

Unpredictable milk production in Europe

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EuroDairy is a new, interesting European project that aims to increase the economic, social and environmental stabilisation of the dairy sector in Europe. Changes in the dairy market are quite sudden and often unpredictable. In 2016, the European Commission accepted the launch of a major international project under the Horizon 2020 program, in which 14 countries take part, from Ireland to Poland and from Sweden to Italy. The project involves farmers' organizations, the dairy industry, agricultural advisors, experts from scientific institutes and universities, in total 20 partners.

EuroDairy will support the development and dissemination of innovation in milk production focused on problems after liquidation of milk quotas, socio-economic effects, efficient use of resources (especially feed), concerns for animal welfare and milk production relationships with environment and preservation of biodiversity.

The project does not carry out new scientific research in the field of dairy industry but it focused on the exchange of mutual experiences between experts and farmers from different countries. EuroDairy focuses on four main themes established on the basis of consultations with the dairy industry and have a direct impact on the economy, environmental and social determinants of biodiversity.

Of particular importance may be various innovations introduced by farmers in various countries in the production and preservation of feed, animal nutrition, modernisation of buildings, care and health (eg treatments related to proper hoof care, rearing calves, slurry management, etc.). In order to understand the situation of milk producers in various countries, a total of 120 dairy farms were selected. Pilot farms, in which surveys concerning milk production are conducted and whose owners have agreed to share their experiences and innovations in dairy farming.

The largest number of such farms is in France and Great Britain, in Poland several farms were selected for participation in the project, and 6 Polish farmers agreed to cooperate. Experts participating in the project meet each year in a different country, so far such seminars have been held in the Netherlands, in Birmingham (Great Britain), in Bled (Slovenia) and Aveny (France). The seminars not only discuss the results obtained in various countries but, above all, it is an opportunity for direct contact with farmers and visits to selected pilot farms.

Farmers are happy to share their comments, praise the successes in milk production, but also do not hide the difficulties they have to overcome in order to maintain the appropriate standards and ensure economic profitability of production on their farms.

Farmers appreciate such exchange of international experiences, as evidenced by the participation in our last seminar by a dozen or so farmers from various regions of France. The farmers also organise trips of interested groups from one country to another (eg exchange between France and the Netherlands, Spain and Ireland etc.) through EuroDairy.

During the seminar in Birmingham, a very interesting discussion comparing organic and conventional farms, while the meeting in France in July 2017 showed the possibilities of milk production in difficult alpine regions but also the chances for farmers who decided for example to produce local types of cheese. EuroDairy has its own website, activities in different countries can also be followed on this page and the platform that you can use and participate in online seminars and conferences.

The topics of these seminars may be attractive also for our farmers, for example, this year there was a seminar on proper care of the hooves and prevention of lameness, a seminar on the use of additives to facilitate the ensiling of feed.

I strongly encourage you to visit the project website, if necessary I will gladly provide additional information to interested farmers, milk production is not an easy task and requires not only knowledge, expenditure, experience but above all passion, which is certainly not lacking Polish farmers.

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Research Themes

EuroDairy drives the engine of innovations on 4 main themes at dairy farms: animal care, biodiversity, resource efficiency and socio-economic resilience. Find more info on these dairy topics here!

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