995, he rented in Kielce, and, subsequently, purchased a refrigerator with the capacity of 1800 tones. On the other hand, in 2002, he purchased a modern production plant in Pińczów from the “Agros” company, which prides itself on over 30-year experience in fruits and vegetables processing industry. He invested in modernization and quick development by using preferential credits with grants from the Agency for Restructuring and Modernization of Agriculture. This is the way this specific processing empire managed by Mr. Michał Górniak has grown.
I use the word „empire” on purpose; and it is not an exaggeration. Products under this brand are known not only in Poland, but also almost all over the Europe and America. Fruits and concentrates produced by GOMAR are part of the fruit products of the majority of renowned Polish and foreign companies. They are famous for their perfect quality because this firm does not process just anything, but only the highest quality, selected raw material coming exclusively from permanent contractors.

Everything under control

– Our company cooperates only with renowned producers, where long-term gardening traditions are cherished – emphasizes the company’s owner. – If you want to achieve a perfect final product, the raw material must comply with the highest standards. Due to the fact, all our raw materials come from ecologically clean areas located far from the industrial plants. Once a year, our contractor has to present the results of the soil analysis and the certificate — for each type of the raw materials — issued by an accredited laboratory specializing in examining the content of harmful metals, pesticides, nitrates and nitrites.

It is worth noticing that GOMAR has its own plant laboratory which is one of the most modern ones in the fruits and vegetables processing industry. We work in three shifts, i.e. 24 hours. We control each batch of the raw materials, semi finished goods and packaging in accordance with applicable specifications. Additionally, we control the products and finished products in the course of the production in terms of the physical, physicochemical and microbiological features. Therefore, all is precisely controlled.

Although GOMAR’ quality requirements towards its contractors are very high, and it imposes strict production regimes, suppliers highly value the cooperation with the company. The sale of their products at remunerative prices is guaranteed and they can count for the support as regards the enlargement of their plantations.

The main raw materials come from the areas which are famous for their high gardening culture. So, the vegetables stem from the ecologically clean area of Ponidzie, strawberries from the surroundings of Bieliny, cherries, currants and apricots from sandomierski poviat, chokeberries from near Łęczyca and Kutno. On the other hand, the majority of apples are delivered from the neighborhood of Grójec, i.e. from the largest orchards of the European Union. All plantations are supervised by specialists of raw material service of GOMAR.

One of the biggest assets of Mr. Górniak’s firm is also the technical equipment, such as electronic devices to sort out the fruit, thanks to which worse quality fruits can be precisely selected from a large batch, a modern concentrates production line equipped with 5 Buchar press, Wiegand compacting station, high performance ultra filtration station and aseptic concentrates and pomade packaging line. What is more, the plant dispose of fruit juices and drinks, vegetable juices and fruit-vegetable bottled juices, vegetable salads, compotes — all these highly modern and effective. It is worth mentioning that the production capacity of a set for tomato concentrate production amounts to more than 200 tones per 24 hours. The technology is also the most modern one — proven to guarantee the highest quality of all products.
For the adjustment of his plant to the EU requirements and the improvement of the products quality to comply with the world standards, Mr. Górniak allocated not only the generated GOMAR’s profits but he also benefited, through ARMA, from the SAPARD Program funds and the Sectoral Operation Program.

**Products variety**

The product offer of GOMAR is plenteous. The frozen food includes: strawberry, cherry, plum, gooseberry, black- and redcurrant, raspberry, blackberry, chokeberry, rhubarb, pumpkin, carrot, parsley, leek, celery, onion, pepper, cauliflower, broccoli, tomato, Brussels sprouts, various mixes and what not. The offer includes also apple, cherry, strawberry, blackcurrant, chokeberry, tomato concentrates, fruit pomade, and MICHAŚ carrot-fruit juices which the plant is most pride of and which were awarded prizes at prestigious international trade fairs. The firm offers these juices in seven flavors. They are natural, consist of strawberries, raspberries, banana, peaches and oranges, but do not include any additives. The Poles and the consumers from overseas love them because they are rich in vitamins, microelements and other nutritional elements.

However, it is not all. The processing plant from Pińczów recommends also delicious, natural fruit juices in eight flavors, excellent fruit drinks of seven types, as well as nectars and a large variety of different fruit syrups. The large offer of fruit products are worth mentioning as well. They include jams, plum jams and the unique “Fantazja Śliwkowa” (Plum Fantasy) with cacao and vanilla added, marmalades, compotes – delicate, fresh fruits used for their production and their exquisite taste will satisfy even the most choosy gourmets.

Vegetable products can not be omitted either. This group consists of various pickles, salads, ketchups and a large variety of canned mixes for preparing salads. The famous pickled cucumbers from Pińczów must be mentioned as well—who does not know their delicate taste and plenteous aroma?

All the products are excellent and of supreme quality. They are produced in accordance with the ISO and HACCP standards, posses kosher and Russian GOSTSTANDART certificates and are registered in the American FDA. Therefore, more than 65% of these delicious products are sold to foreign consumers, among others to: Germany, the USA, Canada, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Sweden, France, Norway, Finland and other countries in all parts of the world. The artistry of Polish gardeners and fruit and vegetable processors is celebrated all over the world.

GOMAR company has also put up a few of its best products do the prestigious program of the Minister of Agriculture: “Discover Great Food” (PDŻ). Two of them: „Nektar z Aronii” (Chokeberry Nectar) and „Powidła Śliwkowe” (Plum Jam) have been already positively evaluated and they are authorized to use the PDŻ quality mark.

**Antoni Radzewicz**

*Agency for the Restructuring and Modernization of Agriculture*
“Truskawka kaszubska” or “kaszëbskô malëna” is one of 14 Polish products registered by the European Commission under the Protected Geographical Indication category and thus participating in the Community high-quality food scheme.

Two names are used to describe the product: “truskawka kaszubska” or in the Kashubian language “kaszëbskô malëna”. They can be used interchangeably. The name “truskawka kaszubska” is used most frequently in case of sale of strawberries in parts of the country other than Kaszuby and abroad. The second name, commonly used in particular by inhabitants of Kaszuby is “kaszëbskô malëna”.

**Unique quality of the product**

Under the protected designation “truskawka kaszubska” or “kaszëbskô malëna” only strawberries of the following varieties: Senga Sengana, Elsanta, Honeyeye can be sold. These fruits are quite variable in shape: spherical-conical or spherical-kidney-shaped. The longitudinal section is heart-shaped, the cross-section is round. First fruits are large or medium-sized. The color of the fruit skin is dark-red, uniform over the entire surface, slightly glossy and intensely red when cut. Strawberries are firm, slightly hard and at the same time juicy.

They are covered with a silky, very thin skin on which the seeds are visible and palpable.

The high quality of “truskawka kaszubska” or “kaszëbskô malëna” results from its very strong, unique and intense flavor and aroma. This product is also sweeter when compared to strawberries coming from other regions. This results from the specific microclimate of the Kashubian Lakeland.

**Place of production and relation to the geographical area**

“Truskawka kaszubska” or “kaszëbskô malëna” is produced in the area of the Pomorskie
voivodeship, in the following poviat: Kartuzy, Kościelzna, Bytów and communes: Przywidz, Węjherowo, Luzino, Szymud, Linia, Łęczyce and Cewice. There are about 1500 strawberry plantations there with a total area of 1800-2000 ha.

The reputation held by “truskawka kaszubska” or “kaszebskô malëna” could not be maintained, had it not been for the climatic and soil conditions which foster cultivation of this fruit in this area. Poor soils and severe climate of the Kashubian Lakeland have a favorable impact on the process of strawberry development and ripening. The flowering time is clearly delayed due to a short period of vegetation in this area. Moreover, large differences in the relative height allow cultivating strawberries on the slopes exposed to sunlight, which ensures proper ripening of the fruit.

History and reputation

Strawberries were brought into the territory of Kaszuby at the beginning of the 20th century and the area of their cultivation was increasing intensely in that region. This was due to the unique taste of the fruit and favorable soil and climate conditions in the area. Cultivation and sale of strawberries started being profitable for the inhabitants of Kaszuby fairly quickly because consumers appreciated their exceptional taste and high quality. Strawberry fields became an integral part of the Kashubian landscape. It was the abundance and popularity of strawberries which led to the fact that at the beginning of the 1970s a strawberry-picking feast was organized. Since 1971, on the first Sunday of July in Złota Góra near Brodnica Góra, a large folk picnic has been organized by the farmers from the Kartuzy poviat. The name and course of this event are inseparably linked with the tradition of harvest time of strawberries which constitute the greatest natural wealth of Kaszuby. The culminating point of the event are strawberries in various, not only edible but also stage and contest forms, according to the slogan: all about strawberries.

The exceptionality and popularity of “truskawka kaszubska” or “kaszebskô malëna” is indicated by the level of its crops in the region as well as numerous references in the national, regional and local press showing that everything that relates to this fruit is very important for the inhabitants of Kaszuby. So, “truskawka kaszubska” or “kaszebskô malëna” became a part of the culture and identity of the Kashubian population. The reputation of “truskawka kaszubska” and first of all its strong connection with the above geographical area are also confirmed by the results by the consumer research. 67% of respondents admitted that they knew at least one of the names under which the product was sold - “truskawka kaszubska” or “kaszebskô malëna.” In addition, it was regarded by the respondents as tastier and sweeter in comparison to other strawberries.

Department of Geographical Indications
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
Hospitable lands – Pomorze, Mazury and Warmia

Poland is a country abundant with touristic and landscape attractions. Forests cover almost 30% of the country. In Poland, there are 23 national parks of special natural value, with habitats of protected animals and plants, 120 landscape parks, 1354 nature reserves - animal, landscape, forest, plant, water or inanimate nature ones. Cultural heritage resources constitute an important element of tourist attractiveness of Polish rural areas.

Regions in the north of Poland: Pomorze (Pomerania), Warmia and Mazury (Masuria) constitute in administrative terms the Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship (the main city – Szczecin), the Pomorskie Voivodeship (the main city – Gdańsk), the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship (the main city – Olsztyn) and the southern parts of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie, as well as the Podlaskie ones. Those areas have an extremely varied land form features, exceptional natural and landscape attractions and an interesting history whose monuments are looked after by local societies.

Tourists who wish to visit those regions may spend their time bathing in the sea and walking along beautiful beaches with fine white sand, or they can set off by bike to explore the forests abundant with undergrowth (mushrooms, blackberries, blueberries and cranberries). Numerous lakes are a paradise for those keen on sailing and fishing. One can also try fishing in the sea profiting from the offer of Baltic Sea fishers at the seaside. Shore waters of the Baltic Sea, the Gdańsk Bay and the Vistula Lagoon, as well as the Pomeranian and Masurian lakes provide us with an opportunity to do various water sports. One can swim in the rivers and lakes of Pomorze, Warmia and Mazury in canoes as well. Areas which are particularly beautiful and unique for their natural and landscape properties are covered with special care as National or Landscape Parks. They are available for sightseeing on condition that the obligatory rules are observed. Pomorze, Warmia and Mazury have also numerous tangible culture monuments located on those areas. Rural development heritage parks, palaces and manor houses, sacral structures and craft workshops tell visitors the story of these areas. One of the ways to get to know a region is to get close to its people and nature through agritourism.

Every year more and more agritourism farms are established in Poland. The Central Statistical Office informs that as of 31 October 2010 their number was 7,640, out of which 382 were located in the Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship, 587 in the Pomorskie Voivodeship and 721 in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship. Out of the total of 81,767 beds in agritourism farms, 4,226 were located in the Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship and 6,909 in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, which means that almost 23% of beds are located in those three northern voivodships. This attests to the touristic potential of those regions.

The Polish Federation of Country Tourism “Hospitable Farms”, which gathers at present 71 local agritourism organizations from all voivodships, has been operating since 1996. On the Federation’s website at www.agroturystyka.pl,
one can find information about the agritourism offer of all the local associations and touristic attractions in the vicinity of a given agritourism entity.

Let us start then a trip around Poland, getting to know interesting, though less known, corners located not in cities in the region, but in the countryside, near agritourism farms.

At the western end of Pomorze, there is the Wolin Island, with the Woliński National Park. Still active, steep shore cliffs of the height of up to 95 m asl are located here. These are the highest ones in Poland. At the top, near the cliff, there grows the unique orchid beech. In the main part of the Park there are moraine hills of the height up to 115 m asl. These are covered with 100-year old trees, and in the eastern part there are four postglacial lakes. 230 species of birds have their habitants in the Woliński National Park. One can also see here a show bison pen established in 1976. The Park is covered with attractive cycle paths and walking routes.

Going east, we can choose to rest near beautiful sea beaches of Pobierowo, Rewal or Niechorze, or look for interesting places farther away from the seaside.

Discussing places of interest at the seaside one must not forget about the ruins of the church in Trzęsacz. Until present, only one wall of this gothic church (erected in the 14th - 15th century) has remained. For years, the rest has been gradually sliding down from the cliff to the sea. In Niechorze one can see a sea lantern from 1866. Going east along roads in the mainland, let us have a visit in Krąg, where the Podewils Castle, also set off by narrow gauge from Gryfice, via Trzęsacz, Rewal, Niechorze to Pogorzela. On Sunday, the railway is pulled by an old steam engine. Once you are in Gryfice, it is also worth going several kilometres south to Ploty, where two monument castles are located - an old one from the 13th century, situated in the eastern part of the town, and a “new” one in the centre - a renaissance residence surrounded by a park.

Food
built in the 15th century on oak logs, like houses in Venice, as it was surrounded by wetlands. Gothic cellars have remained in the castle. It has 52 rooms and 365 windows, which corresponds to the number of weeks and days in a calendar year. At present, the castle houses an elegant hotel. Going north from Krąg, we arrive at Darłowo whose most important monument is the Castle of Pomeranian Princes from the 15th century. Farther in the east, between Darłowo and Leba, there is the so-called “Checkeder Land” (Kraina w kratę). The name has been derived from wood frame construction – wooden elements painted black are arranged in a checked pattern completed with white walls. Approximately 2,500 such buildings have been preserved in over 90 villages - most of them in the village of Swolowo. This village has remained a unique arrangement of buildings, which has been considered a monument of the European heritage.

Another natural object – the Słowiński National Park, famous for its wandering dunes, sandbars and large coastal lakes - Gardno and Lebsko - is situated near Leba. One can admire the park premises from the viewing tower on the Rowokół hill (115 m asl).

The village of Kluki with a heritage park consisting of 20 houses inhabited by Słowiniacy, a population group related to Kashubians is situated by the Lebsko Lake, within the premises of the park.

The Drawieński National Park, covering part of the Drawsko Forest, 13 glacial lakes, areas along the Drawa and Płociczna Rivers is situated in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship, in its central part. A canoe trip along the Drawa River is the greatest attraction of the area, but one can also see this part of the country walking. The park delights with an abundance of both animals and plants. The habitants of the park include beavers, badgers, raccoon dogs, as well as black storks and white-tailed eagles.

There are more landscape parks in the Pomeranian Voivodeship: the Słupia Valley Landscape Park, the Kashubian Landscape Park, the Pomeranian Landscape Park (between Leba and Rozewie and near Tricity), Vistula Spit Landscape Park. All those places are worth visiting, as they offer special landscape attractions.

In terms of monuments of the old architecture, it is worth visiting Lebork and its castle built by Knights of the Cross in the 14th century,
a gothic church and city walls, as well as Wejherowo with a set of 26 baroque chapels from the 17th century. On a high cliff on the Rozewie Cape, there is a sea lantern, and inside there is a Lantern Museum.

The Pomorskie Voivodeship abuts with the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, i.e. subsequent regions of the northern Poland – Warmia and Mazury – farther in the east, between Gdańsk and Elbląg. Mazury, also referred to as a land of a thousand lakes, is famous primarily for the greatest complex of Polish lakes – the Great Masurian Lakes. These have been connected with each other with channels built from the 2nd half of the 18th century until the beginning of the 20th century. It was planned to continue the works in order to connect the lakes with the Baltic Sea through the Masurian Channel. The wars made the construction stop, still water gates enabling sailing in both directions were partially built. At present, the Guzianka water gate is the one which is used to the greatest extent, with approximately 20,000 ships, yachts and canoes passing there every year. The Great Masurian Lakes are a paradise for those keen on sailing, canoeing, ice boating, diving and fishing. Mikołajki is the main yacht harbour, while the Śniardwy Lake is the greatest Masurian lake and, at the same time, the greatest Polish lake.

Those keen of canoe trips are recommended to have one along the Krutynia river – through the beautiful Piska Forest, abundant with interesting specimens of animals, aqua birds, or one along the Czarna Hańcza river and the Augustowski Channel.

As far as monument buildings located here are concerned, it is worth visiting a residence of a Prussian family – Lehn- dorff in Sztynort erected on the cape and surrounded by three-hundred years old oaks.

Mazury and Warmia partially are the areas on which numerous castles built in the 14th century by Knights of the Cross have been preserved. The most interesting ones, obviously besides Malbork, are located in Ryn, Giżycko, Barciany and Kętrzyn. The last one is attractive to tourist also due to its more recent history. Eastwards from Kętrzyn, in Gierloż, the headquarters re-
ferred to as the Wolf’s Lair (Wilczy Szaniec) were established by Hitler. Several dozens of shelters, an airport, a railway line and a power plant were built on the wooded area. At present, part of the area can be visited; however, the rest still covers some secrets.

The Elbląski Channel, built in the mid 19th century, 212 m long, which has, besides water gates, a system of ways to pull ships on rails between the lakes, is one of the most interesting objects of the Polish technique. One can go on a cruise from Ostróda to Elbląg. The Augustowsk Channel built in the 1st half of the 19th century, connecting the Biebrza and Niemno Rivers is another enterprise of that type. 80 km out of the total length of 101 km is located on the territory of Poland.

In the north-east of Poland large and valuable forest complexes are situated as well: the Augustów Primeval Forest and the Knyszyńska one. The most valuable natural elements of Mazury and Warmia are protected as national parks, e.g.: the Wigry National Park, the Biebrza National Park, the Dylewskie Hills Landscape Park, the Masurian National Park, the Suwalski Landscape Park. Each of them is worth being described in details.

The beauty of the northern regions of Poland is hard to describe, it is better to visit those places and get to know them on one’s own, taking, at the same time, advantage of the offer of accommodation in agritourism farms, and taste local specialties about which we are writing in this issue of the magazine.

Ewa Woicza-Bekas
Agency for Restructuring and Modernization of Agriculture (ARMA)
Roasted country-style ham, kielbasa lisiecka, kabanos sausages, Kujawski sour rye soup, cheese, yoghurt, kefir and button mushrooms, tomatoes, strawberries, jams, dumplings and pancakes, fruit and herbal teas, various spices and even honey and wheat beers and many other Polish, delicious, aromatic and healthy products were presented on Saturday, 18 June 2011 in the gardens of the Warsaw University of Life Sciences in Warsaw during the “Discover Great Food” Picnic organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The meeting with wonderful, Polish top-quality food was opened by Minister Marek Sawicki, together with the ambassadors of good, healthy food, i.e., a group of children participating in the “Glass of Milk” and “Fruit at School” programmes.

“You are warmly welcomed in the hospitable gardens of the Warsaw University of Life Sciences in Warsaw, at the Picnic which gives an opportunity to explore and taste the best Polish products, healthy and safe. The products which, on one hand, are prepared according to good old recipes, and, on the other hand, are manufactured in the most modern processing plants. Thanks to these good raw materials, proven recipe and modern processing, Polish food is today well-known and appreciated not only in Europe but also worldwide”, said the minister of agriculture.

In addition, Marek Sawicki stressed that Poland was an important exporter of agri-food products as demonstrated by the amount of about PLN 54 billion which we have achieved through sales of food products in foreign markets. “In foreign trade, we still have a surplus of PLN 10.5 billion. Therefore, here I would like to thank farmers and processors and to invite everybody to visit, taste and explore good Polish food” - said the head of the Ministry of Agriculture, the host of the Picnic.

This year, the honorary guest of the event was Prime Minister Donald Tusk, who visited the stands, tasted products presented
there and also talked to exhibitors and journalists. “Today, nobody doubts that our country is becoming a model country in the European Union as regards production of healthy food,” said the Prime Minister and stressed with pride that everyone could be recommended our Polish cucumbers and other vegetables, fruit and cold cuts.

Moreover, the Prime Minister announced his participation in the event organized in Brussels, promoting Polish strawberries. He also ensured that Polish cucumbers and other vegetables would accompany him at the international meetings during the Polish EU presidency.

During this year’s event, around 100 companies presented their offers, including 40 with the PDŻ mark. These are products of the highest quality which are permanently under control thanks to which their quality and gustatory values are always at the same high level. This is a guarantee for the consumer that a product which he/she found tasty once will be equally tasty all the time.

The Picnic organized during the most beautiful time of the year, on the threshold of the summer, was an excellent opportunity for active recreation in the open, among the flavors and aromas of delicacies of Polish cuisine. In addition to the numerous tastings and cooking shows, for example, under the “I, button mushroom” campaign, the PDŻ Picnic means also the number of other attractions. Contests and games for
children, shows of historic agricultural machinery or technology workshops on the interesting and important issues, such as chemistry in food, production of sausages or flavors and aromas in food – conducted by the specialists from the Faculty of Food Sciences SGGW.

In addition, children could spend time having fun at the “Milk Island” where consumption of milk was promoted in an attractive form. On the other hand, animal lovers had an opportunity to visit a mini zoo which featured farm animals: cows, sheep, horses, pigs and poultry.

All these attractions and the palatable tastings of organic, traditional and regional Polish specialties were accompanied by performances of folk bands and a show of Slavic fashion organized within the framework of the Slavic Heritage Days. Traditionally, the participants in the “Discover Great Food” Picnic had an opportunity to buy traditional Polish food which successfully conquers the hearts of consumers throughout the entire European Union and is increasingly recognized in other continents.

Once again, the Picnic, thanks to its unique family atmosphere, products of exceptional flavors and aromas, attracted crowds of the people from Warsaw. The next edition is to be held next year.

Press Office
MARD
The market of regional products in Poland

With 28 products included in the EU system of protected designations of origin (PDO), protected geographical indications (PGI), traditional specialities guaranteed (TSG), Poland occupies the 9th place among all the EU states in terms of the number of registered products’ names. In 2011, the number of registered products’ names in the entire EU exceeded 1000. We are a long way from such potentates as Italy or France, which have, respectively, 230 and 184 registered names, but when looking at the List of Traditional Products, containing the potential candidates for the EU registration, we may be optimistic. The national List of Traditional Products, into which products are entered by the Minister of Agriculture, contains already almost 900 products.

In the European Commission, the names of another 6 Polish products, whose specifications have already been published in the EC Official Journal, are waiting for the registration. In addition, two further applications for the registration of Polish products’ names were sent to the EC.

The registration of the first Polish name – bryndza podhalarska as PDO – took place in 2007. In 2008-2009, 14 names were registered and in 2010 – 8 names. In 2011, 5 Polish products’ names were registered (Table 4, page 61).

Registration is not enough

After registration the names in the EU system, producers are entitled to use the names with respect to the products they produce only when they subject their production process to verification of compliance with the specification and obtain a quality certificate or a certificate of conformity.

Verification of compliance of the production process with the specifications of the products’ registered as PDO, PGI and TSG are carried out at the request of producers by the voivodeship inspector of the AFQI (Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection, Polish abbreviation IJHARS) or authorized certification body. The scope and frequency of these verifications depends on the

Oscypek

Miód pitny

Rogal świętomarciński

Food safety
specificity of the production process of a given product. After the verification, if the production process is compliant with the specification, the producer receives a certificate of quality issued by the voivodship inspector of the AFQI or certificate of conformity issued by the authorized certification body. These documents entitle producers to use:

- the name registered as PDO/PGI,
- expressions: protected designation of origin (PDO), protected geographical indication (PGI), traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG),
- PDO, PGI or TSG symbols.

Currently, in addition to the voivodeship inspectors of the AFQI, 5 private certification bodies are authorized to carry out verifications, issue and revoke certificates conforming compliance of the production process of agricultural products and foodstuffs having PDO, PGI and TSG with the specification:
- PNG Sp. z o.o.,
- Polskie Centrum Badań i Certyfikacji S.A.,
- COBICO Sp. z o.o.,
- Biocert Małopolska Sp. z o.o.,
- TÜV Rheinland Polska Sp. z o.o.

The first verifications of compliance were carried out in 2007 and until the end of June 2011, 421 quality certificates and certificates of conformity were issued in total for 16 agricultural products and foodstuffs registered as a PDO, PGI and TSG (Table). Given that in recent months several new names of Polish products have been registered, it is expected that within the year 2011 more applications for verification of compliance with the specification will be submitted (Table).

### Number of issued quality certificates and certificates of conformity in the years 2007-2011

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q.c. – quality certificates; c.c. – certificates of conformity; * - status as of 30.06.2011

Not only oscypek

When writing about regional and traditional products, the most frequently mentioned products are: oscypek, rogal świętomarciński, kiełbasa lisiecka, pierekaczewnik or obwarzanek krakowski. Not all registered Polish products have such a strong media support and are recognized by consumers, also outside the area of their production. It is worth remembering that the EU register includes not only famous oscypek, bryndza podhalańska or pierekaczewnik, which are most often given as examples of registered products and presented during various events promoting regional and traditional products. Less known registered Polish products are, for example, suska sechlońska, wiśnia nadwiślanka, fasola korczyńska or recently registered karp zatorski. These products are certainly known in the areas where they are produced but outside those areas only few people have ever heard about them.

Suska sechlońska is a product whose name probably is the biggest surprise for people who have heard it for the first time. Suska sechorńska is a slightly dried and smoked plum whose original name is derived from the local dialect, from the area where this plum is produced. Suska means a dry plum (slightly dried and smoked plum) and the additional designation sechorńska is derived from the name of Sechna located in the Laskowa Andruty kaliskie

Kiełbasa lisiecka

Food

Summer 2011
municipality, Limanowa poviat, one of four localities in the Małopolskie voivodeship where suska sechlońska may be produced. In the past, two names were used to define that village – Sechna and Sechlna and the name “sechlońska” is derived from the latter. The inhabitants of the village are called “sechloki”. In the territory of the municipalities of Laskowa, Limanowa poviat, Iwkowa, Brzesko poviat, Łososina Dolna, Nowy Sącz poviat and Żegocina, Bochnia poviat, there are characteristic kilns where plums from local orchards have been dried and smoked for years. Perhaps in the first half of the 18th century each holding in this area had already its own orchard. According to old tales, the history of drying plums was related to the activity of a local priest who ordered his parishioners to plant several or a dozen or so fruit trees, as a penance. The best crop was given by plum trees. However, the farmers who wanted to outsmart the priest started producing śliwowica (plum brandy). To prevent spread of drunkenness, the priest ordered to dry fruit because smoked plums could not be used to make śliwowica anymore. The custom of drying plums survived till modern times and the method of production remained virtually unchanged. Plums are still dried in the specific kilns of which the oldest one is almost one hundred years old and there are 677 kilns in four municipalities.

The last registered Polish product is a carp – karp zatorski, which is farmed exclusively in earth carp ponds in accordance with the “Zator rearing method” based on the two-year farming system and sold fresh, unprocessed. Production of karp zatorski is conducted in three neighbouring municipalities: Zator and Przeciszów in Oświęcim poviat and Spytkowice in Wadowice poviat, located in the western part of the Małopolska voivodeship. Fish ponds occupy around 22% of the area of the Zator municipality.

The centre of carp farming in Zator is one of the oldest in the region. The beginning of fishing and carp farming in Zator is dated back to the time of the reign of Bolesław Krzywousty (1086-1138). Significant development of fish farming in this area had taken place after 1870 when the entire complex of fish ponds was rebuilt – its area increased twice and in the years 1891-1894, fish stores and ponds were built in Laskowa. The information on fish farming in the Zator ponds was detailed documented in the pond registers whereas extensive knowledge of the issues of fish farming as well as of economy contributed towards regarding the Zator ponds, before World War I, as very modern. After another heyday of farming, after the end of World War I, Zator became the largest producer of fish in Małopolska. In order to organize fish trade, in 1933 the fish collection point was opened in Kraków at Dietla Street.

After World War II, the issues of ownership of fish farms changed, also, financial problems arose, but according to the long-term tradition, fish production was continued in the area of Zator. On a basis of past experiences, fish farmers commenced the progressive implementation of the “Zator rearing method”, which is used until nowadays. Now, carp farming is very developed and the demand for karp zatorski, resulting from the long-term reputation of this product, is increasing. For many years the most important event in the region has been the annual “Carp Feast” organized at the turn of June and July in order to celebrate the memory of the history of the city of Zator and the whole area of fish farming, including famous carp.
day feast is, _inter alia_, an opportunity to taste carp served in many ways e.g.: “po zatorsku” — in cream with mushrooms, parsley leaves and cheese as well as marinated and smoked.

**The future of regional and traditional products**

Poland may enjoy the ever-increasing number of registered names of Polish products and knowledge of consumers of these products is still growing but still is not sufficient. One of the main goals of the system for protection of regional and traditional products’ names is to create opportunities for producers to achieve measurable benefits from sale of products with registered names. The European Commission is constantly working on simplifying the quality systems, including the registration of the regional and traditional products’ names and creating possibly clear rules as to their functioning, so that, as many producers as possible could join them. At the same time, the EC attaches great importance to the education of consumers regarding the functioning of the quality systems and recognition of quality products. Of great importance is also the role of national institutions, starting from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, through the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection (IJHARS), to local self-governments, in constant dissemination of knowledge about traditional and regional products. The role of the control bodies is also to ensure that the registered names are properly protected against practices of unfair producers.

The importance of the consumer awareness in recognizing original products corresponding to the specifications, on a basis of which their names have been registered, is illustrated by the examples of famous oscypek or e.g. kiełbasa lisiecka. Many types of cheese, having nothing to do with the product, whose name was registered, were sold under the name of oscypek. Still, many consumers do not know how genuine oscypek looks. The similar situation is in case of kiełbasa lisiecka which originally can be produced only from pork but till the registration and carrying out the control by the AFQI, for example “kiełbasa lisiecka drobiowa” (made of poultry meat) could be found in the market.

Poland has a great potential with regard to regional and traditional products and the activities of producers, media and promoting institutions as well as control bodies will certainly bring better and better results in making consumers commonly aware of registered products and in making their production not only the passion of producers but also a source of measurable financial advantages.

**Organic Farming and Regional Products Office**

**Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection**
control in the market of fresh fruit and vegetables

Fresh fruit and vegetables placed on the market in the European Union and those at the stage of trade with third countries must comply with the commercial quality requirements laid down in the Community regulations.

The regulations require the owner of fruit and vegetables covered by the marketing standards to comply with them. The trader may exhibit these products, offer them for sale, deliver them and place them on the market within the European Union only in accordance with the marketing standards and is responsible for ensuring such compliance.

Commercial quality standards

The commercial quality standards for fresh fruit and vegetables have been laid down in the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 543/2011.

The European Commission singled out ten species of fresh fruit and vegetables with the highest economic value for the European Union, namely: apples, pears, strawberries, citrus fruit, kiwifruit, lettuce and endive, peaches and nectarines, sweet peppers, table grapes, tomatoes for which application of the specific marketing standards has been provided.

The specific marketing standards contain very precise definitions of the products for which they are to be applied. In addition, the minimum requirements, quality classes, provisions concerning size, tolerance, presentation and marking (including the obligation to indicate the country of origin and other information which the standard stipulates) have been laid down.

Fresh fruit and vegetables for which no specific marketing standards have been established must meet the requirements of the general marketing standard. The general marketing standard is a concise description of the provisions with respect to the minimum requirements and tolerances allowed with respect to these requirements. Furthermore, it imposes an obligation to mark the products with the country of origin.

Retail sale

Fresh fruit and vegetables may be put up for sale provided that the retailer places in a visible place, near the product, the clear, specific information about the country of origin. In addition, in case of products for which the specific marketing standards have been established, it is necessary to indicate the quality class, and, in accordance with the provisions of those standards, the variety or commercial type. The information must be presented in such a way so as to avoid misleading the consumer.

Rules of official controls

The JHARS Inspection was authorized to control fresh fruit and vegetables, in terms of their compliance with the European Union provisions regarding the commercial quality, pursuant to the act of 19 December 2003 on the organization of the fruit and vegetables market, hops market, tobacco market and dried fodder market and of the markets in flax and hemp grown for fiber. As the sole authority in Poland, it has competence in this area.

Pursuant to the aforementioned act, the JHARS Chief Inspector, after consulting the voivodeship inspectors, draws up a plan of selective controls of fresh fruit and vegetables in terms of their compliance with the European Union provisions. The function of the control body is performed by the JHARS voivodeship inspector.

Controls of fresh fruit and vegetables carried out by the JHARS Inspection concern only the commercial quality provisions. The health requirements are checked by the State Sanitary Inspection. Supervision over the compliance with phytosanitary requirements is exercised by the Main Inspectorate of Plant Health and Seed Inspection.

The JHARS Inspection carries out controls of the commercial quality of fresh fruit and vegetables in the internal market, at the point of import from third countries and point of export to third countries.
Controls in the domestic market

Fresh fruit and vegetables in the Polish market are controlled under the targeted controls. Targeted controls are nationwide and are carried out simultaneously in all voivodeships.

For each targeted control, taking into account the seasonality of supply, the specific species of fresh fruit and vegetables, considered as priority ones, are selected. The most frequently selected species include: apples, citrus fruit, tomatoes, cucumbers, carrots, cabbage and pepper.

Between the 3rd quarter of 2004 and the end of the 1st quarter of 2011, the JHARS Inspection carried out 25 nationwide targeted controls of fresh fruit and vegetables. In the course of a single control, the goods from 160 operators, on average, were controlled, which over the above-mentioned period gives a total number of almost 4,000 controls of traders dealing with marketing of fresh fruit and vegetables.

In the years 2005-2010, the JHARS Inspection verified the commercial quality inspection of more than 23,000 lots (Chart 17, page 61). From 2005 to 2009, fresh fruit and vegetables were controlled in each quarter. Given the improvement in the quality of these products, in 2010 the nationwide controls were carried out once every 6 months (Chart 17, page 61).

It is worth to stress that in addition to targeted activities, the JHARS Inspection also carries out ad hoc controls. These controls are either nationwide or local. Decisions to carry out this type of activities are made by the JHARS Chief Inspector on a basis of the information proving the need to verify the specific market. The subject of the control are primarily seasonal products.

Controls in trade with third countries

The JHARS Inspection carries out controls of fresh vegetables and fruit imported from third countries to Poland and exported from Poland to third countries. Should it be found that fresh fruit and vegetables comply with the requirements laid down in the provisions, the JHARS Inspection issues The certificate of compliance with the community marketing standards for fresh fruit and vegetables. This document is a basis for the admission of fresh fruit and vegetables to trading or for their export outside the European Union.

The weight of lots controlled at the import and export stage still increases (Chart 18, page 61).

In 2005, the JHARS Inspection controlled almost 56 thousand tonnes of fresh fruit and vegetables originating in third countries and more than 69,000 tonnes in 2010. In 2005, controls covered more than 434 thousand tonnes of fresh fruit and vegetables intended for export to third countries and in 2010 more than 984 thousand tonnes.

The number of controls of fresh fruit and vegetables carried out in 2010 was by 12% higher than the number of controls carried out in 2009 (Chart 19, page 61).

The market of fresh fruit and vegetables in Poland is intensely supervised. The possibility of cooperation within the framework of the common market enables the rapid exchange of information on the irregularities found. The commercial quality of fresh fruit and vegetables being a subject of trade in Poland is under permanent control.

Commercial Quality Control Office
Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection (GIJHARS)
Strawberries on Polish table

Currently, Poland is the second, after China, supplier of strawberries in the global market and belongs to the largest global producers of this fruit. Strawberries appeared in Poland in the 18th century and started enjoying greater popularity in the 1st half of the 20th century. The varieties locally grown in Poland are characteristic for their specific taste, for example, truskawka kaszubska, truskawki bielińskie, “Buska faworytka”.

Late spring and early summer is the season for strawberries. Red, juicy, sweet – it is hard to resist them! Not only do they look appetizing but also are very healthy and tasty in any form. There may be many of these forms, as evidenced by the Internet Great Strawberry E-Book containing 440 recipes!

However, let us start with the traditional Polish strawberry soup. Its preparation consisted in pouring into boiling milk, while still whipping, yolks mixed with sugar. Strawberries rubbed through a sieve were put directly into the pot with milk. The soup was served with croutons or biscuits. On the other hand, the recipes of regional Kashubian cuisine include a dish: strawberry cream with rum. Also preparing by Polish housewives the sweet strawberries products such as strawberry compote or strawberry jam, which are to be enjoyed during the long winter evenings, has a long tradition.

The popular sweet dishes and desserts made of strawberries in Poland are: pierogi with strawberries, pancakes with strawberries, dumplings with strawberries, kefir and strawberry cocktails, strawberry sorbets, cakes with strawberries (fruit layer cakes, fruit shortcake cupcakes, sponge cake roulades, yeast cakes with fruit).

In addition to these traditional dishes with strawberries, new dishes with interesting flavors and appearance are contemporarily created. This is for example, strawberry salad with mint and feta cheese, which also contains arugula, black olives, chopped dill, honey sauce (honey, lemon juice, olive oil, potentially a clove of cheese) and spices – sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.

The most delicious dishes of Polish strawberries are made in the summer season when fresh fruit is used to prepare them.

Ewa Woicka-Bokas
Agency for Restructuring and Modernization of Agriculture
Polish cuisine is extraordinarily rich, interesting and full of delicious flavours. It is an additional attraction for tourists to discover them while visiting the particular parts of Poland. So, we invite you to a culinary journey around our country!

We will start with the regions located in the north of Poland: Pomorze (Pomerania – western and eastern part) and Warmia and Mazury (Masuria). In summer, they are particularly often visited by Polish and foreign tourists, due to their natural values: kilometre long, white and sandy beaches at the Baltic Sea, beautiful lakes, gentle hills, vast forests full of undergrowth.

Pomorze is a vast region situated on the Baltic Sea stretching from the mouth of the Oder River in the west (at the border with Germany) to Pasłęka River in the east (at the border with Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation). Warmia and Mazury are situated in the north-east of Poland and, apart from a little fragment of the Vistula Lagoon, do not have direct access to the sea.

Within the territory of Poland, except for little areas such as Żuławy, Pyrzyce region, soil and climate conditions are not favourable for the cultivation of more demanding plants. Low class soil predetermines in this region, and, additionally, due to its northern location, the growing season of plants is shorter than in the south of Poland. However, at the same time, the sea and numerous lakes provided the food – delicious fish. Undoubtedly, these factors influenced the creation of various culinary traditions of these regions. Potatoes, rye, Swedish turnip and buckwheat could be cultivated on the sandy soil. On the other hand, one could not only breed animals that did not require special feed (ducks, gooses, goats) or could use the vast available meadows and pastures (cattle), but also catch salt and freshwater fish.

The northern Poland is a region of culinary traditions stemming from diverse sources. This variety of resources must not be forgotten. The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development keeps the List of Traditional Products which includes products whose quality or extraordinary features and properties result from applying traditional production methods being. These methods are not only a part of the region’s cultural heritage in which they are produced, but also a part of the local community identity. At present, this list consists of 887 products. In particular voivodeships, the products are approved by the Marshalls. In three voivodeships in the northern Poland, more than 150 products entered on the list – the majority of them in the Pomorskie Voivodeship (118), a few times less in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship (21) and in the Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship (11).

In the above mentioned main regions in the northern Poland, smaller regions can be distinguished as well, and, sometimes, their culture...
and culinary traditions are very specific. Their regional products often enter the national list or receive the protection of EU quality systems and, as a result, are used for promotion of the entire region.

In the Pomorskie Voivodeship such regions comprise: Kaszuby (Kashubia), Kociewie, and Lower Vistula Valley.

The geographical Kaszuby is partly located at the seaside, and partly inland, where numerous lakes and forest can be found. Their main municipal centres are Wejherowo, Kartuzy, Puck and Kościerzyna. The local cuisine of the Kaszuby seaside is based on sea fish, in particular herrings, sprats, flounders, salmon and cods, whereas the lake part – on freshwater fish, in particular on eel, sander, pike and perch. In the parts richly covered by forests, the dishes will be often made from mushrooms, bilberries and cranberries. Dishes prepared from poultry, especially from gooses and ducks, as well as dishes containing potatoes and Swedish turnip are very popular within the entire Kaszuby. Kashubian cuisine consists also of delicious marinates, in particular gherkins and pickles. Worth mentioning are also the interesting soups, for example, buttermilk, pear, pumpkin, dried fruit soups or the most famous one – the Swedish turnip soup.

Breeds of geese have been developing in Kaszuby for many years and there still exists the saying “Kaszuby geśiną słynące” (“Kashubia is famous for goose meat”). The local traditional delicacies known among the residents of Kaszuby for generations include smoked, stuffed, filled geese, and so called „okrasta kaszubska”, in other words – „obona” or „łobona”. In the traditional version, the grease was prepared from chopped goose meat and fat which were put in layers in earthenware jugs, and the layers were sprinkled with salt. In the sophisticated version, the grease is heavily seasoned with herbs. It was usually made in autumn, when the gooses were slaughtered, and stored in the larders all year long. The grease is used to flavor the soups, sauces and to butter the bread. The grease entered the national List of Traditional Products.

Another goose meat products from the list is piersnik dębogórski, i.e. smoked goose breast. Two symmetrical breast are cut off (along with the skin) from the bone, folded and bound with a string. So prepared “piersniki”: are being sunk in the brine for 24 hours, and subsequently smoked using exclusively deciduous tree, e.g. alder, beech, oak, adding, for better aroma, juniper branches. Smoked „piersniki” stored in an airy place are being fresh for 2 – 3 months. „Piersniki” were being prepared for various types of holidays.

A more labour-consuming dish is the “laced goose” served on special occasion, such as wedding. The goose rubbed with salt and marjoram is being stuffed with the buckwheat and cooked potatoes filling, and, after being prefried, stewed under cover. Next to the roasted goose, pieces of turnip and potatoes sprinkled with marjoram can be placed.

On the other hand, among the Kashubian dishes being made from sea fish, included in the list of traditional products, the following ones are worth recommending and tasting: Kashubian herring, Kashubian smoked eel, Kashubian cod meatballs and Kashubian cod liver. Kashubian herring is a roasted herring poured with vinegar pickle with herbs and onion.

A traditional soup – „polewka rybna” is being cooked from freshwater fish, i.e. roaches, crucian carps and perches, which Kashubian Switzerland lakes abound in. In the Kaszuby region, fish meatballs are also prepared from different fresh-
water fish, with the addition of fresh pre-fried bacon, onion and garlic. The sauce is being prepared from vegetable stock, in which they had been cooked, spiced with the cream and vinegar.

The interesting traditional Kashubian dishes include also the “soup from yellow turnip”. Its basis is the goose meat stock. Along with the meat pieces, there are oblong pieces of yellow turnip and carrots as well as diced potatoes. The soup is being spiced with marjoram, salt, pepper and sugar. This dish is also included in the list of traditional products.

When it comes to cakes, „młodzowy kuch z kruszonką”, which in the Kashubian language means yeast-raised cake with crumble, is very popular in Kaszuby. This product entered on the national List of Traditional Products, and its recipe dates back to the year 1700. The sweet crumble layer at the top of the cake is quite thick. In order to strengthen the flavour and maintain the wetness of the case, a crushed apple is added.

When writing about Kashubian traditional and regional products, one cannot forget the Kashubian strawberry, the so called – kaszubsko malena, which has been also broader described in this magazine.

The cuisine of the Kociewie region, also situated in the Pomorskie Voivodeship, is slightly less popular. Kociewie is a region in the eastern part of Tuchola Forest located between the Wierzyca and Wda River basin, on the left Vistula’s bank. The capital city of Kociewie is Starogard Gdański. The whole region has its own dialect.

Kociewie was not one of the rich regions. The cuisine of Kociewie is based mainly on potatoes, Swedish turnip, cabbage, onion, milk from homebred goats as well as fish living in lakes and rivers of Kociewie. It uses also mushrooms, forest fruit and cranberries. In the southern part of Kociewie, in Lower Vistula Valley, there is the fragment of Polish plum field.

Soups were very common on the tables in Kociewie. Similarly to Kaszuby, yellow turnip soup based on goose meat is very popular in Kociewie. Kociewie brzad soup (in Kociewie dialect, brzad means fruits) is a soup made from dried fruits (from prunes, pears and apples), which is a necessary element of the Christmas Eve in Kociewie. Although the Kociewie soups have poor recipes, they intrigue by their names such as poryraj – a soup from potatoes with noodles, zagraj – a soup from overboiled potatoes and goat milk, and szarpak – a cabbage soup from sauerkraut.

Potatoes, as a cheap and easy to cultivate product, were one of the substances of Kociewie cuisine. The inhabitants of this region cook “Golce” – potato noodles with crackling and sauerkraut, sometimes stuffed with cottage cheese or mushrooms, and roast “refkacz” – small potato noodles warmed up on pork fat, or “szandar” – potato cake with pork fat.

They eat also herrings, including the ones marinated in onion and goat milk. Poorer families prepare a blind herring, i.e. chopped onion, slightly parboiled in vinegar marinade with allspice added, subsequently served with jacket potatoes.

In Kociewie, meat was eaten merely on special occasions. Usually, the meat included poultry which, similar to goats, could be easily bred in people’s own farms. On special occasions, especially at weddings and “przyjęciny” (a first Holy Communion reception), they served a chicken casserole – cooked pieces of broth chicken with rice and white sauce with raisins. The List of Traditional Products includes also the Kociewie smoked chicken.
Due to the availability of the undergrowth, the hostesses from Kociewie had the possibility of preparing dishes based on mushrooms. In the part of Kociewie with Tuchola Forest, they prepare mushroom products and marinades, mushroom chops, sauces and even mushroom brawn.

Among the cakes popular in Kociewie, worth mentioning are the ones entered on the List of Traditional Products. These are: Kociewie fefernuski and Kociewie grochowinki. Fefernuski are small gingery cakes, different in shape and glacé, baked for Christmas. On the other hand, Kociewie grochowinki are cakes in a form of a pod of peas, fried in deep fat, sprinkled with powdered sugar.

The Lower Vistula Valley bordering on Kociewie is a region full of fruits. Apple trees, plum and cherry orchards deliver very tasty fruits which are a very valuable element of home-made preserves. The products entered on the list of traditional products - delicious plum jams from Lower Vistula Valley and Powiśle’s plums in vinegar come from this region.

Honeys from Eastern Pomorze must not be forgotten either: Kashubian honey, forest honey from Biernatka and Pszczółki that have been entered on the list of traditional products and are merely ones of many aromatic natural honeys from Pomeranian apiaries.

On the list, there are as much as 118 products coming from the Eastern Pomorze region on which one could write for ages. However, it would not be sufficient to describe the culinary resources of this part of Poland.

In the western part of Pomorze (in the Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship), there are another, not less interesting, traditional products. Undoubtedly, these products include the ones entered on the national list, e.g.: cucumber from Kołobrzeg, bread from Koprzywno, drahimski honey, wine made from plums and marinaded with cones.

The cucumbers from Kołobrzeg are pickled, but, as they are produced using natural brine from the spring in Kołobrzeg, their taste is extraordinary.

The bread from Koprzywno is wholegrain bread baked exclusively from natural ingredients, whose recipe and manner of baking had been brought to Koprzywno by displaced persons families from western parts of pre-war Poland. This is how the traditions of Polish eastern borderlands became connected with the modern culinary art of the northern Poland.

On the other hand, the drahimski honey is the result of a long cultivated work of apiarists from Drahim who obtained honey from bees’ families collecting the nectar in the Drawsko Forest. Today, this region is located within the Drawsko Landscape Park, abounds in various plants and vast foraging area. Huge moors, beautiful alleys of old limes, locust trees groves as well as rape and buckwheat cultivation are very common here. Nearly two hundred apiaries collect honey, trying to maintain the tradition of this dying profession. The honey is really delicious. It has an unforgettable scent, flavour and colour.
Mushrooms marinated with cones are a curiosity of the Western Pomorze region. In order to enrich the dish and give it a milder flavour different from the spicy vinegar ones, honey and pinecones are added to the marinade.

Let us move, for a moment, to the Warmia and Mazury region, to learn the flavour of the local cuisine. Two culinary traditions have been mixed here – the German and the Polish. The inhabitants have inherited after the Germans the inclination for sweet and sour dishes, abundance of meat and various sorts of noodles. Polish tradition includes the cream usage, a great number of herbs being added to the dishes as well as meat products, bortsches and tripes. The fish and crayfish soup with addition of herbs and birch tree bark is the region’s delicacy.

The most popular soups in Warmia and Mazury included pea soup, cabbage and bean soup, whereas the hostesses from Mazury – the “Masurian Lake District” – specialized in preparing fish, sour and duck blood soup.

One of the typical dishes is the Masurian pork. The pork is parboiled in a vegetable stock. Next, it is browned in fat, put into a frying pan and sprinkled with breadcrumbs. The plum jam is spread with vegetable stock in which the pork was parboiled, and is poured into the frying pan. Next, butter and cream are added and stewed until it becomes tender, in the end adding sugar, salt and cloves. Finally, a glass of red dry wine is poured and the sauce is seasoned with flour. The dish is ready. The two influences – the German and the Polish are being reflected in this dish. There is both wine and cream. Parboiled pork in breadcrumbs batter is the German influence, whereas the plum jams (sometimes also cranberries) are the Polish invention.

In Mazury, fish with apples and so called fraszynki, i.e. potato and potato flour chops stuffed with spicy meat filling are prepared. A potato cake with meat or a kind of dumplings filled with beef and onion which are called dybdzalki are very popular.

In the Warmia-Mazury cuisine, necessary ingredients which every hostess needs to have in her kitchen include: smoked pork fat (in pepper), fresh butter, cream, marjoram, cumin and cardamom. The inhabitants of Mazury also like fish, especially those in freshly smoked trouts and eels for which the “Lake District” has been famous until today.

The national List of Traditional Products does not include many products from the Warmia and Mazury region. However, those which entered the list comprise meat products such as Masurian smoked ham, Masurian smoked bacon and Masurian smoked pork fat. The list includes also the honey from Mazury Garbate and Masurian liqueur, so called niedźwiedziówka (made from buckwheat honey, rectified alcohol and lemon juice).

Even the most colourful descriptions will not reflect the flavour, aroma, consistency and appearance of the dishes. Therefore, you have to visit this region and taste the delicacies of the northern Poland for yourself!

Ewa Woicka-Bekas
Agency for Restructuring and Modernization of Agriculture (ARMA)
Table 1. Geographical structure of Polish agri-food products export in 2004 and 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specification</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UE</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>78.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other developed ones</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIS</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balkan countries</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing countries</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFTA</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 2. Development of foreign trade in the major partners' arrangement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups of countries</th>
<th>Export in EUR millions</th>
<th>Trade balance in EUR millions</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EUR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU – 15</td>
<td>2 041.6</td>
<td>7 792.6</td>
<td>376.0</td>
<td>1 538.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU – 10/12</td>
<td>575.1</td>
<td>2 368.1</td>
<td>418.2</td>
<td>1 648.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other developed ones</td>
<td>271.5</td>
<td>420.7</td>
<td>-31.6</td>
<td>68.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSI</td>
<td>624.1</td>
<td>1 376.2</td>
<td>176.3</td>
<td>1 072.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing countries</td>
<td>490.9</td>
<td>751.9</td>
<td>-454.2</td>
<td>1 415.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data of the Foreign Trade Information Technology Centre (CIHZ) and Customs Service (CAAC) prepared by the Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics – National Research Institute (IERiGŻ-PIB).

Table 3. Structure of Polish export of agricultural and food products in 2004 and 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Products</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EUR millions</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal products</td>
<td>1 995.3</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live animals</td>
<td>221.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and meat products</td>
<td>752.8</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy products</td>
<td>560.9</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish and fish products</td>
<td>345.5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetable products</td>
<td>2 887.2</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn and corn products</td>
<td>190.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil plants and oil plant products</td>
<td>116.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits and fruit products</td>
<td>737.7</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables and vegetable products</td>
<td>296.0</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mushrooms and mushroom products</td>
<td>182.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes and potato products</td>
<td>106.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar and sugar products</td>
<td>593.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee, tea, cocoa</td>
<td>122.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco and cigarettes</td>
<td>128.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water and non-alcohol beverages</td>
<td>177.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other vegetable products</td>
<td>835.8</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other agricultural and food products</td>
<td>359.7</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5 242.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 14. Structure of payments effected by ARMA under the funds co-financed from the EU as of 31.05.2011 (in billion PLN and in %)

- Direct support schemes (SAPI, CAPS, sugar, energy, separate and interim payment to fruit and vegetable), 6.26
- RDP 2007-2013; 23.71
- SAPARD Programme; 4.51
- OP Sustainable development of the fisheries sector; 2007-2013; 0.94
- Common organization of the fruit and vegetable market; 1.41
- SOP Fisheries 2004-2006; 10.00
- SOP Restructuring 2004-2006; 6.56
- RDP 2004-2006; 10.88
- SOP Restructuring 2004-2006; 0.94

Source: EC, GUS, data for PL of 2010

Chart 15. Annual payments of the funds co-financed by the EU by ARMA in the years 2004-2011 in PLN billion

- National funds
- EU funds

Chart 16. Aid granted by ARMA under the programmes co-financed from the EU by programmes by regions in billion PLN (31.05.2011)¹

- Dolnośląskie
- Kujawsko-pomorskie
- Lubelskie
- Lubuskie
- Małopolskie
- Mazowieckie
- Opolskie
- Podkarpackie
- Podlaskie
- Pomorskie
- Śląskie
- Świętokrzyskie
- Warmińsko-mazurskie
- Wielkopolskie
- Zachodniopomorskie

- SAPARD Programme
- SOP 2004-2006
- Direct support schemes
- Common Organization of the Fruit and Vegetables Market
- OP Fisheries 2007-2013
- Common Fisheries Policy

¹ Exclusive of so-called national aid, technical assistance from RDP (2004-2006, 2007-2013), SOP and SOP measures implemented by UM and FAPA

Chart 17. Number of controlled lots of fresh fruit and vegetables (targeted controls)

- 2005: 3328
- 2006: 2756
- 2007: 4768
- 2008: 4429
- 2009: 5023
- 2010: 2786

Chart 18. Weight of fresh fruit and vegetables controlled at the stage of import and export (in tonnes)

- 2005: 0.2
- 2006: 0.4
- 2007: 0.6
- 2008: 0.8
- 2009: 1.0
- 2010: 1.2

Chart 19. Number of controls of fresh and vegetables in foreing trade (2009-2010)

- 2009: 49221
- 2010: 56122

Table 4. List of names of Polish products registered as PDO, PGI or TSG by the EC in the years 2007-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>bryndza podhalańska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>oscypek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>redykołka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>podkarpacki modr spadzisty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011*</td>
<td>karp zalipski</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ state as of 30.06.2011

* - state as of 30.06.2011
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

WHERE THE CROP IS BEING GROWN