Fine food – source
Fine food – source of health
Polish foreign trade in agri-food products in the period between January and September 2010 developed successfully. The turnover value for this period amounted to EUR 17,239 million, increasing by 12.5% as compared to the corresponding period in 2009, whereby the export value increased to a slightly higher degree the import's value.

Poland is the fourth poultry meat producer in the European Union. In the period 2004-2010, the production of poultry meat increased steadily year-to-year. By 2009, it reached the level of over 1.2 million tones, ca. 332,000 tones more (36%) than in the year 2004. The Polish share in the European Union's production amounts to ca. 11%.

On 1 July 2011, for the first time in history Poland will chair the Council of the European Union, the EU main decision-making body, to head the Council work for a period of six months. Preparation for and holding the EU Presidency involves the necessity to coordinate several thousands of meetings, both formal (discussions of current affairs) and informal (exchange of opinions on long-term matters), in Brussels, Luxemburg and in the country of the Presidency, including meetings at the highest level.

Indigenous Poultry Breeds in Poland and Their Protection

Poland has a long-time tradition of activities for the protection of genetic resources of farm animals. This fact allowed our country to contribute to the European Union collection of indigenous breeds and varieties of animals, complementing its resources with the valuable species. In Poland, inter alia, numerous and genetically varied poultry populations covered by the animal genetic resources conservation programme are kept.
The localization and climate of Sądecczyzna have impact on the diversification of its flora and fauna. The flora of the areas located at a lower level is now farmland and meadows, as well as some remains of oak and hornbeam leafy forests and mixed forests with the following dominant species: fir-trees and pine-trees. Above (550-110 m a.s.l.), there is the so called ‘regiel dolny’ full of fir and hornbeam forests and spruce forests.

'Suska sechlońska' is one of the twelve Polish products entered by the European Commission into the category of Protected Geographical Indications, and thereby participating in the EU’s food quality system. The name ‘suska sechlońska’ derives from the local dialect and signifies a dried and smoked prune.

The High Level Forum for a Better Functioning of the Food Supply Chain

The Forum is composed of the ministers of agriculture of 13 EU Member States, entrepreneurs, trade associations and non-governmental organisations. The Forum will deal with the following areas: trade contracts practices, food prices monitoring, competitiveness in agri-food industry and agri-food sector logistics.

Unforgettable Holidays

Sądecczyzna

The localization and climate of Sądecczyzna have impact on the diversification of its flora and fauna. The flora of the areas located at a lower level is now farmland and meadows, as well as some remains of oak and hornbeam leafy forests and mixed forests with the following dominant species: fir-trees and pine-trees. Above (550-110 m a.s.l.), there is the so called ‘regiel dolny’ full of fir and hornbeam forests and spruce forests.

Regional Product: Suska sechlońska

‘Suska sechlońska’ is one of the twelve Polish products entered by the European Commission into the category of Protected Geographical Indications, and thereby participating in the EU’s food quality system. The name ‘suska sechlońska’ derives from the local dialect and signifies a dried and smoked prune.

The Year 2010 with the "Discover Great Food" Programme

Participation in national and international fairs is the key objective of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development within high quality food promotion - the Discover Great Food Programme, ecologic products, as well as products entered in the List of Traditional Products which participate in the system of Protected Geographical Indications, Protected Designation of Origin and Traditional Specialty Guaranteed.

The main goal of the "Discover good food" programme is to promote certificate confirmed high quality food.

Systemic Safety Assurance in Poultry Production Chain

Recently there have been incidents connected with biological hazard, including microbiological, chemical or physical hazards of food, such as: dioxin scandal, prions causing BSE, pathogen infections, allergens, including GMO, toxins, and several others. Many of them concerned animal origin products, including poultry. The incidents both alarm the public opinion and at the same time increase government control to undertake preventive measures. The incidents have also increased awareness among food producers in Poland as well as all over the world.

White Kołuda® Geese Breeding Achievement of the National Research Institute of Animal Production

Geese have been farmed for centuries, integrating very well with the Polish rural landscape. These birds are kept for tasty meat and valuable down and feathers. Goose liver pâté is highly valued as a delicacy all over the world.

Under “goose”, W. Kopaliński’s Dictionary of Myths and Cultural Traditions quotes an old Polish text that highlights the importance of geese: “There is no better game than our geese: good feathers and good down, to say nothing of gooseflesh”.

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

The turn of the year is the time for conclusions and future planning. The European agriculture is in a specific situation nowadays.

The European Commission Communication on the future of the CAP after 2013 published in mid-November can mark the starting point for a reliable discussion on new solutions. In my opinion the proposals put forward in the document are conservative and not ambitious enough. Such approach preserves the present agricultural policy and threatens the development in agricultural to remain at the level we had at the end of the last century.

We are now facing completely new challenges. Therefore, we need an ambitious reform of the Common Agricultural Policy to meet these challenges. It must ensure the development of European agriculture in the years to come thus improving the competitiveness of this sector on the global market. It should also meet the future food demand. It should be noted that in the next 20-30 years the demand for food will increase twofold according to the forecasts of economists and demographers. Food safety and observance of environmental protection requirements are important tasks which need specific capital expenditure. I am, therefore, in favour of maintaining the agricultural budget at least at the current level. The opinion poll carried out in the European Union shows unanimous public support for further functioning of the Common Agricultural Policy and its financing. It obviously involves an increasing responsibility for public funds which we have at our disposal. They should be spent in the most rational and effective manner. Therefore, with the imposition of the environmental protection requirements and increasingly exorbitant standards on the farmers, we cannot accept products on the European market the production of which does not meet these criteria. Otherwise, there are no two ways about a fair competition. It is the same in the present conditions of European agriculture functioning. It is high time to depart from the historical entitlements to payments. We demand introduction of new, objective criteria for resources distribution among the Member States. New criteria should take account issues such as surface of agricultural land, employment, implementation of environmental protection requirements and additional support for the less favoured areas.

The future development of European agriculture also requires financial reinforce-
ment of the second pillar in the entire European Union. We need to establish new proportions for allocation of budget funds between the first and second pillar for all Member States. I believe that allocation proportions should be 50/50 or 60/40. Today, the average EU proportion is 80/20. This situation disturbs the competition and supports stagnation. Reinforcement of the second pillar will be conducive to the development and modernization of agricultural holdings. In my opinion this is the best way to improve their competitiveness in the global market. This opinion is shared by the countries of the Visegrad Group as well as by Bulgaria and Romania. I am certain that this approach will gain more supporters. Even the "old" Member States have already noticed the need to depart from historical entitlements to payments, whereas not that long ago this was almost unreal.

Since the first day of my office I have held numerous talks on various EU forums and invited guests to Poland. The meetings and talks help us deepen our knowledge of each other and better understand each other during the discussions. Presented arguments and data give us all a lot to think of. The question is whether we will be able to rise above the national interest and focus on what is the best for the entire European Union. As a matter of fact, not much has been left from the basic concepts that motivated the founders of one of the oldest community policies - the Common Agricultural Policy. Generally, there are 27 different policies nowadays. In this situation, how can we speak of a single market and level playing field?

Poland will assume the Presidency of the European Union in mid-2011. This is a new challenge and responsibility for us. We are preparing ourselves very intensively for this role. I'd like to avail myself of this opportunity to thank all my fellow ministers from more experienced countries for the declared willingness to support Poland in preparations for and during its Presidency. This support is important to us. We are aware that this will be the time of decisions crucial to the future of the European agriculture. Therefore, we spare no effort to make the CAP a useful tool for the development of European agriculture and to restore level playing field inside the Community so as to improve competitiveness of our agricultural holdings in the global market.

Therefore, I believe that we should grasp each opportunity to talk and approximate positions. Fairs and exhibitions favour such approach. This year Poland is a Partner Country at a well known Grune Woche fair held in Berlin. The fair opens the exhibition and trade season of the agricultural sector. It would be advisable to begin a serious debate on the future of the European agriculture to foster its further development and to improve its competitiveness in the global market. And this is precisely what I wish you and for myself in the upcoming New Year 2011.

Marek Sawicki
Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development
Polish foreign trade in agri-food products in the period between January and September 2010 developed successfully. The turnover value for this period amounted to EUR 17,239 million, increasing by 12.5% as compared to the corresponding period in 2009, whereby the export value increased to a slightly higher degree the import's value.

Export

In the period between January to September 2010 the value of foreign trade in agri-food products amounted to the total of EUR 9,593 million, increasing by 12.7% as compared to the corresponding period of the previous year (Chart 1, page 57).

The European Union’s states were the main importers of Polish food. Total income from the products sold on the EU's market amounted to EUR 7,620 million. Within the structure of agri-food export the EU's share decreased slightly from the level of 80.5% between January and September 2009 to 79.4% in the corresponding period of the year 2010. The value of sales to the European Union’s countries increased by 11.2%, including the sales to the “old” EU states of EU-15 which increased by 12.3%, whereby the value of sales to 11 “new” Member States increased by 8.2%.

Between January and September 2010 Germany was
the biggest importer of Polish agri-food products, purchasing them for the amount of EUR 2,111 million, which constituted growth by 9.4% as compared to the corresponding period in 2009. The largest quantity of products sold in this direction (in terms of value) included: smoked fish (mostly salmon) for the amount of EUR 186.9 million, poultry meat for the amount of EUR 136.9 million, as well as shortbreads, wafers and other baked goods for the amount of EUR 101.7 million.

The Great Britain was the second biggest EU's importer of Polish agri-food products, having purchased goods for the amount of EUR 671 million. This accounted for a growth at the level of 14.7% as compared to the period from January to September 2009, as well as a 7% share in total export value. Chocolate, chocolate goods, poultry meat and pork meat (salted, dried or smoked) were the main products imported by the Great Britain.

The successive positions among the main importers were occupied by: the Czech Republic - EUR 621 million, France - EUR 598.8 million, Italy - EUR 565 million, the Netherlands - EUR 555 million, and the Russian Federation - EUR 548 million.

The value of export to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) amounted to EUR 992 million and increased by as many as 31.5% as compared to the three quarters of 2009. Such a situation was mostly a result of a considerable increase in the export value of sugar, chocolate and chocolate goods, as well as dairy products, meat and preserves, fresh apples and champignons. The export to the CIS countries constituted 10.3% of total export value of agri-food products.

Compared to the period between January and September 2009, the biggest increases in sales were reported in the trade with France - by 38.1%, with Sweden - by 33.1% and with the Russian Federation - by 30.6%.

In the analyzed period of 2010, cigarettes, poultry meat, chocolate and chocolate goods, beef, sugar syrups, baked goods and confectionery products (shortbreads, wafers, etc.), cheese, smoked fish (mostly salmon), apples, pork and frozen fruits (mostly strawberries, raspberries and cherries) prevailed in terms of value.

Total export of meat and unprocessed umbles in the analyzed period amounted to 693,700 tonnes worth EUR 1,327.2 million. This accounts for an increase in value by 17.8% as compared to the previous year. The value of poultry meat export amounted to EUR 491.4 million as compared to EUR 400.9 million in the previous year; the value of beef amounted to EUR 486.8 million (EUR 466 million a year earlier), whereby the value of pork amounted to EUR 281.8 million as compared to the amount of EUR 202.7 million in the previous year.

**Import**

In the first three quarters of 2010 the Polish import of agri-food products amounted to EUR 7,646 million, which compared to the corresponding period in 2009 constituted a growth of 12.2% (Chart 2, page 57).

The value of products imported by Poland within the EU amounted to EUR 5,239 million, surpassing the import value of the previous year by 9.3%. The import from the EU's countries constituted 68.5% of total import value of agri-food products (70.3% in the year before). The value of purchases realized in 11 countries which had acceded to the European Union after 1 May 2004 increased by 11.2%, amounting to ca. EUR 745 million.

Agri-food products imported by Poland mostly originated from Germany, with their value amounting to EUR 1,649.6 million. Import from Germany increased by 7.3% as compared to the year before and constituted 21.6% of total agri-food import. The value of import from the Netherlands reached the amount of EUR 695 million, from Spain - EUR 407 million, from Norway - EUR 364 million, from Poland - EUR 338 million.

The Netherlands provided us with the biggest amounts of live plants, cut flowers and beef, citrus fruits were mostly imported from Spain, salmon from Norway and pork from Denmark.

Compared to the corresponding period in 2009, the value of import from the CIS countries increased by 23.7%, amounting to EUR 199 million. The import from the CIS constituted 2.6% of the general import structure (as compared to 2.4% in the previous year).

In terms of value, the most important products imported to Poland in the analyzed period were: pork, soya oil cake, fresh fish, fish fillets, sugar syrups, citrus fruits, unprocessed tobacco, coffee, chocolate and animal feed. Pork was mostly imported from Germany and Denmark.

The total value of meat and unprocessed umbles import amounted to EUR 784.3 million in the period of three quarters of 2010, similarly to the corresponding period in the previous year. The import value of pork amounts to EUR 718 million, whereas the value of beef and poultry meat amounts to EUR 26 million.

**Balance**

In the period between January and September 2010 the balance on the trade in agri-food products reached the level of plus EUR 1,946.7 million, surpassing the corresponding period of the previous year by 14.8% (EUR +1,695.9 million).

The balance on turnover with the EU's countries was also positive and amounted to EUR 2,381 million. By way of comparison, in the period between January and September 2009 the balance amounted to EUR +2,057 million.

The highest positive balance was reported by Poland on the turnover with Russia (EUR +519 million), Germany (EUR +461.7 million), the Great Britain (EUR +460 million) and with the Czech Republic (EUR +352 million).

On the other hand, Poland reported import value surpassing export, and thus a negative balance, in trade with Argentina (EUR -332 million), Norway (EUR -302 million) and Spain (EUR -228 million).
Poultry, Egg and Preserves Markets in Poland

Poultry market

Poland is the fourth poultry meat producer in the European Union. In the period 2004-2010, the production of poultry meat increased steadily year-to-year. By 2009, it reached the level of over 1.2 million tones, ca. 332,000 tones more (36%) than in the year 2004 (Chart 3, page 57). The Polish share in the European Union’s production amounts to ca. 11%.

The Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics estimates that in 2010 the poultry meat production will increase by another ca. 8% to the level of 1,350,000 tones. 890,000 tones of poultry meat were produced during the first eight months of 2010, that is 13.5% more than the amount realized in the corresponding period of the previous year. In that period the producers reported an increase in the poultry meat export by 31.5% and a decrease in the import by 20.5% as compared to the period from January to August 2009 – the national market’s supply becomes less and less dependent on importation.

Chicken meat accounts for 75-78% of the industrial production, while turkey meat for more than 20%. About 90% of chickens and turkeys are placed onto the market chilled. Close to 98% of total production of that meat originate from poultry facilities which employ over 50 individuals. In Poland there are 504 approved facilities that specialize in poultry preserves, including 30 facilities specializing solely in poultry preserves.

Broiler chicken and turkey meat constitutes more than 93% of the national structure of poultry meat production. Industrial slaughters of broiler chickens amount for 78% of the national slaughters of poultry livestock. Turkeys come second, with a share amounting to 15.4%. Water poultry (geese, ducks) amounts for less than 3%.

In Poland purchase prices of broiler chickens change seasonally (Chart 4, page 57). The highest prices are reported in the summer months. Relatively high purchase prices were reported in 2009 from June to August, when the price for broiler chickens amounted to PLN 3.6 per kg.

The average purchase price of broiler chickens amounted to PLN 3.2 per kg in the period from January to October 2010, thus surpassing the year 2009 by nearly 6%, but remaining behind the year 2008 by 1.1%. After the half-year period of strong decline in the second half of 2009, the purchase prices of broiler chicken livestock began to dynamically increase in the period from January to August 2010. Afterwards, they began to decrease again and by October 2010 they stopped at the level of PLN 3.13 per kg. In October 2010, the purchase price of broiler chickens decreased by 12% as compared to August 2010, when it reached the highest level of PLN 3.55 per kg. However, in comparison with January, the price in October increased by 7.4%.

The sale of chicken carcass amounts to 60% of the whole sale structure of poultry meat. The sale price of chicken carcass is by 30% lower than the average EU’s price. Poland belongs to the cheapest producers of poultry meat on the Common Market and has managed to maintain this competitive position since the second half of 2004. In October 2010, the price of carcass amounted to EUR 116.1 per 100 kg as compared to the EU’s average price which remained at the level of EUR 176.6 per 100 kg. The Great Britain, Bulgaria and Spain are traditionally Poland’s biggest rivals in terms of prices.

Considering the health assets of poultry meat, its considerably low price in proportion to other kinds of meat, as well as a major, still not fully realized market potential, the long-term outlook for poultry sector is optimistic. As reported by the Polish Central Statistical Office, in 2000 the poultry share in total meat consumption in Poland amounted to less than 14.7%. In 2009, the consumption of poultry meat increased to the level of 24.3 kg per capita (which amounts to 32% of total meat consumption). A slight increase in poultry meat’s consumption is predicted to persist also through the year 2010. As a result of the expected...
increase in production, the consumption of poultry meat will rise by ca. 3% to 25 kg per person. The increase in the consumption of poultry preserves (cold meat, tinned meat, cold meat products) has a major influence on the level of poultry meat consumption. In the preserves production cold poultry meat has the biggest share in terms of weight and value. The production of these cold meat products in 2009 amounted to 104 000 tones. According to the data provided by the Polish Central Statistical Office, 2005 was thus far the most productive year, with the production amounting to 126 000 tones of poultry cold meat. In the preserves structure the highest production dynamics after 2004 was reported in the cold meat sector—a twofold increase in the period between 2004 and 2009. The tinned meat production oscillates at the level of 35 000 tones per year, with a slight upwards trend.

The Polish foreign trade in poultry livestock, meat, umbles and preserves has for years maintained a positive balance. In 2009, the export of these products amounted to 337 200 tones, surpassing the previous year by 14%. However, due to lower in proportion to 2008 prices of meat and poultry preserves, export income decreased by ca. 9%. The income from the importation of poultry products increased from 66 300 tones in 2008 to 75 700 tones in 2009, but the purchase expenses lowered by ca. 4%. The main consumers within the Polish geographical structure of export are Germany (in 2009 – 32.9% of the export), the Czech Republic and the Great Britain (each 12.0%) Holland and France (respectively 6.7% and 6.4%). Hong-Kong follows next (2.8%), becoming recently a dynamically growing importer.

In 2010, the export of poultry livestock, meat, umbles and poultry preserves is expected to amount to 380 000 tones, thus surpassing the year 2009 by ca. 13%.

Along with France, Holland and Germany, Poland leads in terms of poultry sale outside of the European Union. During the first eight months of 2010, the Polish poultry sale outside of the EU was reported to increase by 74%.

**Egg market**

Since 1995, egg production in Poland has steadily increased. In 2009, it reached the level of 554 000 tones, thus surpassing the year 2008 by 3.7%, which located Poland in the seventh position among the EU’s countries. The Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics predicts that the national use of eggs, including consumption purposes, will increase only slightly. This commercial egg production is to increase to the amount of 580 000 tones, that is by 4.7%. It is the result of an increase in the production dynamics, which in the previous years grew at an annual pace of ca. 1.5-2%. The Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics predicts that the national use of eggs, including consumption purposes, will increase only slightly. This increase was caused by greater dependence of the egg market on exportation, which already constitutes 29% of total egg production.

In 2007, egg consumption decreased by 10% as compared to the year before and despite the 7% increase in 2008 and the 1% increase in 2009, it has never again reached the level from the year 2006.

In December of 2010, commercial egg prices in Poland at the level of EUR 113.1 per 100 kg were by 11% higher than the average EU's price. Denmark is the most expensive egg producer in the Europeans Union (ca. EUR 178 per 100 kg), while Holland is the cheapest (EUR 58.4 per 100 kg).

By way of comparison, in Austria—where contrary to Polish methods, the cage breeding system is not used and hens are bred in open-air pens, be it ecologic or with bedding - average egg (M and L category) prices oscillate at the level of EUR 150 per 100 kg.

In 2009, the Polish egg and egg preserves export amounted to 149 700 tones, surpassing 2008 by ca. 13%, while the incomes increased by ca. 16%. In 2009, the balance on foreign egg and preserves trade accounts was positive and amounted to EUR 121.4 million, surpassing the previous year by ca. 10%. Poland exports commercial eggs mainly to Germany (in 2009 – 36.7% of the export), Holland and the Czech Republic (13.1% and 12.6%, respectively), Romania (9.5%), Denmark (7%), Slovakia (6.7%). In 2009, the export of Polish eggs to Germany increased by as many as ca. 36%.
On 1 July 2011, for the first time in history Poland will chair the Council of the European Union, the EU main decision-making body, to head the Council work for a period of six months.

The Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union is a natural consequence of EU accession of our country in 2004 and of the specific obligation following from its Member State status that was imposed by the Treaty establishing the European Community of 1957. The EU Council Presidency is based on a rotation system: every six months another EU Member State takes over responsibility for the functioning of the Council in the pre-established order and presides over its sessions.

In line with the practice adopted in 2006 and enshrined in the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, the Member States hold the Presidency collectively, i.e. by previously designated groups of three Member States (the Trio) and based on a collectively prepared 18-month framework programme. The cooperation of the countries within the Trio ensures better stability...
in terms of policy and programme allowing for a better coordination and implementation of the Presidency goals and consistency of the EU actions.

Pursuant to the rules established unanimously by the Council of the European Union on 1 January 2007, when Poland will assume the Presidency in the second half of 2011 it will be the first and the biggest country of the Trio which also includes Denmark and Cyprus.

Preparation for and holding the EU Presidency involves the necessity to coordinate several thousands of meetings, both formal (discussions of current affairs) and informal (exchange of opinions on long-term matters), in Brussels, Luxembourg and in the country of the Presidency, including meetings at the highest level. The key role of the Presidency is to work out agreements between the Member States, particularly when the matters in question are sensitive and controversial.

Another task of the Presidency is to represent the Council before the EU institutions, particularly before the European Commission and the European Parliament.

In view of establishing the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy in the Lisbon Treaty, the Presidency competence in the field of foreign policy have been limited.

Preparations for assuming the Presidency

The preparations of Poland the EU Presidency have already began in 2007 and consisted mostly in the analysis of the other countries’ experience in this respect. In 2008 the Government Representative for Presidency was appointed and in January 2009 the Polish government adopted a comprehensive preparatory framework programme for this historical event. Moreover, in 2009, funds were secured, logistic support preparation was undertaken, as well as Polish civil servants training and the first informative and promotional activities were in place.

Three areas of importance have been identified for the Presidency preparations to focus on: political area (determination of the priorities consistent with the strategic objectives of the Polish policies, European decision-making process), organizational area (logistic preparation, human resources, budget) and promotion of Poland.

Interministerial consultative and advisory groups responsible for particular preparation areas (budget, human resources, promotion and culture, programme issues, logistics and safety) have been established to support the Government Representative for the Presidency.

Preparations in the Ministry of Agriculture

Being aware that the Polish Presidency is a tremendous challenge that requires extensive qualifications and organizational efficiency at the local and European level, and a unique opportunity for Poland and Polish agriculture, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has been making efforts to fulfil that important task in the best possible manner since 2007. Preparations of the Ministry of Agriculture focus on the following areas:

- preparation of the organizational structure and staff.

In 2008, the Ministry formed the Unit for coordination of the preparatory activities of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and bodies reporting to or supervised by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for the implementation of tasks associated with the EU Polish Presidency. The Under-Secretary of State responsible for the EU issues, was appointed the Head of the Presidency Unit which was composed of the directors of all organizational Ministry units, vice CEO's of the Agency for Restructuring and Modernization of Agriculture, the Agricultural Market Agency, Agricultural Property Agency, Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer, Deputy Inspector of the Plant Health and Seed Inspection, Deputy Inspector of Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection, Director of the Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics and Director of the Foundation of Assistance Programmes for Agriculture. The Presidency Unit tasks involve initiation and implementation of works needed for preparation of the Ministry and bodies reporting to or supervised by the Minister competent for the tasks associated EU Polish Presidency.

Activities carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture within the framework of preparations for EU Polish Presidency are coordinated by the Department for European Union and International Cooperation within which the Department for Presidency and Cooperation with EU Member States was set up in 2009.

The centrally established Presidency Corps, i.e. a team of public servants involved in the preparations for and the future Polish Presidency (about 1200 persons at the national level), will included 158 persons appointed in the Ministry of Agriculture to function as technical experts and organizational coordinators. In the years 2009-2010, these persons participated in an intensive centrally organized training. In 2009 and 2010 about 30 persons involved in the preparations for the Presidency underwent a monthly
on a regular basis, taking into account framework programmes of the European Commission for the years 2010 and 2011, progress of work on particular dossiers and talks with the Trio partners. At the same time, a debate was held in the Ministry on the identification of the key objectives for the Presidency, the so-called sector priorities of the Polish Presidency, within the work conducted by the EU Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (AGRIFISH) in the second half of 2011. The selected issues covered the debate on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy, including the reform of direct payments scheme, the future of the rural areas development policy and the support for investments in the renewable energy sources development, as well as the future of the Common Fisheries Policy.

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development holds bilateral and multilateral meetings (the Visegrad Group, EU-12) with his counterparts from all Member States of the EU to lay the ground for the debate on the Common Agricultural Policy beyond 2013. Besides, the priority issues for the Polish Presidency in the area of agriculture and fishery, particularly the reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy, are discussed at the meetings held with Polish members of the European Parliament and employees of the EU’s institutions on the initiative of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

In order to establish closer cooperation within the collective Presidency, a technical meeting with the representatives of the Ministries of Agriculture of Denmark and Cyprus, with which Poland forms the Presidential Trio, was organized by the Polish party. The meeting was held in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development on 10 September 2010. At the meeting the ministers discussed the objectives of the Trio’s 18-month framework programme, as well as the progress of preparations of the Trio’s Ministries of Agriculture for the Presidency, such as the logistics of the planned informal meetings and staff preparation. The next step in the development of the Trio cooperation was the meeting of the Trio’s Ministers of Agriculture which was organized on the initiative of Minister M. Sawicki and was held in Warsaw on 10 October 2010. The talks concerned the cooperation of the Ministries during the Presidency of the EU Council, particularly the activities related to the Trio objectives as well as the current progress of the debate on the Common Agricultural Policy beyond 2013.

The Trio meetings were held also at the level of the Chief Veterinary Officers and the directors of the departments responsible for fishery policies.

Preparations for effective cooperation with the EU’s institutions which are the main actors in the decision-making process include consultations carried out by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development with Dacian Cioloş, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, and its Cabinet as well as with European Commission experts.

On 9 June 2010, Minister M. Sawicki participated in the consultations held in Brussels between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Poland and the Board of EU Commissioners. The Minister delivered a speech on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy. He also met with Commissioner J. Dalli responsible for health and protection of consumers and participated in a debate in the cluster "Productivity of the utilization of resources, agriculture, environment, climate, energy", during which issues concerning the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy were discussed in particular.

In view of the enhanced role of the European Parliament, resulting from the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and from covering agricultural politics with the
so-called ordinary legislative procedure (formerly known as co-decision procedure), in March 2010, in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development a liaison officer was appointed for cooperation with the Government Representative for Presidency in the matters concerning the European Parliament. In order to tighten the cooperation with Polish members of the European Parliament working in the commissions crucial from the point of view of the Ministry of Agriculture, and to prepare the Ministry for effective cooperation with the European Parliament during the Polish Presidency, between September and December of 2010, the liaison officer served a 3-month internship in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in Warsaw. Regular cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the European Parliament consists mostly in passing on of the Ministry’s position on agricultural matters and of informational materials to Polish deputies in the EP via the Permanent Representation of Poland to the European Union in Brussels.

Opportunities and challenges
For each Member State the Presidency in the EU Council involves both a great responsibility and a unique opportunity. As this will be the first Polish Presidency, Poland lacks the experience that the “old” EU members have.

During its Presidency Poland will face several different challenges: the role of an intermediary to work out a compromise and of a neutral country in the negotiations, acting in line with the principle of impartiality also in respect of the issues of Poland’ own interest. In this context, it will be crucial for Poland to keep balance between its national interest and the function of an unbiased chairman, effective mediator and efficient organiser of the EU activities.

At the same time the Presidency is an exceptional opportunity for Poland because the EU functioning efficiency the quality of decisions taken will eventually affect the lives of almost 500 millions of citizens. The European Union Presidency may strengthen the position of Poland among the Member States, as well as may bring new experience and knowledge which may favourably affect the Polish cooperation with the EU institutions in the years to come.

Moreover, the Presidency is also a unique opportunity for Poland to show itself to European countries and their societies as a reliable and responsible partner, an efficient country with a considerable potential in many domains oriented towards a constructive cooperation and organisationally effective.

In the area of agriculture the Presidency offers not only an opportunity to show strength of the Polish agricultural and food sector, but also to promote the Polish rural areas along with their cultural heritage and customs, traditional Polish food and cuisine, undeniable tourism values of the Polish countryside, Polish hospitality and openness, attachment to the traditions, family and grounds, as well as Polish sensitivity to nature beauty.

The Presidency of the EU Council will allow Poland to influence the decisions taken in the European Union on the key issues of the current and future European policies. In the area of agriculture, rural areas and fishery the debate on the Common Agricultural Policy reform will certainly be of utmost importance during the Polish Presidency, as this will aim at creating a policy that is modern, simple, fair, market-oriented and sustainable. The activities undertaken to improve and simplify the Common Fisheries Policy will also be of importance.

Katarzyna Kubiak-Stefanowska
Department of
Presidency and Cooperation with EU’s Countries

Department of European Union and International Cooperation
Polish poultry industry is one of the most modern and effective industries in the entire expanded Union. The industry's structure and modern conditions as well as the leaders' manner of operating do not differ from the structures and operating methods of their rivals from the most developed European countries. This results from adjustments of the poultry industry to the requirements of market economy and to the UE’s standards, which was due to investment recovery in the pre-accession period and in the first years after it. This recovery, present in the entire sector of agri-products’ preserves, was possible mostly thanks to the support obtained within the EU’s funding programmes.

EU financial aid

The sector of agri-products processing, including poultry processing, was first granted EU financial aid in the pre-accession period within the SAPARD Programme (Measure 1 Improving the processing and marketing of agricultural and fishery products). The programme continued in the first period after the accession (post 2004) by The Sectoral Operational Programme (SOP) “Restructuring and modernization of food sector and rural development in 2004-2006”, (Measure 1.5. Improving the processing and marketing of agricultural products). The aid for the agricultural products processing within both programmes amounted to the total of PLN 3.2 billion (ca. EUR 822 million).

In the current programming period the aid for the agri-products processing is handled mostly by Measure 123 Increasing the added value of basic agricultural and forestry production. This measure is covered by the Rural Development Programme for 2007-2013 (RDP 2007-2013). The financial limit specified within the RDP 2007-2013 budget for Measure 123 for the entire period of the Programme’s execution amounts to EUR 932 million (ca. PLN 3.7 billion).

The measure is aimed at competitiveness improvement, conditioned by added value, production quality, a decrease in production costs, development of new products, production processes and techniques as well as improvement of production conditions.

A beneficiary can be defined as a natural person, corporate entity or non-corporate entity that:

- conducts registered activity within poultry industry or marketing of agri-products,
- acts as an entrepreneur carrying out activities as a small, medium or medium-big enterprise which employs fewer than 750 employees, or an enterprise whose turnover does not exceed EUR 200 million*.

This means that compared to the previous two programmes the support was not granted to the largest entities operating in the agri-products’ processing sector, namely those employing 750 individuals or more and with their turnover exceeding EUR 200 million.

So far, Measure 123 included four calls for applications for aid. Within the calls 2614 applications were collected for the total amount of PLN 6,910.5 billion. Almost one half of this amount, that is PLN 3,376.7 million accounts for the 2010 call, within which 989 applications were submitted. An increase in the scope of operations planned within the applications submitted during the recent call was certainly fostered by the option introduced in May 2010 which enabled requesting a down payment in the amount of:

- 50% of the aid amount granted within the agreements signed in 2010,
- 20% of the aid amount granted within the remaining agreements.

By the end of November 2010, 912 agreements were concluded between the Agency and beneficiaries for the total amount of PLN 1,457.4 million (EUR 287.1 million). For the operations within the poultry processing sector these amounts are 136 agreements and PLN 216.6 million, respectively.

Small enterprises (44%) and medium enterprises (40%) constitute the biggest beneficiary group. Micro-enterprises’ share amounts to 11%, whereas the share of medium-big enterprises – to 5%. In case of the poultry sector’s beneficiaries medium enterprise are the dominant ones (60%). Medium-big enterprises also have a relatively high share (15%).
Most operations which have received support so far, namely 37%, are related to meat production and processing, including operations within the poultry sector which account for 15%. (Chart 5, page 57).

The biggest share accrues to operations concerning meat production and processing, namely 28% of the aid amount, granted pursuant to previously signed agreements, including 15% for the poultry processing sector. (Chart 6, page 57).

An average granted aid amount per one operation is PLN 1,586,000. This amount equals PLN 1,208,000 for the entire meat sector, whereas in the poultry sector alone it amounts to PLN 1,593,000. (Chart 7, page 58)

Construction works (37%) and purchase of production machines and devices (33%) are the main positions within the structure of eligible operating costs. In case of operations within the poultry sector this share amounts to 40% and 34%, respectively.

Majority of operations carried out by beneficiaries of Measure 123 concerns a relatively low aid amount as compared to the maximum available amount of PLN 20 million per one beneficiary in the programming period. With respect to 62% of the analyzed operations, the granted aid amount does not exceed PLN 1 million. Only in the case of 2% of operations this amount exceeds PLN 10 million (Chart 8, page 58). In the case of operations within the poultry sector the operational structure in the discussed scope takes a similar shape. The above-mentioned share in the first two groups is similar; namely in the group up to PLN 1 million and in the group between PLN 1 and 5 million.

Minor differences are however present in the groups with the highest granted aid amounts, namely PLN 5-10 million, in which with respect to the operations within the poultry sector this percentage amounts to 4%, as well as in the group receiving above PLN 10 million (3%).

Funds for the agri-food products processing can also be granted within two other measures covered by RDP 2007-2013, namely:

- 311 Diversification towards non-agricultural activities
- 312 Establishment and development of micro-enterprises

The scope of support for the agri-food products processing can also be limited within these activities is limited. This assessment can be confirmed by the fact that the agreements concerning the operations within the entire agri-food products processing account for only a small percentage, that is ca. 1% of the total number of agreements signed so far. This is because processing is among numerous categories aided by the EU funding programme. The maximum aid amount is also relatively small compared to Measure 123, since it cannot exceed PLN 100,000 per one beneficiary in the period covered by the Programme.

National aid

The poultry sector can benefit from financial aid provided by the Agency for Restructuring and Modernization of Agriculture. The aid is financed from the national budget. The most basic form of national aid consists in providing additional payments to interest yielding investment credits granted from own funds of the banks cooperating with the Agency. Preferential investment credits can be contracted by agricultural holdings and special branches of agricultural production which specialize in egg yielding and slaughter poultry, as well as by facilities conducting activities linked to poultry slaughter or poultry goods production.

Credits enable the financing of numerous different investments connected to production or processing of poultry (e.g. construction or modernization of buildings, purchase of machines, devices and equipment). Preferential credits are an attractive source of investment financing since thanks to the additional payments provided by the Agency, the borrower covers the interest rate which in the case of majority of credit lines amounts to no more than 29% annually. After the accession to the EU, farmers are the main beneficiaries of preferential credits. In the period from 1 May 2004 to 30 June 2010 93,790 preferential credits were granted for the total amount of PLN 12,560.4 million, including 1,473 credits contracted by poultry producers for the total amount of PLN 979.4 million (7.8%).

In accordance to the UE’s definition, small enterprises are those which employ fewer than 50 employees (full-time employees), and whose annual turnover and/or total annual balance does not exceed EUR 10 million. This enterprise group also includes micro-enterprises, namely enterprises which employ fewer than 10 employees and have an annual turnover and/or total annual balance not exceeding EUR 2 million. Medium enterprises include the ones which employ below 250 individuals, their annual turnover does not exceed EUR 50 million and/or their total annual balance does not exceed EUR 43 million.
Indigenous Poultry Breeds in Poland and Their Protection

Poland has a long-time tradition of activities for the protection of genetic resources of farm animals. This fact allowed our country to contribute to the European Union collection of indigenous breeds and varieties of animals, complementing its resources with the valuable species. In Poland, inter alia, numerous and genetically varied poultry populations covered by the animal genetic resources conservation programme are kept. These populations were most threatened with extinction in the 1970s of the 20th century, when the domestic poultry industry, supported by cheap loans, began to develop industrial rearing methods on an intense basis. This was achieved by utilizing imported, highly productive breeding material. Domestic poultry breeds and families with the lower productivity were pushed at the margins of the business activity which meant extinction of many valuable populations. Elimination of populations well adapted to the local conditions entails the risk of losing such desirable qualities as: survivability, resistance to diseases and adverse environmental conditions, longevity, high reproductive capacity and instinct to hatch eggs and tend chicks.

As the animals belonging to indigenous breeds and varieties constitute unique material for studies, particularly on DNA polymorphism, serum proteins, embryonic karyotypes, etc., they are of great importance to science. Therefore, actions aimed at the protection of these populations have been taken. In the 1970s of the 20th century, flocks of indigenous and local poultry breeds were inventoried and their genetic and production characteristics were developed. In order to restrict an unwanted increase in inbreeding, the first programmes on conservation of indigenous poultry breeds containing protection methods, the necessary minimum number of populations and an appropriate mating system were developed. Poultry populations threatened with extinction are protected by means of the in situ method – consisting in the protection of live animals in their habitat, in several flocks with a preference of a region where it was created.

Currently in Poland, laying hens, geese and ducks have been covered by the genetic resources conservation programme.

Populations of laying hens include from 660 to 1050 birds combined with cocks in the proportion of 10:1. In total, the conservation programme covered about 15 thousand birds. These hens are kept in four farms in different regions of the country, with more than 90% of them located in experimental stations belonging to the National Research Institute.

Laying hens covered by the conservation programme are: Greenleg Partridge (Zielononóżka kuropatwiana) (Z-11 and 9 Zk), Yellowleg Partridge (Żółtonóżka kuropatwiana) (Ż-33), Polbar (Pb), Rhode Island Red (R-11, K-22, K-44 and K-66), Sussex (S-66), Leghorn (G-22, H-22 and H-33), Rhode Island White (A-33, A-22 and A-88), New Hampshire (N-11), Barred Rock (WJ-44 and P-11), Barred Plymouth Rock (D-11).
of Animal Production. Recently, an increase in farmers’ interest in rearing hens of indigenous Polish breeds, i.e. Greenleg Partridge, Yellowleg Partridge, Polbar and Rhode Island Red has been observed.

Greenleg Partridge hens (photo 1, page 16) were recognized as a breed at the end of the 19th century. Back then, attention was paid to so-called "Galician hens" which, apart from good laying traits, were able to make good use of natural feeding grounds when walking far away from a hen house, did not require thoughtful care, were willing to hatch eggs and tend chicks. They were anticipated to be bred for eggs and meat. Determination of reseda-coloured shanks, as one of breed features, was compliant with seeking original, distinguishing physical characteristics. The weight of cocks at the age of 20 weeks is 1700-2200 grams and of hens 1500-1800 grams. The average number of eggs weighing between 55 and 58 grams obtained from a hen up to the 450th day of life is between 180 and 190 pcs. Due to the high percentage of egg yolk, eggs obtained from these hens are very tasty and more and more frequently purchased for consumption. Cockerels raised on green runs are characterised by delicious meat with a low fat content.

In turn, Yellowleg Partridge hens (Z-33) are general-purpose birds bred from Greenleg Partridge hens crossed with New Hampshire cocks. They can be distinguished by characteristic yellow legs, partridge-like plumage with a brown coating and yellow skin. These hens tolerate large-group breeding better than Greenleg hens and are characterised by the higher laying performance, weight of eggs and body mass. They constitute a valuable population in regard to production of eggs and "Label Rouge" broiler cockerels characterised by meat with excellent taste and dietary values. Yellowleg Partridge hens (Z-33) have a genetically determined trait of fast feathering.

Polbar hens were created by Prof. Laura Kaufman who was conducting breeding work on creating a domestic breed of hens with a different, sex-dependent colour of down in chicks, determined by two sex-related pairs of genes: S, s determining silver colour and golden colour and B, b determining striping or the lack of striping. For this purpose, Barred Plymouth Rocks were used, with a genotype determining silver colour and striping, and they were crossed with Greenleg Partridge hens characterised by golden colour and the lack of striping. In the genetically determined breed, pullets have dark down with a partridge-like pattern on the olive-green background and a characteristic dark line in the extension of the external corner of the eye. Cockerels are of light cream-coloured or smoky-coloured down, often with a darker streak on the back. There is no dark line in the extension of the corner of their eye. These two traits of sexual dimorphism determine autosexing and allow to distin-

Geese covered by the conservation programme are divided into three basic groups:

Domestic southern: Lubelska (Lu), Kielecka (Ki), Podkarpacka (Pd), Garbonosa (Ga), Biłgorajska (Bi), Zatorska (ZD1);

Domestic northern: Kartuska (Ka), Rypińska (Ry), Suwalska (Su), Pomorska (Po);

Conservation flocks of foreign origin: Kuban (Kubańska) (Ku), Roman (Romańska) (Ro), Slovak (Słowacka) (Sł) and Landes (LsD-01).
Ducks covered by the conservation programme are:

Danish Pekin duck (*Pekin duński*) (P-8), French Pekin duck (*Pekin francuski*) (P-9), Domestic Pekin duck (*Pekin krajowy*) (P-33), English Pekin duck (*Pekin angielski*) (LsA), Hybrid (*Mieszaniec*) (KhO-1) and Miniduck (*Minikaczka*) (K-2) kept in flocks of 250 birds in the Waterfowl Genetic Resources Station in Dworzyska (Wielkopolskie region), belonging to the National Research Institute of Animal Production.

Domestic Pekin duck (*Pekin krajowy*) (P-11, P-22, P-44, P-55) kept in flocks of 500 birds of each family in a private holding.

Governement

Duck sexing between sexes exact to 99.100%. Due to beautiful, fluffy plumage and auto-sexing, this breed is also appreciated in amateur or backyard rearing.

Rhode Island Red hens (R-11) belong to the most typical representatives of general-purpose breeds, prevalent in Poland and formerly known as Kar-
mazyn hens. Due to among other features genetically determined relatively high resistance to the Marek’s disease in backyard rear-
ing they are characterised by high survivability. They are recommended for pro-
duction of broiler chicks in runs as due to good gains and yellow colour of car-
casses they may be used as stewing hens and cocks.

Other families and lines of hens were imported to Poland before and af-
after World War II, and thus kept in the country for sev-
eral dozens of generations, most frequently used for production of commercial, general-purpose hybrids, intended for extensive rear-
ing systems which were terminated during the in-
tensification of poultry pro-
duction. In accordance with the adopted conservation programme, birds are not subject to selection for the improvement of the per-
formance traits.

Currently, with customers’ increasing interest in organic poultry products, studies are conducted on the use of these birds for small-group rearing in organic and agri-
tourism farms where due to specific quality features of eggs and meat as well as beautiful, multicoloured plumage they may be a source of tasty poultry prod-
ucts and an attractive ornamental element in individual regions of the country.

Varieties of southern geese can be differentiated by lower body mass when compared to other varie-
ties, with good muscula-
ture and low fat content in carcasses, low laying per-
formance except for Gar-
bonosa (Ga) and Zatorska (ZD1) geese on the other hand, but good brooding and tending capacity on the other. Northern geese and geese of foreign origin are mainly characterised by strong body build.

Out of 14 breeds and varieties of geese, 12 con-
servation flocks are kept in the Waterfowl Ge-
etic Resources Station in Dworzyska (Wielkopolskie region), belonging to the National Research Institute of Animal Production. The size of these flocks fluctu-
ates between 250 and 450 units. In total, about 4300 geese are covered by the conservation programme.

Derived from the Asian
goose *Anser cygnoides*, Gar-
bonosa (Ga) geese (photo 2, page 17) are chara-
terised by good health and resistance to adverse, uncontrolled small-group rearing conditions, low fat content in carcasses and very good hatching rates. They are inseparably con-
ected with rural culture and traditions in South-
Eastern Poland. The dis-
tinctive feature of Kartuska (Kä) geese are: good sur-
vivability and resistance to adverse environmental fac-
tors, very good muscula-
ture with low fat content, solid body build and the
good feed conversion rate. They play an important role in preserving farming culture in Kaszuby, Kielecka (Ki), Lubelska (Lu), Podkarpacka (Pd) and Zatorska (ZD-1) geese are covered by the protection due to very good musculature and low fat content in carcasses, desirable chemical composition of meat, high adaptability to the conditions of southern Poland and high resistance to infectious diseases. Goose breeds related to the northern region of Poland: Pomorska (Po), Suwalska (Su) and Rypińska (Ry) are characterised by good health and resistance to adverse environmental conditions, well muscular carcasses, relatively high reproduction rates and the good quality of feathers and down. Derived from the Asian goose Anser cygnoides, Błigorajska (Bi) geese are particularly valuable for their good survivability, high slaughter value (good musculature and low fat content in carcasses), good feed conversion rate and a large share of down in pluckings.

A separate group of protected geese is represented by breeds of foreign origin adapted to the Polish breeding conditions. Landes geese (LsD-01) – the currently existing flock is a population standardised in genetic and phenotypic terms and characterised by good health and a high level of reproductive traits. A flock of Roman (Ro) geese kept in Poland belongs to few such flocks in Europe with their distinctive features being: high body mass with well developed pectoral muscles. Another breed which is not represented in large numbers in Europe is Slovak (S1) goose with the high reproductive capacity, high average weight of eggs and relatively high laying performance as well as fine fibre structure of pectoral and femoral muscles.

All geese make very good use of pastures as feeding grounds, which predispose them to be reared in small holdings having meadows and pastures. The only representatives of Geese from conservation flocks, however not present any longer in other regions of Poland are Geese from conservation flocks. These globally unique indigenous populations of general purpose birds are perfectly adapted to Polish regions diversified in terms of climate, environment and culture. Due to the diversity of the phenotypic characteristics, they are a huge attraction in amateur rearing.

Families of Domestic Pekin ducks (P33, P11 and P22) are characterised by the high dietary value of meat, low fat content in carcasses and the good quality of feathers. They demonstrate high resistance to worse environmental and nutritional conditions in extensive rearing. The population of Miniducks (K2), limited in terms of the number, is of low body mass and well developed meat production traits. When compared to families of Pekin ducks, they lay less eggs, however their hatching rate is much better. Created as a result of multibreed crossing, families of Hybrid ducks KhO-1 (photo 3, page 18) and English Pekin ducks (LSA) are characterised by the relatively high laying performance, high body mass and high slaughter performance as well as resistance to adverse environmental and nutritional conditions. Due to their original physical appearance and colour of plumage, Hybrid ducks (KhO-1) may be kept in various maintained water bodies in parks, gardens and zoological gardens. The import families include Danish Pekin ducks (P-8) and French Pekin ducks (P-9). Danish Pekin ducks (P-8) are known for their good musculature and a high level of reproductive traits while French Pekin ducks (P-9) are general-purpose ducks. Due to their certain genetic discreteness, duck families of foreign origin, have been used, for many years for scientific research and may constitute breeding material, used in the genetic improvement of commercial families.

A small number of breeds, families and varieties of the above-mentioned poultry populations poses a threat to their survival. Therefore, for many years the National Research Institute of Animal Production has been actively involved in works on the protection of indigenous breeds, cooperating in this field with academic centres, National Poultry Council, National Animal Breeding Centre and non-governmental organisations. The National Research Institute of Animal Production organized a database that contains the sizes of these populations, the location of protected breeds and genetic resources conservation programmes (www.izoo.krakow. bioroznorodnosci.pl), updated on an on-going basis.

The majority of conservation poultry flocks have been classified by FAO as global genetic resources subject to the protection (World Watch List, FAO 2000).

Biodiversity should be maintained not only for practical but also for cultural reasons. Indigenous breeds are inseparably connected with the agricultural landscape, tradition and culture of rural communities as well as they bear testimony to multi-generational achievements of breeders. Therefore, production based on local breeds may be profitable in agriculturally poor regions, by contributing to the effective management of these areas and to production of eggs and meat of the unique dietary and taste quality. Small populations of animals with a diversified genetic structure are a reservoir of invaluable genes. Currently, studies are conducted on searching for valuable genes and specific characteristics of the quality of products obtained from these unique animals in order to use them in breeding works and in production of niche, e.g. regional products, but the results of these studies will be known in several years.

National Research Institute of Animal Production
Department of Animal Genetic Resources Conservation
Meeting at SIAL 2010 in Paris

On his official visit to SIAL 2010 Global Food Market Place fair in Paris Marek Sawicki, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, met with Bruno Le Maire, the Minister of Agriculture of the French Republic on 17th October 2010. The meeting was consistent with the Polish-French dialogue on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy. It was also a reaction to the joint position presented by Germany and France on the key aspects of CAP in mid-September 2010.

Minister Le Maire emphasized that he was still in favour of the trilateral cooperation (Poland, France, Germany) based on the Weimar Triangle concept. He also stressed the importance of maintaining the CAP budget level and the necessity to delay the debate on fund allocation until the budget was approved. Minister M. Sawicki said that Poland definitely wished to maintain the current EU budget level and was even the first EU Member State which suggested to increase it.

Minister Sawicki placed emphasis on his satisfaction with the French and German support for departure from the historical allocation criteria for direct payments. He was very specific on the fact that the present circumstances very favourable for in-depth reform of the CAP, particularly for a proposal of a uniform Common Agricultural Policy for all 27 Member States, which had been applying different policies so far. The Minister emphasized that the CAP reform should address innovation enhancement and agricultural holdings development - this was the key objective to be supported by the payment systems. Another important objective of the reform is to enhance the CAP competitiveness compared to the polices applied in the extra-European regions. For this task to be implemented a support should be granted to the market itself and to the instruments of market development and its protection, especially against speculations.

SIAL 2010 Fair in Paris has been one of the most important 2010 world events in the agri-food sector. The Polish National Stand was arranged by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. During the Fair which was held between 17th and 21st October, apart from the Ministry, the visitors could familiarize themselves with the offers of the Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Paris, the Lower Silesia Marshal Office, „Sokołów”, „Amigo” and „Vinpol” companies as well as the Polish Chamber of Milk. On the second day of the Fair a seminar on the French-Polish cooperation in agri-food sector was delivered.

Warsaw Representatives of the EU Presidency Trio

Marek Sawicki, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development met with the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries of Denmark, Henrik Høegh, and the Minister of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment of Cyprus, Demetris J. Eliades, on 20th October this year.

Co-operation of the ministries during the Presidency in the Council of the EU and the state of the current debate on the form of the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013 were the main topics of the meeting. ‘We want to learn each other priorities so as to work out a common schedule of actions for the consecutive Polish, Danish and Cyprian presidencies in the Council of the EU,’ stressed Minister Marek Sawicki, and he added 'during our presidencies, the most important decisions concerning the form of the Common Agricultural Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy after 2013 will be taken.'
Polish Food Products at the Salone del Gusto 2010 - Slow Food Fair

Between 21st and 25th October 2010, the city of Turin held the International SLOW FOOD fair - Salone del Gusto 2010. This biggest as well as the world’s most prestigious high quality food fair is a biannual event. This year’s eighth edition was attended by about 910 international exhibitors and over 200,000 guests, with every third guest coming from outside of Italy. The visitors could sample more than 2,000 wine brands from all over the world in “Enoteca”, as well as participate in seminars on various issues concerning high quality food. The event included also children education activities which aroused great interest and attracted as many as 1,000 youngest visitors.

The Polish stand organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development stood out from among other exhibitions. The integral image, open form and splendid photographs of the Polish landscape drew attention and enjoyed major interest among the guests. The Polish stand exhibited the products entered into the European Union’s Registers of the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG), such as: andruty kaliskie (sweet wafers from Kalisz) (PGI), olej rydzowy (camelina sativa) (TSG), Kielbasa lisiecka (sau- sage) (PGI), oscypki (smoked cheese produced in the Tatra Mountains) (PDO), redykolki (cheese produced in the Podhale region) (PDO), jabłka łąckie (apples) (PGI), as well as the products for which registration is still pending: kabanosy (smoked Polish sausages) and ser koryciński (a type of Wizajny cheese from the region of Podlasia). The visitors could also taste the Polish traditional dishes prepared with products produced in compliance with organic farming rules. At the Polish stand the visitors emphasized high quality of the presented products, as well as the involvement of Polish producers in the development of the traditional and local products abroad.

Participation of Poland in the Salone del Gusto fair showed how important the high quality food is in the world and how extensive is the demand for such products.

Polish-Vietnamese Talks

On 28th October this year, Minister Marek Sawicki met with the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Nguyen Minh Luang. The Vietnamese delegation to Poland included entrepreneurs interested in trade cooperation with the Polish companies.

Minister Marek Sawicki expressed his satisfaction with the progress in cooperation, particularly in the field of veterinary science. The talks concerned continuation of arrangements for other veterinary certificates. Minister Nguyen Minh Quang underlined the importance of cooperation between the ministries of agriculture of both countries in the development of agriculture and food economy in Vietnam. He addressed a request to the Polish entrepreneurs to take actions in this regard. He also referred to the great investment opportunities, in particular in the coffee and timber products market. Nguyen Minh Quang stressed wide experience of Poland in the agricultural and food processing sector modernization, whereas the Vietnamese party is eager to build on it as well as on assistance in agricultural education.
Minister Sawicki expressed his interest in such support. He said that Poland had a well-developed agricultural advisory system, which could effectively contribute to the Polish-Vietnamese cooperation in the field of agriculture.

### Polish-Latvian Cooperation

A delegation of the Ministry of Agriculture of Latvia headed by Minister Janis Duklavs paid a visit to Poland between 9th and 10th November. The guests visited the agri-food processing plants and cooperatives. Bilateral talks were also held and the ministers of Agriculture of Poland and Lithuania answered questions of the press representatives during the break.

Minister Marek Sawicki said that the discussion concerned the following three main issues: the future of the Common Agricultural Policy, the Polish Law on the insurance of crops and farm animals and the standards of food production in small plants and farms. The Latvian party was interested in the Polish legal solutions and their practical aspects.

The head of the Polish ministry of agriculture also mentioned the Cooperation Declaration signed in Slovakia. For the first time in the last two years, the Visegrad Group countries, Bulgaria and Romania have assumed such unequivocal and firm position with regard to the future of the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013, the minister stressed.

Minister Duklavs expressed his support for the adopted Declaration to Minister Marek Sawicki. He also said that he hoped that the other Baltic countries would support that document. He reminded that the direct payments level for the Latvian farmers is the lowest. The Minister also underlined the role of the Polish Minister whom he considers a determined supporter and initiator of a modern and complex reform of the existing Common Agricultural Policy.

### The High Level Forum for a Better Functioning of the Food Supply Chain

On 16th November, Minister Marek Sawicki attended the first session of the High Level Forum for Better Functioning of the Food Supply Chain held in Brussels. The session was chaired by Antonio Tajani, Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for Industry and Entrepreneurship.

Keynote addresses were delivered by M. Barnier, the Commissioner for Internal Market and Services, D. Gioloş, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development and J. Dalli, the Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection.

The Forum is composed of the ministers of agriculture of 13 EU Member States, entrepreneurs, trade associations and non-governmental organizations. The Forum will deal with the following areas: trade contracts practices, food prices monitoring, competitiveness in agri-food industry and agri-food sector logistics. The Forum established pursuant to the Commission Decision (2010/C210/03) will assist the European Commission with the development of industrial policy in the agri-food sector and with the implementation of the initiatives proposed by the Commission in its Communication "A better functioning food supply chain in Europe".

Following the Forum session, Marek Sawicki attended a conference on the Common Agricultural Policy beyond 2013 held by the European Parliament during which he presented the Polish view on the Policy reform. The presentation was also joined two Members of the Polish Parliament: Jarosław Kalinowski and Czesław Siekierski. The conference was attended by about 120 persons. The Minister also met with Albert Dess and Michel Danton, members of the European Parliament Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development. The talks involved the future of the CAP.
Polish-Portuguese Consultations on the Future Common Agricultural Policy

On 19th November 2010, Marek Sawicki, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, received António Serrano, the Portuguese Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries.

The document on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy presented the day before by Commissioner Dacian Cioloș was one of the main topics of the talks. The Polish Minister emphasized that the document published yesterday by the European Commission lacked a clear provision on departure from historical payment rights. In the Minister’s opinion the document was consistent with the Polish expectations, but “Everything depends now on the detailed substance of the presented general provisions”.

Minister Marek Sawicki said that both he and Minister António Serrano were in favour of a high enough budget for CAP implementation - at least at the current level, as well as they are for departure from historical payment criteria. Both ministers also agreed that it was necessary to maintain the two-pillar structure of the Common Agricultural Policy and to keep CAP pillars at the same level.

The guest of Minister Marek Sawicki emphasized that both Poland and Portugal jointly recognized the necessity to modify thoroughly the Common Agricultural Policy. The Portuguese Minister pointed to the fact that the EC had presented very general proposals, and that the entire document needed an in-depth analysis. He also declared his willingness to cooperate with Poland in further works on the presented proposals.

Polish-British Talks on the Future Common Agricultural Policy

Marek Sawicki, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, continued talks with the EU’s ministers of agriculture on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy. James Paice, Minister of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of Great Britain, was another guest invited by the Polish Minister. The meeting was held on 22nd November 2010.

Despite the differences of opinions on agriculture financing and the EU budget Minister Marek Sawicki emphasized that Poland and Great Britain agreed that the Common Agricultural Policy needed a thorough reform.

Great Britain is in favour of abandoning the historical entitlements to direct payments. It also supports division of means into the first and second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy. The Ministers agreed to shift the resources from the first to the second pillar. This was consistent with the Polish idea of 50/50 financing scheme for both pillars.

The talks focused on the document presented by Commissioner Dacian Cioloş last week. As Minister Marek Sawicki emphasized, the document provided a good basis for further talks and for the search of the most advantageous solutions that could lead towards a genuine reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, and not only its cosmetic changes.

Minister James Paice emphasized that the British government wanted to contribute to the discussion on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy with the new Member States, particularly with Poland. “We are not only ready to cooperate, but also to support Poland during its Presidency”, said our today’s guest.
Minister Marek Sawicki attended the 10th Polish-German government consultations which were held on 6 December 2010 in Berlin. The meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Donald Tusk and Chancellor Angela Merkel. Among other guests there were the ministers of: foreign affairs, economy, finance, infrastructure, labor, justice as well as of science and higher education.

Polish-German consultations have been held since 1997 which attests to the importance attached by Poland and Germany to the cooperation at the governmental level. Within the currently ongoing debate on the future shape of the Common Agricultural Policy the consultations presented an opportunity for both ministers of agriculture to exchange views on the Communication of the European Commission concerning the future of the CAP, as well as both the Polish and German visions of this policy after 2013.

In the course of the meeting with Ilse Aigner, Minister of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection, Minister Sawicki pointed to the need of strong and ambitious CAP, one of real community character, since only such policy would be able to meet the challenges faced by the EU’s agriculture. The Minister emphasized that the key objectives of the CAP reform should include its simplification. According to the Polish top agriculture official declarations should be replaced with concrete measures such as specification of the functions of both pillars. The first pillar should cover the stabilization of agriculture incomes in accordance with measurable criteria, whereas the second pillar should be reinforced in order to reshape the CAP into an active development policy to even further facilitate investment, modernization and innovation of agricultural activities.

Minister Aigner mentioned that Germany, as one of few EU-15 countries, is currently moving away from the criteria of direct aid linked with historical production. She also emphasized that complete leveling of direct payments in all Member States would considerably lower the aid amounts obtained by German farmers in relation to the current rates.

Both minister Sawicki and minister Aigner indicated the need to intensify the cooperation at the operational level in order to approximate their positions on the future of the CAP. There should be regular operational meetings of experts, attended also by the French and British ministers of agriculture. Hitherto goal of approximating of the positions within the Weimar Triangle has therefore expanded to include obtaining the possibly broadest agreement also with the Great Britain.

The ministers’ talks concerned also the Polish role as a Partner Country at the upcoming edition of the International “Grüne Woche” Green Week, as well as the Polish Presidency in the EU. Minister Aigner declared the readiness of German experts to support the Polish Ministry of Agriculture in the preparations to the assumption of the Polish chairmanship of the EU Council and when it is exercised it.
In the south of Poland, within the Lesser Poland voivodship, a charming land called Sądeckyzna is situated. It is composed of relatively low mountain ranges of Beskid Sądecki, Beskid Niski and Beskid Wyspowy. The main rivers of the region are the Dunajec, the Poprad and the Kamienica. They are supplied with mountain streams that flow fast in narrow riverbeds.

The localization and climate of Sądeckyzna have impact on the diversification of its flora and fauna. The flora of the areas located at a lower level is now farmland and meadows, as well as some remains of oak and hornbeam leafy forests and mixed forests with the following dominant species: fir-trees and pine-trees. Above (550-110 m a.s.l.), there is the so-called ‘regiel dolny’ full of fir and hornbeam forests and spruce forests. In the mountain range of Beskid Sądecki, the highest parts of mountains (over 1100 m a.s.l.) are covered with spruce forests. You will be able to imagine the richness of the local flora when you realize that there are 1000 species of flower plants, 500 species of lichens, 260 species of mosses and 800 species of mushrooms.

Also the world of animals living in Sądeckyzna is rich and varied. Among the birds, you can observe some rare species, such as golden eagle, there are also wood grouses, black grouses, black and white storks, black woodpeckers. You can see bears, wolves,
lynxes, wildcats, deer and roe-deer on forest tracks in Sądecczyzna.

Forest areas of the Sądecki district abound in numerous species of game: wild boars, pheasants, hares, partridges, ducks and the aforementioned deer and roe-deer. They are magnets for domestic and foreign hunters. Even just a walk in the beautiful forests, contact and furtive watching of nature of the region of Sądecczyzna provides you with great relaxation and a nice way of spending time.

The unique natural values of this area were the reason for separation of its part as the Poprad Landscape Park (existing since 1987). It belongs to the National Ecological Network. The river Dunajec intersecting the park was considered as an ecological corridor of international importance. Fourteen natural reservations were founded within the Park, including 12 being forest reservations. The oldest one was established in 1906 owing to the efforts of the owner of huge forest areas in that region, count Adam Stadnicki. He was involved actively in protection of forests as a passionate and well-educated forester. In order to commemorate his activity, the Adam count Stadnicki natural trail was founded and it is located among other tourist trails and didactic paths. Not only does it lead through beautiful forests of the Carpathian Forest but can also take you to the little palace of the Stadnickis in Nawojowa, surrounded by a forest park. In the park, there are tulip trees, sweet chestnut trees, catalpa, numerous varieties of maples, beech and pine trees. The area of the whole Poprad Landscape Park is over 53,000 ha. It is one of the largest landscape parks in Poland.

To sum up the natural theme, it should be added that forest areas constitute 44% of the Nowosądecki district and the largest amount of forests is in the following communes: (Rytro 92.8% of the commune’s area) and Łabowa (70.8%).

However, the beautiful nature is not the only factor which attracts tourists to Sądecczyzna. At the turn of the 18th century, healing values of some localities were found, which led to establishment of local health-resorts. The most important ones are now Krynica-Zdrój, Muszyna, Piwniczna, Rytro, Zegiestów. Sources of mineral waters available there have been exploited since the second half of the 19th century. These are mainly acidic waters, naturally saturated with CO₂. It is worth getting to know their taste and healing properties. They are often made available in standard pavilions of pump rooms. In the largest, but already modern, pump room in Krynica Zdrój, you can taste some water from the springs called ‘Jan’, ‘Slotwinka’, ‘Tadeusz’ and ‘Zuber’. In order to welcome visitors of the health resorts, the first guest-houses were established at the end of the 19th century – they were beautiful private villas characterized by their unique architecture. Some of them have survived until now and still are pride of the resorts.

However, the history of settlement in Sądecczyzna dates back much further. In the main town of the region, Stary Sącz, existing already in the Middle Ages, duchess Kin-
ga (the wife of Bolesław V the Chaste, Duke of Kraków and Sandomierz) founded a Franciscan monastery and a Franciscan convent in 1280. These were wooden buildings for a long time as buildings of stone started to be erected at the beginning of the 17th century. The remaining parts of the convent complex, the convent of Clarisses, with their picturesque location on a steep scarp, over the former riverbed of the Poprad, belong to the most precious historical buildings of Stary Sącz. The convent looks most beautiful from the side of the access road leading towards Nowy Sącz. It really deserves the name of “the Southern Poland’s Wawel”.

It is worth visiting Stary Sącz because it is a town of priceless historical buildings and unique atmosphere. Most of all, you have to see the market square situated in the centre (having the area of approximately 1 ha) cobbled with stone paving from the 19th century, the so-called boulders. Initially, the market was surrounded by 25 houses. Twenty-two have survived until now. Huge majority of them are one floor buildings with various colours of walls and details; each of them is different, unique. In the surroundings of the market, in the adjacent little streets, we can see plenty of other interesting buildings, e.g. the old hospital for the poor and the building of the Town-Hall – both erected in the 18th century. There also are plenty of interesting historical sacral buildings in Stary Sącz. The most important one, apart from the church and the convent of Clarisses, is the St. Elizabeth and Mar-
garret church, a gothic building with posterior internal decor.

Currently, Nowy Sącz is the main administrative centre, the seat of the district authorities. It is ‘Nowy’ (Eng. ‘new’) only by its name as its history dates back to the 13th century when it was founded by king Wacław II in 1292. Moreover, some ruins of the Royal Castle with parts of urban fortification from the 14th-17th century have remained.

Currently, the city hall situated in the market’s centre is the heart of the town. Among the precious historical buildings of Nowy Sącz, we should also mention the Gothic House from the 15th/16th century, where the Regional Museum is now based. It is worth visiting the museum located in the historical building. It presents some interesting permanent and temporary exhibits concerning Sądecki. Some other oldest historical building of Nowy Sącz is the Monastery Complex of Franciscans which dates back to 1297.

Undoubtedly, an attraction of Nowy Sącz is the Sądecki Ethnographic Park – a regional heritage park presenting wooden architecture and traditional folklore culture of the historical Sądecki region. The park spreads over almost 20 ha of land. Its area contains 68 objects gathered in several complexes. You can see here e.g. several peasant farms, a nobleman’s manor from the 17th century, a Lemko Orthodox church from the 18th century, a part of settlement of Carpathian Gypsies, a village forge, a windmill and oil mill, some little chapels and roadside crosses, bee yards. Some old village craft workshops have been restored. There are also thematic ethnographic exhibitions, e.g. ‘Wedding chamber’.

A separate sector of the park is the so-called Galician Town. It is a reconstruction of Galician small-town buildings dating back to the turn of the 19th century. The town is a lively object in which the historical or reconstructed buildings serve public purposes, e.g. they are used as conference and training facilities or hotel and gastronomical facilities.

Some funds of the European Union were used for extension of the heritage park.

While visiting Sądeckyzna, you should take a trip along its wooden architecture trail and visit the picturesque wooden churches, Orthodox churches, chapels and bell-towers. You can start your trip already in Nowy Sącz from the St. Helen church and St. Roch church. In Stary Sącz, there is the St. Nicholas the Bishop church. You definitely should also visit some other towns along the trail, e.g. Piwniczna and its Greek Catholic St. Michael the Archangel church, in Muszyna – the Dormition of the Mother of God Orthodox church, in Złockie – the St. Demetrius the Knight and Martyr Orthodox church, in Powroźnik – St. James the Less Apostle Orthodox church.

Sądeckyzna abounds in interesting historical objects and its residents are proud of them. They attempt to popularize information about the land among the largest possible number of potential guests. These goals are supposed to be reached for instance though the activity of the Association "Perły Beskidu Sądeckiego" (Eng. ‘Pearls of Beskid Sądecki’) established by 5 communes: Rytro, Piwniczna, Nawojowa, Łabowa and Muszyna. The Association has developed their Local Development Strategy, owing to which local undertakings serving both the residents and tourists visiting the region are to be co-financed with the EU funds within the frameworks of the Programme Leader of RADP 2007-2013 (aid programme of the European Union).

Residents of Sądeckyzna also encourage tourists to taste some traditional specialties of the region. Most of all, we should mention great prunes from Sądeckyzna – ‘sechlońska’ dried plums that are dried and smoked in the traditional way, with smoke. They have been included in the list of Polish products protected with the European Union food quality system as a product of Protected Geographic Indication. We cannot forget about the great honeys from that region with their very long tradition of production. Each year in summer, the Stary Sącz Craftsmanship Fairs are organized. During the fair, local delicacies are also sold. These are for example: cottage bread baked on shovel, flat cakes, lard, marinated mushrooms, ‘łacja’ plum brandy. You should definitely visit Sądeckyzna and get to know its flavours.
Close to Nature
‘Suska sechłońska’ is one of the twelve Polish products entered by the European Commission into the category of Protected Geographical Indications, and thereby participating in the EU’s food quality system.

The name ‘suska sechłońska’ derives from the local dialect and signifies a dried and smoked prune. The adjective ‘sechłońska’ comes from the place-name Sechna located in the municipality of Laskowa, from where the tradition of drying originates.

Exceptional quality of the product

‘Suska sechłońska’ is an unpitted or pitted prune which has undergone the process of drying and smoking. Its size depends on the size of the fruit of the used plum variety, while the shape may range from oblate to oblong. The length usually oscillates between 1.5 cm and 4.5 cm, with a weight of 44 to 99 fruits per 1 kg. ‘Suska sechłońska’ is characterized by an elastic, pulpy flesh and a wrinkled but shiny skin of deep blue to black. The prune is slightly sweet in taste, with a noticeable smoky aftertaste and aroma. The process of drying and smoking in drying facilities is carried out by means of hot smoke, which distinguishes the ‘suska sechłońska’ from prunes dried with warm air. At the time of sale the water content of the finished product ranges between 21 and 42%.

Place of origin

The geographical area in which ‘suska sechłońska’ is produced covers 239.55 km² and is located within the administrative boundaries of four municipalities of Małopolskie voivodship: Laskowa, Iwokowa, Łososina Dolna and Zegocina.

Characteristic kilns, designed and built by the local people in a style adapted to the local terrain, form an integral part of the geographical landscape.

A drying kiln consists of a brick foundation around a hearth and a covered chamber with a wooden grate. The kiln’s chambers are
closed by means of a wooden door through which the place can be filled with plums and which also helps to keep in the warmth and protect against unfavorable atmospheric conditions. There is an oven under each chamber. The structure is protected by a pitched roof. Fruit kilns usually have two or three chambers; however it is also possible to find kilns with only a single chamber or with as many as five chambers. The construction of the kilns ensures the simultaneous circulation of warm air and smoke, thus drying and smoking the plums.

Plums undergoing the drying and smoking process are arranged in a layer 30 to 50 cm thick. The producers turn the mass of drying plums once a day using a special shovel. The process lasts between 4 and 6 days, depending on the thickness of the plum layer. The temperature in the kiln when producing *suska sechłonska* ranges from 45 to 60 °C. This method of drying and smoking plums has been developed thanks to the indigenous skills of local producers and is used solely for the production of *suska sechłonska* in the defined geographical area.

**The history and reputation**

According to the information from the first half of the 13th century, the abundance of fruit trees was the most distinct feature of the Sechna village. Most likely by then each premise already had its own orchard. Legend has it that the history of plum-drying began with a local clergyman who spread the custom of planting a few or more plum trees among his parishioners as a penance for their sins. When the trees began to bear fruits, the farm owners started producing slivovitz. Due to the spread of drunkenness, the clergyman and the curate decided that although plum tree planting ought to continue, the fruits were to be dried, since plums dried with smoke could not be made into alcohol. Over the years the tradition of plum drying spread to Sechna’s neighboring villages in the municipalities of Łaskowa, Iwkowa, Łososina Dolna and Żegocina. The local producers specializing in plum drying invented methods of construction of special drying facilities that fit in perfectly with the local landscape and which give the product high quality and a unique taste. The oldest drying facility, no longer operational, is more than 100 years old. The area covered by the four municipalities boasts as many as 677 such kilns. This is clear evidence of the product’s very close link to the geographical area. The number of kilns is one of the most characteristic aspects of the local landscape.

*Suska sechłonska*’s reputation is based on the long tradition of making the product and the exceptional skills of local producers. *Suska sechłonska* owes its high quality to the unique skills of local producers and the traditional production methods they use. The design of the drying kilns and the method of drying reflect the know-how of local producers and differ considerably from production methods used in other parts of Poland as well as in the neighboring regions.

Since 2001, the town Dobrociesz has organized *The Prune Festival*. Further confirmation of the reputation of *suska sechłonska* is the ‘prune tourist trail’ mapped out by the local authorities indicating farms with plum orchards and drying facilities.

**Division of Geographical Indications**

Department of Agricultural Markets at MARD
As forecasted by the Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics, poultry meat production in Poland is going to increase by over 8% in 2010, while the increase in export is going to amount to over 17% in the same period. In 2010, the export of Polish poultry is therefore going to reach the highest level so far, that is approximately 400,000 tons. Satisfaction of the constantly growing internal demand as well as of the demand notified by foreign purchasers requires provision of a proper level of poultry meat production. Such production is conducted by farms specialized in poultry fattening. The category includes both farms of a very large production scale and smaller ones in which production is meant primarily for the local market.

One of such small poultry producers with firm renown is the farm of Maria and Kazimierz Slabkowski situated in Dziki Bór nearby Sierpc (in the Masovian voivodship). In 2007, they were appointed representatives of the Masovian voivodship to the National Competition "AgroLiga 2007" by the Centre of Agricultural Counselling and... won in the category of "Farmers", which means that they became the National Champions of “AgroLiga 2007”. Undoubtedly, it was a prize and honour for their farm work for many years. They started in 1995, that is 15 years ago. The prospects were not incentive. Despite the fact they were not short of land (54 ha), the soil was of poor quality – the 6th class. Meadows and pastures constituted more than a half of the area, whereas cultivation of grains in the remaining part did not give good crops. What were they supposed to do in such conditions, how to provide their family with proper financial condition? Mr. and Mrs. Slabkowski found a solution – they decided to start trade poultry breeding. In order to adjust their farm to such type of production, they used a credit line for young farmers and invested the obtained money in construction of their first hen house. Credit repayment was not very troublesome as they made use of a form of support offered by the Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture, namely surcharges from the Agency to the interest of investment credits given to farmers. They buy ready-made feeding stuff for chickens as grain production...
Recipe for Success
Poultry Breeding – a Good Idea

in their farm is not cost-effective. When poultry production turned out to be a good idea, they constructed another hen house. Therefore, they have two hen houses now, each of 1200 m² and the annual production of chicken in their farm amounts to 600 tons approximately. It is not a huge amount but, together with the 3-year breeding of beef cattle of the Limousine breed, it provides good income for the five members of Mr. and Mrs. Slabkowskis’ family. The owners co-operate with the local poultry slaughterhouse and are going to maintain the production profile of their farm. Owing to the funds from the European Union aid programmes, they also established better conditions of their activity, e.g. they built an access road to their farm and hardened the large vehicle manoeuvre area (1ha). They equipped the farm with machines necessary for the conducted production types with their own funds.

The family’s living conditions have also improved significantly. Mr. and Mrs. Slabkowski have built a nice house surrounded with a trim garden. The daughter and two sons of Mr. and Mrs. Slabkowskis are happy with the success of their parents. They all want to get involved in agriculture in future. One of their sons, Grzegorz, aged 23, has already started to put that plan into practice and studies zootechnics at the University of Technology and Life Sciences in Bydgoszcz. He is going to provide professional help in conducting animal breeding in the farm. There are more such family farms in Poland and their power consists for instance in harmonious co-existence and co-operation of all the family members.

Ewa Woicka-Bekas
The Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture
Turkey Cold Meat - it Tastes Polish Hit Products

Entry into the market of a new company specializing in meat processing, "surviving" there for over 20 years, and in the meantime undergoing a dynamic development, are all considered a huge success. The Meat Processing Plant "Łukosz" has managed to achieve it. The key ideas were the launch of turkey meat preserves production and consistent politics of the company’s owner.

Creative and inventive, brave, hard-working, good at organizing, but also a very modest and kind man - these are the proper words to describe Mr Edward Łukosz, the owner of the family business - Meat Processing Plant "Łukosz" (general partnership). The plant, located in Chyby (Silesian voivodship), specializes in turkey meat processing. Undoubtedly all these features of the owner contributed to the quick and successful development of the company. But, as Mr Łukosz admits, his career was supposed to develop in quite a different direction. He graduated from the Department of Geodesy at University of Life Sciences in Cracow (previously Agricultural University of Cracow).

The history of the Meat Processing Plant "Łukosz" dates back to 1989 when Mr Łukosz, then a fledgling graduate of the Cracow university - M. Sc. Eng. geodesist - decided to... open a minor plant producing cold red meat. From the very beginning this was a family business, since Mr Edward Łukosz took up trade and marketing issues, whereas production matters were to be handled by his brother - food processing specialist, former chief of production in major national meat plants. After several years, when the company already operated successfully within the market, Mr Edward decided to concentrate on turkey meat processing. Turkey brawn was the first product of that type. Its formulation was worked out in the plant and soon the brawn went into production. It turned out to be a hit in Silesia where the company’s products were sold. This success encouraged the owner to expand his offer of turkey meat products and to give up red meat processing. This turned out to be the crucial strategic decision for the future of the company.

Over the course of 20 years of the company’s functioning it expanded and currently covers a plant in Chyby, a turkey abattoir in Ostróda and a production plant opened in 2010 in Czerwonka-Leszczyny. Total employee number amounts to 750 individuals, and the daily production amounts to nearly 200 tones of meat and cold meat. These amounts position the "Łukosz" company among the biggest turkey meat processing companies in Poland. A considerable production increase occurred after the modernization and launch of the plant in Leszczyny which can produce 100 tones of preserves per day. The abattoir in Ostróda has the workload of 3,000 tones per month. Efficient distribution
is facilitated by three own logistical centers located in Chyby, Dębica and Os-tróda. Thanks to the centers, the "Łukosz" company's products can be purchased all over Poland as well as abroad - in the Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the Czech Republic.

In terms of logistics the company has completed an enormous amount of work, thanks to which it currently has its own distribution network in the entire Poland. It enables the product's delivery in just a few-hour period after the order has been placed. Moreover, all processes conducted within the company have become computerized. While sitting in his office, Mr Edward Łukosz has the overview of productions halls, can conduct long-distance monitoring, run analyses and manage, e.g., tradesmen's work.

Of course such business expansion and development would not have been possible if "Łukosz" produced goods were not characterized by high quality and excellent taste, or did not attract consumers. But the fact is the "Łukosz" products are of the highest quality. The company has concentrated on the production of a minor for the plant's production capacities number of a few dozens products, but these are always of the consistent high quality. They meet all European standards of production. Maintenance of consistently high quality of the products is of a great importance, not only for the purpose of attracting consumers by appearance, taste or smell, but also for the products to have high nutritional value and longevity and to meet high safety standards for this type of food products. The "Łukosz" company has implemented the integrated management system compliant with ISO 9001 and ISO 14 001 standards.

High quality of "Łukosz" products has been repeatedly awarded in branch contests, at exhibitions and fairs. Recently, during the POLAGRA-FOOD 2010 International Fair in Poznań 7 "Łukosz" products were awarded in two contests within the 6th Forum of Butchers and Cold Meat Producers, obtaining the first two places (for the Cracow sausage and the Wišłaska sausage), two second places (for the thigh in jelly and the country sausage), and one third place (for the cherry fillet).

The successes on the international scene undoubtedly included the one on the British market, when for the first time in 2010 Polish turkey meat obtained higher prices than Italian turkey meat.

However, Chairman Edward Łukosz does not rest on his laurels and continues his search for new solutions and products. He declares that at the beginning of 2011 he will start a production of ecological turkey meat products. He has already signed agreements with battery farms which produce turkeys using ecological methods. I think consumers will appreciate and like these products.

The company has also established connections with trade networks widely recognized in the European Union, such as E. Lederc, Bil-la, Intermarche, Tesco, Macro-Cash&Carry. Talks are continued with others.

It is also worth emphasizing that the Meat Processing Plant "Łukosz" is a Polish company, with the Polish registered capital.

The key to success lies in the words of the company's owner - Mr Edward Łukosz: - I make every effort to continue development of my company and to make sure that the consumers link the brand "Łukosz" only with the products of the highest quality.
Participation in national and international fairs is the key objective of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development within high quality food promotion - the "Discover Great Food" Programme, ecologic products, as well as products entered in the List of Traditional Products which participate in the system of Protected Geographical Indications, Protected Designation of Origin and Traditional Specialty Guaranteed.

The main goal of the "Discover good food" programme is to promote certificate confirmed high quality food. Through the conducted activities the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development helps consumers make conscious decisions concerning food products, attempts to build their trust in mass produced food which, nevertheless, is characterized by high and consistent quality, and additionally promotes a healthy lifestyle. Entrepreneurs who participate or intend to participate in the "Discover Great Food" Programme are encouraged to both produce good and healthy products and enhance their investments in quality. This year’s activities, oriented on encouraging consumers to choose Polish products, were organized under the slogan "Lead a tasty and healthy lifestyle". Simultaneously, via the cooperation with dietitians, we demonstrated how to use ‘Discover Great Food’ Programme marked products in a daily, balanced diet. The activities conducted under this slogan were initiated during the annual "Picnic with the ‘Discover Great Food’ Programme" which was hosted in May 2010 in the SGGW’s (Warsaw University of Life Sciences) gardens. The activities were carried out during the successive outdoor events, attended next to the Agricultural Market Agency also by the Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture, Agricultural Property Agency and Farmers’ Social Security Fund. The events included:

- 17th Regional Livestock Exhibition and the Days of Agricultural Consultancy AGROARENA 26-27 June, Szepieutowo;
- 33rd International Agricultural and Industrial Fair AGRO-TECH, 3-4 July, Minikowo;
- Mazovia Province Harvest Festival, 22 August, Sierpc;
- 19th National Agricultural Exhibition, 4-5 September, Częstochowa;
- Barzkowice Agricultural Fair Agro Pomerania, 10-12 September, Barzkowice;
- 17th International Days of Agricultural Consultancy, 11-12 September, Siedlce;
- Spala 2010 - Presidential Harvest Festival, 19 September, Spala;
- International Agricultural Fair AGROSHOW, 24-27 September, Bednary.

Due to the importance of encouraging proper food habits among the Polish people, this type of activities shall be continued in the upcoming years.

Beside outdoor events, other organized activities included
Collective national activities, that is the collectively conducted informational policy concerning Polish agriculture, ensured better reception of the communications addressed particularly to farmers, as well as fostered a positive image of the institutions competent for agriculture.

The activities promoting the programme did not, however, focus solely on Poland. The initiatives carried out abroad aimed at popularizing certified Polish high quality food among consumers. During international trade and exhibition events, visitors of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development’s stands could not only obtain information on the programme, but also try ‘Discover Great Food’ marked products. These events included:

- 75th International Green Week in Berlin, 15-24 January;
- International Food, Drink, Food Processing and Hospitality Trade Fair, 21-24 February Budapest;
- FHA Food and Hotel Asia 2010, 20-23 April, Singapore;
- EXPO 2010 19-21 May, Shanghai;
- Agriculture and Society Exhibition, 18-19 July, Brussels;
- Golden Autumn Festival - 1-4 October, Moscow;
- SIAL 2010 - 17-21 October, Paris;
- International Christmas Bazaar, from 28 November, Prague;
- Christmas Eve, 13 December, Brussels.

Throughout the whole year the information on ‘Discover Great Food’ Programme will be available i.a. in the following magazines: Fresh&Cool Market, Bilans Dodatni (Positive Balance), Hurt i Detail (The Host), Poradnik Samorządzowy (Self-government Handbook). Consumers will have an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the programme’s objective in Nova Wieś Europejska (New European Village), Zielony Sztrand (Green Flag) as well as in Tygodnik Siedlecki (Siedlce Weekly). The presence at international fairs was promoted by English publications in magazines such as Food from Poland (fairs in Moscow and Paris) and Welcome to Poland (Shanghai EXPO), the “Polish Food” quarterly. Moreover, the Discover Great Food programme also appeared on TVP Warsaw (a regional branch of the TVP, Poland’s public television broadcaster) and TVP 2, before and after the most popular Polish programmes and series.

The upcoming year will be crucial for Poland for two reasons - Polish Chairmanship in the EU’s Council and Polish presence as the partner country at 76th International Green Week 2011.

Apart from these events Poland will also participate in the following fairs: BioFach, 16-19 February 2011, Nuremberg (Germany), GULFOOD, 27 February-2 March 2011, Dubai (United Arab Emirates), IFE LONDON, 13-16 March 2011, London (GB), Salon International del Club de Gourmets, 11-14 April 2011, Madrid (Spain) and ANUGA, 8-12 October 2011, Cologne (Germany).

The Minister’s Office
The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
The gala of the "Discover Great Food" programme was held in Warsaw, on 16 December 2010. The ceremony was opened by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development – Marek Sawicki. The invited guests included many representatives of companies involved in production of and trade in food, science, industry media and, first of all, the producers of the products which in 2010 were granted the right to use the PDŻ quality mark.

During the ceremony, Minister Marek Sawicki said that food was the great asset of Poland. He stressed that in case of trade in agri-food products we had a positive balance again, at the level of more than EUR 2 billion. Major recipients of Polish food are the European Union countries. However, we are seeking the third-country markets. We have improved our relations with the Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian markets. We also conduct the intense activities, seeking the further, difficult but interesting Far-East markets.

Growing agricultural production made us seek consumers outside Europe. We want our products with the "Discover Great Food" quality mark to be present in the Chinese, Korean, Singaporean and Vietnamese markets. They will defend themselves with their quality.

The "PDŻ – Discover Great Food" programme was launched in 2004. The right to use the "PDŻ – Discover Great Food" quality mark on the packages is granted by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to the products which meet the criteria developed by the Scientific Committee for the quality of food products. It is composed of eminent scientists and ex-
Great Food" Programme

Experts for agricultural production, processing and human nutrition.

This mark placed on the packaging informs consumers that a given product meets the highest criteria in terms of the quality, production conditions and used raw materials.

Marking the product with the "PDŻ – Discover Great Food" quality mark is a valuable form of promotion and an excellent marketing instrument which the producers are very willing to use. For consumers, this recognisable mark is the information that the product they chose is characterised by the highest quality and taste parameters.

Currently, more than 460 food products, produced by 66 companies, are marked with the "PDŻ – Discover Great Food" quality mark. During the ceremonial Gala, Minister Marek Sawicki presented the producers with the marks for the new products which received them in 2010. Most of them were dairy products and cold meats.

Detailed information to be found on www.minrol.gov.pl and under the address:

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Recently there have been incidents connected with biological hazard, including microbiological, chemical or physical hazards of food, such as: dioxin scandal, prions causing BSE, pathogen infections, allergens, including GMO, toxins, and several others. Many of them concerned animal origin products, including poultry. The incidents both alarm the public opinion and at the same time increase government control to undertake preventive measures. The incidents have also increased awareness among food producers in Poland as well as all over the world.

The 21st century has not only failed to diminish the already known hazards, but de facto increased the number of hazards of the undiscovered nature, additionally enhancing the risk awareness particularly to the acts of international terrorism. These can certainly concern food and water. Civilization development as well as new and changing conditions can breed new health hazards. Digestive system diseases, which are in 40-50% caused by pathogenic microorganisms, are most frequently transmitted with food - mainly raw materials and poultry products. Recent years have also witnessed a change within the digestive diseases epidemiology such as the emergence of new pathogen microbes. The increase in the number of cases is also caused by the conditions of long-distance trans-
port of non-durable, minimally processed food, which enables spread of pathogens worldwide. Other factors influencing the changes within the epidemiology of poisonings and digestive infections include the types of consumed food products, their sources and the change in consumer expectations which favor minimally processed food. The factors set forth above should be supplemented by the increase in popularity of eating outside the household, thus an enhanced significance of mass catering and food service stet activity and features of microbes diversity.

The recognition of the significance of food safety was emphasized by the establishment of the European Food Safety Authority. It holds an important function in both risk assessment and communication regarding food safety within the entire European Union.

The Polish law defines food safety as the set of conditions which must be met and activities which must be undertaken at each stage of food production and distribution in order to ensure human health.

The food producer, who is responsible under law for health safety, may encounter a problematic situation, if the health risk is not managed properly. Inability to minimize the risks - in terms of both the loss of product health quality and marketing losses (which depend on the pace of undertaken corrective measures within own enterprise, as well as beyond it - regarding the public opinion) can account for a major financial cost. Usually such losses involve apart from production losses also a painful loss of market shares and company’s image, which also impacts finances.

Proper risk management and good systemic solution of ensuring food health and quality should include identification and reduction or elimination of the hazard, if it appears.

When a product which does not have proper quality and does not meet basic consumer expectations leaves a production plant, an entrepreneur will come upon a task of the control of the further, usually unfavorable chain of events. This is much more complex than the mere systemic control of the process correctness in the production chain of the producer’s own company.

**Simple definition of “safe food” means food which does not bring harm to the consumer's life and health if is prepared and consumed in the manner compliant with the food’s intended use. Another recognized definition regards food which is free of biological (microbiological), chemical and physical contaminations.**

**Rules and systems of health safety assurance**

With respect to the nature and need of ensuring food health safety, several methods (measures) have been worked out to serve this aim Chart 9, page 59.

The rules and systems which facilitate the production of healthy food, including poultry, first of all cover:

- **GMP** – Good Manufacturing Practice,
- **GHP** – Good Hygiene Practice,
- **HACCP** – Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point,
- **ISO 9001** Quality management systems - Requirements, which also include crucial elements for managing food health safety.

**GMP**

GMP is the basic, essential system. The code of good manufacturing practice contains a list of activities which must be undertaken and requirements which must be met in order to ensure proper health quality of food production, in accordance with its intended use. Pursuant to the Polish law the regulations of good manufacturing practices are not de facto mandatory but recommended. These involve a large number of elaborated GMP codes within particular sectors. Observing the rules ensures a more effective production of food which is safe in terms of health and has desired quality.

**GHP**

Good Hygiene Practice includes activities which must be undertaken and hygienic requirements which must be met at each stage of food production or distribution in order to ensure food health safety. The implementation of GHP guidelines in food production facilities is no longer optional but mandatory pursuant to the Resolution of the Minister of Health of 1 July 2000, followed by EC regulations No 852/2004 and 853/2004.

It is also of high significance that the employees of organizations are instructed to follow the GHP guidelines. Specialized companies which deliver hygiene and disinfection services within food industry execute programs called Complex Hygiene Management. Otherwise a production plant ought to elaborate the Guide to Good Hygiene Practice based on national legal regulations, foreign regulations and own knowledge regarding the company’s specificity.

A division of areas into those within GMP and GHP is not always required, since frequently the two interminable and are interdependent. Therefore we recommend using the acronym GMP/GHP. The basic GHP aspects are covered by general hygiene regulations of food products in Codex Alimentarius.

Simultaneously, compliance with GMP/GHP regulations creates proper environmental conditions for obtaining adequate quality of raw materials as well as for producing food in a manner which guarantees its health safety for consumers.

According to the EU and Polish law, responsibility for food health safety rests on the producer, distributor, and food operator.

**HACCP**

According to Codex Alimentarius, Food Hygiene Basic Texts from 1997 and 2003 the Guide to HACCP defines HACCP as follows: „HACCP is a system which identifies, assesses and controls (manages) the hazards crucial to food safety“.

The system is based on two pillars: the analysis of health hazards (biological, chemical and physical) and critical control points specified on the basis of the conducted risk analysis.
Application of HACCP is of preventive character and assumes identifying potential irregularities and hazards to the process always in time to minimize the risk, before or during the processing. Preventing problems before they emerge is the basic aim of that method and the HACCP system. It should be emphasized that the HACCP method was elaborated particularly in order to eliminate microbiological hazard, and later on developed to also cover other biological threats, as well as chemical and physical hazards.

The HACCP system is based on seven key rules which comply with the basic source of information, namely Codex Alimentarius. The content of the above-mentioned document is also referenced during 12 stages of the system’s implementation. It de facto comes down to the execution of the initial five stages and then of seven implementation rules.

The HACCP system can cover the whole plant or just a part of it, which should be explicitly specified.

Both the GMP/GHP programs and the HACCP system aim at ensuring product health safety. If despite thorough execution of the system’s rules, proper supervision and documentation of conducted activities the plant still lacks proper and safe conditions of food production, then potential health hazards must be accounted for in the HACCP system. In such a case the system could expand to a size which would hinder successful supervision.

HACCP should first of all cover the proper production process - processing of raw material into food, and not the initial conditions (prerequisite programs) that serve to create an adequate, safe environment for the correctly and safely carried out processing. Upon unexpected hazard the producer should be ready to undertake effective actions based on the prepared procedure.

In majority of poultry processing plants the GMP/GHP linked activities are limited to monitoring of parameters in control points (not like CCP in HACCP), and presumptively to undertaking of corrective measures and their documentation. As can be seen from the above, the simultaneous execution of both the GMP/GHP programs and HACCP creates a partly integrated system of assuring food health safety in the plant.

**ISO 22000 standard**

There is a need to integrate the above-mentioned tools and systems into all links of the food production chain, including poultry. The ISO 22000 standard (Food safety management systems) considers hazard analysis the key element of effective management of food safety, since it is the source of knowledge required for a proper design of a set of control measures (in majority these are preventive measures). Pursuant to the ISO 22000 standard any expected hazards originating from raw materials or specific processes, as well as those which originate from the used devices or installations, must be identified and assessed. It should also be specified which of them must be controlled within the given organization, and which by external institutions (within the food production chain), or even by end consumers.

The discussed International Standard integrates the HACCP regulations and the stages of its execution (according to Codex Alimentarius) with the elements of the Quality Management System (pursuant to the ISO 9001 standard). Moreover, management of food safety can be made more effective by integration of the requirements of the HACCP system (and particularly the HACCP plan) with "initial programs" (PRP - Prerequisite Programs), which de facto include various minor hygienic practices and practices connected with production processes adjusted to the plant’s specificity. By way of example, for the poultry industry these are: GHP - Good Husbandry Practice, GVP - Good Veterinary Practice, GPP - Good Production Practice, GMP - Good Manufacturing Practice, GDP - Good Distribution Practice and others.

The elaboration of the ISO 22000 aimed at international harmonizing of requirements within food safety management in the whole food chain. The standard addresses all those who want to implement the integrated system of food safety management.

The postulate of the standard’s compliance with binding legal requirements and standards of particular countries, sector carriers, e.g. poultry carriers, as well as with specific standards prepared by other organizations was an additional argument in support of the creation of the ISO 22000 standard. The works on the elaboration of the standard were initiated in 2001, whereas its final draft was prepared and issued in 2005. The Polish version of the standard appeared in 2006. The standard can be used in all organizations which participate and are connected to the food chain "from field to table".

**The specification of health hazards in the poultry industry**

Maintenance of safety poultry products becomes increasingly more expensive and complex. This results from: pollution, environmental contamination, feed and noncompliance to the regulations of good manufacturing and hygiene practices within particular links of the poultry production chain. It concerns GMP/GHP already at the initial stage in pedigree breeding and parent stock farms, through hatching plants, transport of nestlings to commercial farms, transport of poultry to abattoirs, slaughter, processing, distribution, and finally treatment of ready goods by the consumer. The entire chain requires integrated, complex activities which increase the chance of healthy production of poultry meat and its preserves.

**Key health hazards connected with poultry production include:**

- becoming contaminated with microbes which are pathogenic for humans, or their toxins, as well as,
- residues of chemical compounds such as antibiotics, coccidiostatics or growth stimulants used in livestock production.

Bacteria such as *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* are par-
particularly dangerous for poultry products. Foreign sanitary services, including the US ones, emphasize the significant risk posed by enterotoxic *Escherichia coli* O157:H7.

Poland has implemented a system of the unified veterinary services action regarding infectious diseases that require mandatory control. The instructions issued in 1999 by the Chief Veterinary Officer are the testimony of the scope of activities connected with obtaining of raw material. The instructions concern methods of control of *Salmonella* in: poultry reproductive stock, slaughter poultry and commercial stock. The control of food health safety within the poultry breed sector is mostly based on the GMP regulations. Nestlings, feed, rodents, wildfowl, insects, equipment, clothing or the farm's stuff can all become the source of pathogen infection of the stock in the poultry-house.

Breeding ground is highly prone to infection, whereas the nestling immune capacity is low. As the result of the 92/117/EEC directive implementation, *Salmonella* has been almost completely controlled in commercial stocks (parent stocks) and in hatching plants. After the HACCP compliant transport to a farm, hatched nestlings should be treated as a hazard covered by CCP (Critical Control Point). The stage of nestling transport can also be considered a significant risk subject to the CCP control.

With respect to broiler chicken farms (or laying hens), the key measure after the replacement of stock consists in washing and disinfection of the poultry-house. The effects of these activities are subject to systematic bacterial monitoring.

Fowl delivered to an abattoir are usually strongly infected upon the feathers, skin and in the digestive system. As the result of properly conducted modern slaughter processing, the initial state can be reduced by hundreds of times. Nevertheless, slaughter production lacks the stage, and simultaneously a CCP, which enables total elimination of the risk of *Salmonella* or Campylobacter contamination. This is the opinion of international hygienic experts and microbiologists.

**National program of Salmonella control in broiler hen stocks**

National Program of *Salmonella* control in broiler hen stocks for the years 2009-2011 is executed pursuant to the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of 22 September 2009. The Program was approved by the decision of the European Commission No. 2009/883/WE of 26 November 2009. The community objective (the maximum of 1% of *Salmonella* emergence) should be completed by the end of 2011. The ultimate community objective is to meet the following criterion in the period from 1 January 2009: “*Salmonella*: the presence of bacteria was not reported in 25 g of fresh poultry meat”. The community legislation concerning food hygiene specifies that this criterion is not to be used with respect to fresh poultry meat destined for thermal industrial processing or other technique of processing for the purpose of eliminating the *Salmonella* bacillus.

Until microbiological criteria for poultry meat are not implemented with respect to poultry stocks originating from farms where the presence of *Salmonella* bacilli was reported within the owner conducted examinations, farms and slaughter plants will be subjected to the procedures of 24 July 2009 elaborated by the Chief Veterinary Officer.

Tables 1, 1a, pages 58, 59 present potential hazards introduced by raw material as well as preventive measures, table 2, page 59 the hazards which emerge at the stage of poultry slaughter and table 3, page 60 the hazards which are identified in the poultry meat processing plant on the example of cured turkey ham. Frequently under national conditions these hazards are considered key risks and are subject to control by the CCP specified at that stage.

**Assessment of the HACCP system implementation**

The monitoring of the implementation of the HACCP system in the national poultry industry complex demonstrates that poultry processing plants are legally bound to implement, maintain and improve the HACCP system and Good Hygiene Practices. As for the most advanced system of full scale management of health safety ISO 22000 standard, it has so far been implemented only partially in the poultry industry. Nevertheless, the Polish Centre for Accreditation which are authorized to certify the HACCP system approve the plant HACCP plans if they meet the requirements compliant with the ISO 22000 standard system.

Few plants can reveal some of the following imperfections:

- at times plants omit the stage of raw material production, which is indeed a crucial source of health hazards,
- the system's implementation is initiated no earlier than at an abattoir's threshold,
- the producer ignores/neglects the stage of the product's trip from the plant's door to the consumer,
- the supervision system occasionally lacks the precedent, relatively simultaneous implementation of GMP and GHP.
- the management of many companies treats the system merely as a necessary formality which results from the obligation to implement the HACCP system within the production of animal food.

In each case the Veterinary Inspectorate conditions the right of the producers of raw poultry products and poultry meat products to export to the EU's countries on the updated audit of the proper functioning of the plant HACCP system.
Agri-food Quality Control of Polish Meat and Poultry Preserves

The Main Inspectorate of Agricultural and Food Quality (IJJHARS) conducts annual controls of poultry meat quality and accurateness of poultry preserves' labelling. Trade quality of chicken and turkey meat that is produced by poultry processing plants is verified in terms of compliance with the Commission Regulation (EC) No 543/2008 of 16 June 2008 laying down detailed implementing measures for Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 on certain trade standards in regard to poultry meat, as well as with the producer's declaration. Issues connected with the labelling of meat products produced from raw poultry material are regulated in accordance with mandatory laws, i.a. Ordinance of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of 10 July 2007 on the labelling of food products.

In 2010, the Main Inspectorate of Agricultural and Food Quality conducted controls in 70 poultry production and processing plants. The control of poultry assortment covered three areas: physical assessment of meat, examination of absorbed water content as well as accurateness of poultry preserves' labelling.

Physical assessment

In terms of physical assessment 215 portions of poultry meat and its preserves underwent the Inspectorate's control. The assessment based on sensory impressions, namely appearance, smell, etc. did not reveal any abnormalities in terms of physical features of each controlled chicken or turkey meat portion.

Examination of absorbed water content

The content of absorbed water was controlled in 35 poultry meat portions. Over the course of the control it was reported that 12.9% of plants which were obliged to undergo systematical control of water within poultry meat did not verify the content of water absorbed during poultry slaughter. Moreover, it was reported that in 5.7% of the controlled meat portions the laboratory marked absorbed water was higher by 15.9 g and 259.6 g than the technologically justified water level.

Absorbed water is the amount of water uptaken by poultry meat during the chilling process. The quantity is dependent on the used cooling method (air chilling, spray/evaporative, immersion).

Commission Regulation (EC) No 543/2008 specifies the maximum levels of physiological water (component of poultry meat), the minimum acceptable amounts of water technologically justified, that is the water absorbed during the processing. Depending on the used methods it amounts to: 2% - for the air chilling method, 4.5% - for the spray/evaporative method and 7% - for the immersion method.

Poultry meat labelling

The control covered 220 portions of poultry meat and 114 portions of preserves. The IJJHARS inspectors questioned accurateness of the labelling of 24.1% poultry meat portions. The control reported cases of shelf life being prolonged without carrying out proper storage tests, cases of using inaccurate trade names, of neglecting to inform consumers about the form of a product’s presentation, e.g. lack of information whether the carcass contained the umbles or not. Moreover, the control detected inaccurate definition of trade quality class, that is "1" instead of "A", as well as lack of label information on poultry brand from which the carcass or the umbles were obtained.

Poultry preserves labelling

The IJJHARS inspectors reported that 27.2% of poultry preserves had inaccurate labelling, namely lacked label information on allergens, e.g. soya, celery or milk, or any raw materials used for production, that is: vegetable fat or preservative.

Sanctions

With respect to the existing irregularities, 11 administrative decisions were issued regarding dishonest producers. They included i.a. decision imposing a pecuniary penalty for placing on the market of adulterated poultry meat with the content of water higher than the level technologically justified. Beside that 26 post-control recommendations were issued obliging producers to eliminate the irregularities.

Conclusions

The control results demonstrate that each fourth poultry or poultry preserves portion was inaccurately labeled. Compared to the control results from 2009, currently the poultry meat labelling was questioned with a frequency higher by 1.6 percentage points, whereas poultry preserves - by 17.2 percentage points. This may suggest lack of knowledge among producers or their inaccurate interpretation of the mandatory regulations.

Beata Majchrzak, Quality Control Office The Main Inspectorate of Agricultural and Food Quality
As forecasted, poultry production is going to reach the level of approximately 1.350 tons in the whole 2010, and an increase by 6-7% in comparison to the current year is going to take place in 2011. A slight increase tendency in meat consumption has been observed in the country and it is going to amount to approximately 25 kg per 1 resident in the current year. About 85% of the consumed poultry in Poland are chicken and turkey broilers. Duck and goose meat constitutes a small part of our diet.

**Nutritional value of poultry**

Products of low energetic value, including turkey breast (84 kcal) and chicken breast (99 kcal), are the most popular ones with the consumers. Leg meat is more caloric (104-125 kcal) and contains more fat than breast.

Poultry is a good source of full-value protein which varies depending on the species, breed, age, sex, raising system, feeding method and on the part of carcass. Higher protein content is characteristic of meat of gallinaceous poultry (guinea fowls, hens, turkeys) when compared to waterfowl meat (ducks, geese). The nutritional value of poultry protein is high and comparable with the amino acid pattern recommended by FAO/WHO (apart from methionine and phenylalanine).

In comparison with other kinds of meat, poultry is characterized by lower fat content and a more beneficial ratio of
unsaturated and saturated fatty acids, e.g. the ratio in chicken fat is 0.7, 0.8 in turkey, 0.4 in duck, while in pork it amounts to 0.17. It is characterized by a high level of polyenic acids, in particular of PUFA n-3 and that is why it is considered more di- etetic than pork or beef.

The composition of fatty acids in poultry and its fat depends primarily on the bird's species, phyllum, sex, raising and feeding conditions. In general, females are characterized by more fat deposition than males at the same age. Broilers over 4 weeks of age experience higher rate of fat deposition. Various breeds, phyllums and lines demonstrate diversified ability to de- posit fat. We can influence limita- tion of the fat deposition level of carcass and meat by feeding, so proper balancing of energy and protein (amino acids) and proper feeding stuff additives. Among all the poultry species, the lowest fat deposition is character- istic of turkeys, guinea fowls and ostriches.

Considering the current in- terest of the consumers in meat quality, it is expedient to define the level of indispensable unsatu- rated fatty acids (UFA), especially oleic and linolenic acid, which contribute to e.g. a decrease in the cholesterol level in blood plasma in humans. The share of fatty acids in diet prevents and cures illnesses of the circulatory system, including mainly coro- nary disease, cerebral stroke, arterial hypertension and irregu- lar heartbeat.

The cholesterol content de- pends of the level of carcass fat deposition. The cholesterol content in turkey breast muscles (without skin) amounts to 49 mg/100 g, while in chicken muscles it is 58 mg/100 g. Depending on the species, the highest cholesterol con- tent is observed in leg muscles and the whole carcass.

Poultry of various species is pretty rich in B group of vita- mins: thiamine – B1, riboflavin – B2, niacin – B3, pyrodoxine – B6 and cobalamin – B12. The above mentioned vitamins are important as they play a crucial part in regeneration of body tis- sues, in particular in proper func- tioning of the nervous system. Leg meat is a better source of B-group vitamins in compari- son with breast muscles.

Apart from that, meat con- tains pantoten acid, vitamin A, D and E. Occurrence of vita- mins depends on several factors, e.g. carcasses of thinner animals contain more vitamins of group B, padded ones - more fat-sol- uble vitamins - A, D, E.

Poultry is also a source of easily absorbed iron, sodium, potassium, magnesium and chlorine, as well as copper, zinc and manganese.

Quality of poultry products

A consumer making a purchase is most of all interested in esthetic looks, durability, nutritional value and safety of the product, as well as in its price.

The quality of poultry relies on e.g. the bird's genotype, age, sex, raising and feeding condi- tions and the conduct before slaughter.

The growing expectations of consumers are a now reason for paying more and more attention to the issues of meat quality. The interest in products of ecological origin is increasing among the consumers, especially the ones from large cities. The leading sys- tem of raising slaughter chickens in Poland is the intensive system. In the case of alternative systems, the free-range and ecological ones prevail. That creates a pos- sibility of intensification of the care for the environment, pres- ervation of biological diversity, as well as extension of ecologically- friendly production methods. Ec- ological production of slaughter chickens has been included in the market poultry offer as a result of search for new production direc- tions and for the sake of meeting the growing expectations of the consumers.

Currently, the tendency to raise slow-growing chickens with access to chicken run and applica- tion of feeding mixes with pro-health modification of their content is coming back (ap- plication of plant preparations, removal of cocodistats, addi- tion of antioxidants), resulting in obtaining the final product of increased nutritional value, that is meat of increased content of multiple-unsaturated fatty acids with increased pool of natural antioxidants, limiting the risk of oxidative alterations of multiple- unsaturated fatty acids. Chickens obtained from such production should be cheaper than the ones from ecological production and the consumers should get a product of smaller fat deposition and better culinary properties.

Carcasses of slaughter chick- ens bred in the free-range sys- tem are characterized by smaller share of subcutaneous fat in the carcass in comparison with broil- ers. The high ratio of thermal drip and low water absorbability of breast muscles indicates that meat should undergo techno- logical processing urgently or get to the consumer in unprocessed condition as soon as possible. In comparison with the ones raised in nursery, muscles of turkeys raised with access to run were characterized by more intense vascularization, higher content of connective tissue and more frequent glycogen grains. These characteristics have positive im- pact on the quality of meat meant for processing. Also a lower number of damaged muscle fibers were observed.

Quality tests of meat from ducks raised in various raising systems indicated a slightly higher pH, more intense flavour and higher temperature-induced losses in muscles of birds raised on grass chicken run. It also was demonstrated that meat of birds of slow grow rate and having access to free run was characterized by beneficial profile of fatty acids and a higher share of UFA.

Diet is an important factor in- fluencing the state of health and good disposition of consumers. The increase in social awareness concerning the issues related to nutrition (properly balanced diet) and human health has made food producers extend their market offer with new food products that, apart from the values satisfying human physiological needs, are a tool of prophylaxis of certain diseases. Poultry is easily digestible, juicy, succulent meat, it is tender and soft and has delicate tissue structure, evenly saturated with adipose tissue. Fat is located mainly under the skin, which makes it easier to remove it. The advantageous amino acid content of protein and the rela- tively low caloric value make that meat, in particular meat of young specimens, applicable in diet of babies, children, sports- men, the elderly and persons on slimming diet.

The results of national surveys in- diate that the raising system may influ- ence the quality of carcass of various poultry species.

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White Kołuda® Geese
Breeding Achievement of the National Research Institute of Animal Production

Geese have been farmed for centuries, integrating very well with the Polish rural landscape. These birds are kept for tasty meat and valuable down and feathers. Goose liver pâté is highly valued as a delicacy all over the world.

The following proverbs can be cited as proof of the tradition of goose meat consumption in old Poland: “Gooseflesh leads the way on St. Martin’s Day”, “On Martinmas geese are put on the stove”, “Many a goose is put away on St. Martin’s Day”. Under “goose”, W. Kopaliński’s Dictionary of Myths and Cultural Traditions quotes an old Polish text that highlights the importance of geese: “There is no better game than our geese: good feathers and good down, to say nothing of gooseflesh”.

The ongoing intensification of agriculture, changing consumer requirements, major advances in animal breeding, feed production technology and human diets in Poland and other European countries have reduced the number of goose breeds and varieties used. Goose breeding is regarded as a specialty of Polish agriculture. White Kołuda® geese, which were created at the Kołuda Wielka Experimental Station of the National Research Institute of Animal Production lay around 70 eggs, from which around 40-45 goslings are hatched.

The down of White Kołuda® geese is characterized by excellent structure and colour, with the highest resilience in the world according to Japanese consumers. The feathers and down of White Kołuda® geese are highly valued by manufacturers of luxury sportswear (down jackets) and bed-linen products, mainly in Germany and the Far East (Japan, Taiwan). This is because consumers are increasingly interested in natural materials produced using largely ecological methods. The quality and quantity of down obtained from geese is also related to factors such as management, nutrition, health of birds, and collection method. Most valuable feathers and down are obtained by hand plucking. The farm in Koluda Wielka is a leading Polish producer of excellent feathers and down. White Kołuda® goose feathers are characterized by white colour (no grey feathers), desirable smell and moisture content of 13-14%. These feathers are characterized by high microbiological purity (oxygen value of 22-27), with no immature and damaged feathers or organic contaminants.

“Oat geese” have become an export hit of the Polish poultry industry. White Kołuda® geese, especially W31 hybrids obtained by crossing W33 meat-type ganders with W11 laying-type geese are best suited for their production. Due to incomparable taste and dietetic value, goose meat and fat (obtained from abdominal fat) are regarded as “health food”. The muscle protein content is 17-21% and the fat content is 4.4-5.6% of the product. Due to a large (70%) proportion of unsaturated fatty acids (mainly omega-3) and considerably lower cholesterol level compared to pork and beef products, goose meat and fat are recommended as anti-atherosclerotic agents. White Kołuda® geese received many awards at animal exhibitions for their advantages and role in Polish poultry breeding. Many championship titles and medals obtained at the Polagra-Farm International Agricultural Fair have pride of place at the seat of the Kołuda Wielka Experimental Station.

Considering the increasing importance of dietetic quality of animal food, “Young Polish Oat Geese” fulfill all the criteria of consumer acceptance and market success. The feeding system used in oat goose nutrition (a large proportion of farm-produced feeds of plant origin, including forages) coupled with the free-range housing system result in a product characterized by the highest slaughter, culinary and health-promoting value. Being the only Polish genotype of commercially used poultry, White Kołuda® geese are very well adapted to the Polish environment, showing high adaptive capacity and resistance to harsh conditions.

The breeding of geese at the National Research Institute of Animal Production dates back to 1956, when Zatorska geese were created at the Zootecnical Experimental Station in Zator, based on four varieties of domestic geese: Podkarpackie, Garbunose, Suwalskie and Pomorskie. Since 1960, Zatorska geese have been kept at the Zootecnical Experimental Station (ZZD) in Koluda Wielka near Inowroclaw, which belongs to the National Research Institute of Animal Production. A year later, Gorky geese were...
brought to the Kołuda Wielka Experimental Station from the USSR. Further breeding work was justified because of good reproductive and slaughter performance of Zatorska geese. However, the import of Gorky geese was ineffective because they had boat-shaped carcasses and inadequate muscling, which were unacceptable for the Western importers of Polish geese. As a result, the flock of Gorky geese was liquidated.

During the same period, efforts were made to find a general-purpose (meat and breeding) type of geese. In 1962, White Italian goslings were purchased from a Danish farm and placed at the Kołuda Wielka Experimental Station and at a farm in Maly Klincz near Kościerzyna. The import was a success and the Polish population of geese became uniform thanks to research and breeding centres in Poland and abroad, and with many people who are too numerous to mention in this publication. However, mention must be made of prof. Stanisław Wężyk from the National Research Institute of Animal Production, who has actively participated in research and breeding projects related to geese in Kołuda Wielka for many years. We must also mention a considerable contribution of Prof. Eugeniusz Herbut, the Deputy Director of the National Research Institute of Animal Production, who has initiated and co-authored many studies related to goose welfare, among other things.

The results obtained in the initial years were unsatisfactory but highly promising. In 1963, an average of 32.2 eggs and 12.5 goslings per layer were obtained. After eight years of breeding, the number of goslings increased to over 15, and in 1985 (23rd year of breeding) the number of goslings averaged 37. At present, goose productivity is around 40 goslings per layer on a nucleus farm.

Since 1985, two lines of the geese have been bred on the nucleus farm: WD-1 and WD-3. WD-1 geese were selected to improve reproductive traits while maintaining an adequate level of meat traits. WD-3 geese were improved towards meat traits while maintaining an adequate level of reproductive traits.

In the autumn of 1990, the Commission for Breeding Material Approval, attached to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Economy, approved the WD-3 line as nucleus stock, based on the documentation and results of productive value evaluation. The Commission also designated a new distribution method for groups of breeding geese. Since 1991, a nucleus farm has sold to category “A” breeding flocks a group for production of males (♂♂) and females (♀♀) of line WD-3) and a group for production of males (♂♂) and females (♀♀) of line WD-1). Based on the study results and fattening tests, it was decided to sell ♂♂ of line WD-3 and ♀♀ of line WD-1 to farms with parent stocks to obtain a W31 hybrid, which proved ideal for fattening.

In 1993, the geese bred in Kołuda Wielka were given the trade name White Koluda® geese, approved by the Commission for Breeding Material Approval. In 1997, the symbols of WD-1 and WD-3 lines (letter D designating an experimental line) were changed into W11 and W33. The two lines of White Koluda® geese created in Kołuda Wielka (W11 and 33) have a trademark. Together with the trade name, these were submitted on 20 August 2001 to the Patent Office. The Polish Patent Office registered the application as no. Z/239873 and started to carry out the registration process.

For over 40 years, the Kołuda Wielka farm has carried out its unique breeding programme. Its aim is not only to improve the W11 maternal line and the W33 paternal line, but also to use crossbreeding to obtain a commercial hybrid matching the standard of the “Young Polish Oat Goose”, which is an export hit of Polish producers and was registered at the Patent Office by the National Poultry Council. The rules of “Young Polish Oat Goose” production were approved by the National Poultry Council and implemented by the Main Inspectorate of Agricultural and Food Quality. In 2003, the Inspectorate instructed experts in the su-
Supervision of goose breeding and fattening with regard to the breeding principles concerning “Young Polish Oat Geese”.

On 1 January 2003, at the National Research Institute of Animal Production, opened the National Goose Research and Development Centre (KOB-HG) in appreciation of the achievements, involvement and contribution of researchers from the Kołuda Wielka Experimental Farm to White Kołuda® goose breeding, taking into account the development of goose production in Poland. The Centre was organized at the Kołuda Wielka Zootechnical Experimental Station as part of the National Research Institute of Animal Production. The main tasks of the KOB-HG are to develop goose production in Poland, to supervise all of the parent stocks, to consolidate the goose production environment, to exert an influence on goose production volume, and to cooperate with Polish exporters of goose meat. These activities were helped by the Law on Livestock Breeding Organization and Reproduction from 20 August 1997 (Journal of Laws of 2002, No. 207, Item 1762), which together with the regulations of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (Journal of Laws of 2002, No. 150, Items 1244 and 1245; Journal of Laws of 2003, No. 41, Item 356) enabled the National Research Institute of Animal Production to obtain permission to keep the record books for parent geese.

In 2007, the system of White Kołuda® parent gosling distribution was modified by excluding grandparent stocks, which delayed breeding progress at the level of parent stocks. This reorganization will enable complete consolidation and mutual cooperation of the National Goose Research and Development Centre and the reproductive rung of the breeding ladder, i.e. parents. These flocks are very important for breeding procedure as they translate breeders’ efforts into practical results. No breeding programme can succeed without contracts between breeders and livestock users. Breeders have the right but also a duty to monitor the breeding material they created and sold. They must know the real value of animals, their needs and productivity under different environments, evaluate them, analyse problems, draw conclusions and use them in further work. Breeders also have to keep a close eye on the market and changing consumer preferences, and be flexible in adjusting breeding practices to consumer needs.

Poland is the largest producer of geese in Europe, with goose meat exports (mainly to Germany) reaching 18,000-19,000 tons per year. In Poland, the consumption of goose meat is very low. Considering the old tradition of goose meat consumption on St. Martin’s Day (11 November), it might be worthwhile to reintroduce this custom, especially since this day (Independence Day) is of special significance to Poles and deserves special treatment in every dimension, including the culinary dimension. Let us renew this old tradition.

Halina Bielińska, PhD
Jakub Badowski, PhD
Kołuda Wielka Experimental Station
National Research Institute of Animal Production
The Polish tradition of breeding and consuming goose is very long and firm. Goose was most frequently served at royal or magnate courts, while at less affluent noblemen and peasant’s houses, goose was a festive dish.

Goose dishes are also consumed today in Poland. Numerous old Polish culinary recipes are still in use, for example goose served traditionally by old Polish recipe. It is a dish of an exceptional taste resulting from the sauce formulation. Dried prunes, raisins, cooked green bean, smoked bacon fried with onion and basil are added to the sauce made while roasting.

In some regions of Poland goose is particularly popular. Kashubia (Pomerania) is famous for its original methods of preparing goose. Smoked and stuffed goose is the local delicacy, “okrasta”, i.e. minced, raw meat with goose fat, seasoned with herbs and spices is the region’s most distinctive dish. Kashubs recommend “okrasta” to be spread on bread.
In Silesia and Greater Poland, particularly on St. Martin’s Day (the 11th of November), consuming goose dishes is a tradition. On that occasion roasted goose (with sweet marjoram, drizzled with light beer while cooking) is the most popular dish appearing on the table. In Silesia, goose is also served cold, i.a. “smoked goose halves”, “stuffed goose neck” (minced pork stuffing, goose liver and roll).

Goose dishes are also popular in Kuyavia, the homeland of Koluda Gans. The Kuyavians serve for example roasted goose stuffed with apples or roasted goose with dried plums. Another Kuyavian dish, “czernina”, is a soup with the addition of goose or duck blood, made from umbles, mixed with dried or fresh fruits. In Kashubia it is traditionally served on the first day of Christmas.

It is worthwhile to try goose dishes while visiting Poland.

Ewa Woicha-Bekas
ARMA

Festive goose pâté

Goose with prunes
In Polish cuisine poultry raw material has always been considered valuable for preparation of dishes. According to available historical sources, ducks were eagerly consumed at the royal court of the Jagiellons' (in the 14th century). Turkey appeared on Polish tables not long afterwards. Polish literature, diaries, and particularly culinary books from recent centuries contain numerous descriptions of poultry dishes. They often became a part of characteristic old-Polish customs. They are mentioned in major Polish literary works such as Adam Mickiewicz’s “Pan Tadeusz” (19th century), where one can find “black soup”, i.e. soup known as “czernina”. Czernina or another dish known as gray duck, were served for dinner at Polish noblemen’s houses when the host wanted to inform the potential groom that his marriage proposal had been rejected.

In old Poland our ancestors eagerly consumed capons, fattened hens, hens, roosters, chickens, turkeys, geese, ducks and guinea hens, but also peacocks, turtledoves and swans. The most sophisticated dishes were served at the tables of the most affluent – kings, princes, aristocrats. However, on festive occasions and at family events poultry was also consumed at less affluent houses of noblemen and peasants. Backyard poultry breeding was and still is popular in Poland.

Traditional Polish Cuisine

Poultry Dishes
In modern day Poland poultry dishes are still in high demand. Chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese and less often wildfowl - partridges and pheasants are among the most frequently consumed poultry meat.

"Polish-style chicken" is the classic national dish. The dish’s unique taste derives from the stuffing placed inside the chicken prior to roasting. Its ingredients include: stale roll soaked in milk, cut parsley, poultry liver dabbed with butter and egg-yolk, foam from egg whites. The stuffing is seasoned with sugar, salt and pepper. Fresh cucumbers or green salad seasoned in a typical way for the Polish cuisine, namely poured with sour cream containing sugar and salt, are the best addition to roasted chickens.

In individual Polish regions poultry dishes are prepared in ways characteristic for the local area. One poultry species can be made into dishes with a completely different taste. Let us then go on a culinary journey around Poland in search for interesting flavors and recipes.

Nowadays, chicken dishes are the most popular choice due to general availability of raw material such as whole carcasses or their elements. Apart from the already mentioned recipe for "Polish-style chicken", almost each Polish region has elaborated its own local methods of preparing chicken.

In Lesser Poland chicken is served "Cracow-style". It is stuffed with Cracow groats cooked in stock (non-calcined buckwheat groats), with the addition of cut parsley. Prior to stuffing the carcass is additionally sprayed with lemon juice. The use of groats for stuffing is a part of Polish tradition, as groats dishes have always held an important position in our cuisine.

At the opposite end of Poland, in Pomerania, chicken is served in yet another way - this dish is known as "Motławski chicken" (originating from the name of the river, one of the Vistula’s tributaries which flows near Gdańsk).

In Masovia we will be served i.a. "spring chickens". Carcasses are stuffed alike the "Polish-style chicken", but with the addition of fresh fennel instead of cut parsley. Podlasie, in turn, offers chicken stuffed with forest mushrooms, preferably milky agaric. Tasty fillet roasted using cooked chicken meat and poultry liver is among other dishes served in Podlasie. The Podlasians also prepare chicken in partridge-like way. In order to obtain the wildfowl’s taste the carcass is dabbed in juniper and larded with thin stripes of backfat, particularly popular in Kashubia (part of Pomerania), Greater Poland, Kuyavia and Silesia.

Kashubia has long been famous for its original methods of preparing goose. Smoked and stuffed goose (e.g. with veal, mushrooms) is the local delicacy. Festive goose pâté and goose thighs in dark sauce are the unique dishes originating from the regions of Pomerania and Kashubia. Used raw materials such as roasted goose and partridge meat, veal liver, chopped hazelnuts and white wine are the testimony of the festive and unique taste of the pâté. Moreover, the pâté is layered - it consists of two layers of minced and seasoned goose and another one between them which is made of sliced partridge meat.

The latter of the mentioned Kashubian dishes - goose thighs in dark sauce, is also characterized by an excellent, original taste, obtained mainly thanks to the uncommon mix of ingredients and sauce spices. After the frying the
Thighs are stewed with vegetables (carrot, parsley, celery, onion), ginger, lemon juice and dried lemon peel, clove, nutmeg, caramel, grated wholemeal bread, plum jam and red wine. It is no wonder then that the sauce made while stewing has an amazing, unique taste and aroma.

The Greater Poland and Kuyavia have different, specific local methods of preparing geese and ducks. "Poznań-style duck" is the most characteristic, popular dish originating from these regions. Its unique taste derives from the process of stewing of a portion of a duck with specially prepared red cabbage. Geese are served in a similar way.

Both in the Greater Poland and in Kuyavia the duck is served stuffed: with veal in the Greater Poland and with pasta and mushrooms in Kuyavia. It is also worth mentioning unique regional dishes such as stuffed goose neck (stuffed with poultry livers and chamignons or pearl barley (barley), duck jelly roll, duck casserole with pickled cabbage, duck breast with black currant sauce, goose with apples or goose with dried fruits. The number of goose and duck dishes in the Greater Poland and Kuyavia is enormous, which is the result of the long regional tradition of breeding these poultry species and consuming them even at less affluent houses. It was precisely the region of Kuyavia that was once represented by a peculiar old-Polish soup "kwaśnica". It is made on umbles, with the addition of goose or duck blood as well as dried or fresh fruits.

In Silesia duck and goose dishes hold a very significant position. Goose, and particularly roasted goose is most popular on St. Martin's Day (the 11th of November). Among cold snacks the most popular are smoked goose halves or stuffed goose neck (minced pork stuffing, goose liver, roll and sweet marjoram).

In Lesser Poland geese are stuffed with buckwheat groats, while goose is used for cooking of the popular regional soup "kwaśnica" (sour cabbage soup, with the addition of pickled cabbage juice).

While searching for interesting goose and duck dishes it is also worthwhile to familiarize oneself with Masovian regional cuisine. We will find there dishes such as "Masovia-style black pudding, goose stuffed with fruits, Polish-style goose neck, duck stuffed with pasta and plums, duck breasts with prune sauce.

Festive duck pâté in pastry is a special dish originating from the eastern regions of Poland, namely from Podlasie and Lubelszczyzna. The pâté's unique, amazing taste derives from the composition of ingredients such as: duck liver, veal, turkey liver, larded with truffles, nutmeg, mashed clove and breadcrumbs. The latter is prepared using onion fried in butter, roasted veal and back-fat, caper-bushes, liver paste and stale roll. Additional flavor is obtained by rubbing of the turkey carcass with dried lemon peel and spraying it with lemon juice.

Turkey meat, which was once considered the most sophisticated of all, is now the most popular in Masovia. A dish known as double stuffed turkey served traditionally by old Polish recipe has its origins here. The preparation of this dish is particularly laborious, but the final result is unique and tasty.

In old-Polish cuisine turkeys are most often served at Easter. At affluent magnate and nobleman's houses turkey was considered the most sophisticated dish of all. The turkey's stuffing contained conkers and truffles. Nutmeg was an essential ingredient of the conker stuffing. With respect to turkey with truffle stuffing, it additionally had its breasts larded with truffles.

These are only some of the poultry dishes which have their origin in the traditional and regional Polish cuisine. Nowadays poultry is still eagerly consumed in Poland, therefore we can hope that old recipes are not forsaken and that we will continue to invent new interesting dishes.
Chart 1. Export of agri-food products between 2006 and September 2010*

Chart 2. Import of agri-food products between 2006 and September 2010*

Chart 3. Poultry meat production in the period 2004 - 2009

Chart 4. Broiler chicken purchase prices in the period 2004-2010

Chart 5. The structure of provided aid as per the supported sectors (total operations number = 100%)

Chart 6. The structure of provided aid as per the supported sectors (total aid amount = 100%)

* provisional data

Source: The Polish Central Statistical Office

Source: The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

Source: data according to MIS reports (Management Information System) of the Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture
Table 1. Hazards introduced by livestock into the poultry slaughterhouse as well as the preventive measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of hazard</th>
<th>Preventive measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Microbiological:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- non-spore forming pathogenic microflora such as</td>
<td>GMP/GHP at breeding stock and commercial farms, hatching plants, feed mixing plants,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmonella,</td>
<td>during livestock transport - responsible livestock producer creating controlled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>E. Coli</em>, <em>Campylobacter</em>, <em>Yersinia enterocolitica</em>,</td>
<td>conditions which prevent hazards and limit the development of pathogenic bacteria to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Listeria monocytogenes</em></td>
<td>humans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- spore forming microflora such as <em>Clostridium</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and specifically <em>C. perfringens</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data according to MIS reports (Management Information System) of the Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture
Table 1a. Hazards introduced by livestock into the poultry slaughterhouse as well as the preventive measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of hazard</th>
<th>Preventive measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chemical:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- antibiotics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- antibacterial substances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- pesticides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The implementation of the GMP in the poultry breeding plant by a responsible farmer

Table 2. Hazards and CCP suggestions as well as potential preventive measures in the process of the receipt of raw material, slaughter and post-slaughter chicken processing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process stage</th>
<th>CCP</th>
<th>Hazard characteristics</th>
<th>Preventive measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receipt of raw material</td>
<td>CCP-1</td>
<td>M - incorrect conduct of starvation prior to slaughter, presence of food in the crop and in the digestive tract which results in the contamination of carcasses during the evisceration process</td>
<td>Compliance to the GMP for starving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scalding, plucking and washing after the plucking</td>
<td>CCP-2</td>
<td>M - carcasses' cross pathogenic contamination by contaminated scalding water and by the plucker's fingers. Bacterial contamination of muscles at the points of skin damage, inaccurate removal of the visible contamination</td>
<td>Compliance to the GMP/GHP for scalding, plucking and washing after the plucking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting, opening of the abdominal cavity and evisceration</td>
<td>CCP-3</td>
<td>F and M - physical and microbiological contamination by the digestive tract's content, incorrect automatic washing of the device, insufficient hygiene of employees' hands and devices</td>
<td>Compliance to the GMP/GHP for these stages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing of carcasses</td>
<td>CCP-4</td>
<td>F - inaccurate washing of carcasses under the wash's showers, visible contamination on the surface of carcasses</td>
<td>Compliance to the GMP/GHP for washing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooling of giblets</td>
<td>CCP-5</td>
<td>M - increased temperature and bacterial development</td>
<td>The GMP for giblets' cooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal and external washing of carcasses</td>
<td>CCP-6</td>
<td>F and M - inaccurate removal of surface contaminations containing pathogens</td>
<td>The GMP/GHP for carcasses' washing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooling of carcasses</td>
<td>CCP-7</td>
<td>M - Insufficiently effective cooling of carcasses, growth of pathogenic bacteria</td>
<td>The GMP for carcasses' cooling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M - microbiological, C - chemical, F - physical
Table 3. Hazards and CCP suggestions as well as potential preventive measures in the production process of cured, cooked and sliced turkey ham. Modification to the CFIA model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process stage</th>
<th>CCP</th>
<th>Hazard characteristics</th>
<th>Preventive measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receipt of meat raw material</td>
<td>CCP3</td>
<td>Assumption that each raw material contains: M - pathogenic bacteria, non-spore forming: Listeria monocytogenes, Staphylococcus aureus, Yersinia, Campylobacter, Salmonella, E. Coli and others</td>
<td>Compliance with the GMP/GHP regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CCP4</td>
<td>M - non-spore forming bacteria: Clostridium perfringens, C. botulinum and others</td>
<td>Compliance with the GMP/GHP regulations for raw meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CCP1</td>
<td>M - receipt of raw material with increased temperature which does not meet required criteria of freshness and microflora contamination Contamination with fragments of bones, wood and metal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concocting of brine for curing and marinating Its quantitative injecting (in accordance with the recipe)</td>
<td>CCP2</td>
<td>M - development of pathogens in the ready product as the result of insufficient amount of nitrate in the used brine recipe for curing and marinating C - nitrate excess in the product as the result of incorrect weighting and injecting</td>
<td>Compliance with the GMP for curing and marinating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thermal processing</td>
<td>CCP3</td>
<td>Development of pathogenic bacteria as the result of the product's underheating</td>
<td>The GMP for thermal processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooling</td>
<td>CCP4</td>
<td>Sporulation of C. perfringens and bacterial growth as the result of insufficient cooling dynamics</td>
<td>The GMP for cooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulling of the sheaths used for block formation; ham slicing</td>
<td>CCP5</td>
<td>Pathogen cross contamination (e.g., Salmonella, L. monocytogenes, S. aureus) as the result of incorrect human handling and device (machine) contamination</td>
<td>The GMP/GHP for these production stages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging / labeling of the product</td>
<td>CCP6</td>
<td>Growth of pathogens as the result of incorrect data registration</td>
<td>GMP/GHP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M - microbiological, C - chemical, F - physical
Useful Addresses

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

THE MINISTER’S POLITICAL CABINET
provides direct political and technical advice to the Minister, Secretaries and Under Secretaries of State, acc. to the tasks assigned.
Telephone number: (+48 22) 623 13 78

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THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSULTANCY, AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND SCIENCE
carries out the tasks vested in the Minister in the area of establishment and operation of consulting, agricultural education and science system, social protection of farmers.
Telephone number: (+48 22) 623 15 75

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
carries out the tasks vested in the Minister in the area of planning and management of financial resources under the budgetary headings 32, 33 and 35 as well as financial resources from EU intended for development of agriculture, fisheries and rural areas.
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carries out the tasks vested in the Minister in the area of land management, support of agrarian restructuring and vindication of agricultural real property, spatial planning, protection of agricultural land, agricultural surveying, land classification, environmental engineering, use of unconventional energy sources including biomass for energy purpose, land meioration, technical means of production for agriculture and coordination of environmental protection issues.
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carries out the tasks vested in the Minister in the area of plant breeding and seed production, plant protection, registration of plant protection products, health quality of biological material, organic farming, protection of genetic resources, GMOs as well as fertilisers and fertilisation.
Telephone number: (+48 22) 623 21 51

THE DEPARTMENT FOR DIRECT PAYMENTS
carries out the tasks vested in the Minister in the area of direct payments under the Common Agricultural Policy.
Telephone number: (+48 22) 623 12 34

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provides legal services to the Ministry’s departments.
Telephone number: (+48 22) 623 25 22

THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
carries out the tasks vested in the Minister in the area of absorption of the EU funds allocated to the Member States for agricultural and rural sectors development.
Telephone number: (+48 22) 623 18 42

THE DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES
the department of fisheries carries out the tasks vested in the Minister in the area of development of the sea and inland fisheries, agriculture and market in fish.
Telephone number: (+48 22) 623 14 71

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION
carries out the tasks vested in the Minister in the area of the co-ordination of participation in the Common Agricultural Policy (co-operation with the Office of the Committee for European Integration), participation in the works of the European Union authorities and also within the framework of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) as well as other international organizations and also bilateral and multilateral foreign co-operation.
Telephone number: (+48 22) 623 24 71

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL MARKETS
carries out the tasks vested in the Minister relating to the regulation of agricultural markets in the framework of the Common Agricultural Policy, agricultural statistics, market information, restructuring of agri-food and food processing, normalisation in agricultural and agri-food processing, utilising unconventional sources of biomass for energetic purposes and analyses and the reform of the CAP in the framework of agricultural markets regulation.
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