

SAVE eNews 1/2003



Quarterly e-mail service of the European SAVE Foundation
(Safeguard for Agricultural Varieties in Europe)

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Pusteria cattle – a new population has been discovered

After the First World War, South Tyrol became part of Italy as fixed in the treaty of St.Germain. Many local residents could not imagine to continue living in their old home country. They sat on "packed luggage" and sold all their belongings. Many of them even sold their cattle and machinery for lowest prices. Some of the buyers came from Piedmont, and took entire herds of cattle with them. This is only one but the most probable story of the origin of the recently discovered large population of Pusteria cattle in Piedmont.



The breed, called Barà in Piedmont, has never been recorded nor described. Thus, it never appeared in the Italian breed lists. The SAVE Foundation has recently been informed about the discovery by its Italian partner organisation R.A.R.E.. In edition No. 34 of the quarterly journal "Quaderni della Regione Piemonte - Agricoltura", the breed is described in detail by the authors Mimosi A., Ighina A., Bianchi M., Rasetto P. and Ferrero L. in the article "Caratterizzazione della razza Barà-Pustertaler". The article is available in the Internet under:

http://www.regione.piemonte.it/agri/ita/news/public/quaderni/corrente/dwd/n34pp18_20.pdf

A short version of the article, including two photos, is published on the Novità-page of R.A.R.E: <http://www.save-foundation.net/RARE/novita.htm>.

Barà cattle is kept in Torino province, a few animals in neighbouring Cuneo province. The population amounts up to approximately 2000 to 3000 animals (they have not been counted yet). A scientific examination of the Department for Animal Breeding of the University of Torino showed that the Barà and the Pusteria are not separate breeds but share the same origin. Further examinations will follow. The original population of Pusteria cattle is endangered and counts less than 200 cows in Italy, Austria and Germany (see SAVE Focus 2000/2001).

Karakachan projects in Bulgaria

Since ten years, the Bulgarian 'Semperviva Society' has been active for the breed of Karakachan livestock guardian dogs. They are successful utilised for the protection of herds against bears and wolves which appear still frequently in Bulgaria. For two years, Semperviva has also been active for the conservation of the endangered Karakachan sheep and Karakachan horses. All breeds have originally been bred by the Greek-



speaking Karakachan nomad people. Within the course of the settling-down process, a major part of the cultural inheritance of the Karakachan was lost, not at least its traditional livestock breeds. During thorough and comprehensive search tours in the remote areas of the Rhodope mountains, Semperviva was able to find enough animals for the set-up of new nucleus herds. The conservation programmes are supported by SAVE Foundation and financed by the Liechten-

stein "Fondation pour les Animaux du Monde". Both horses and sheep are to be used (horses for trekking and transport in the Pirin National Park) and it is thus planned to self-finance the project.

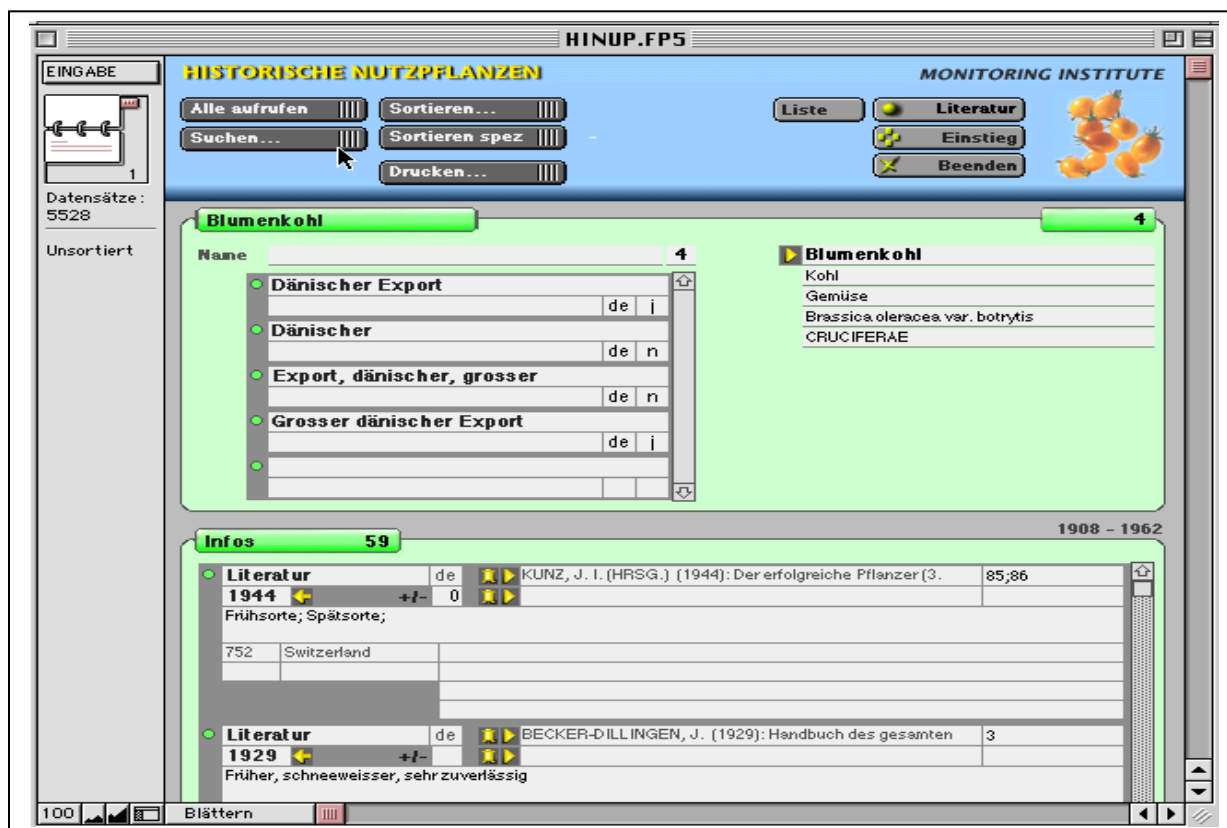
For SAVE, the project has model character. Particularly the interlinking of agricultural use and nature protection is exemplary. The different project parts are coordinated together with Balkani Wildlife Society and form a symbiosis. It would not be possible to realise each part separately (sheep herd – livestock guardian dogs- protection against wolves; NGO - Pirin National Park; horses to secure transport in protection areas etc.). In a second phase of the project, the nucleus herds have to be consolidated and put on a broader genetic basis by the introduction of further blood lines. Furthermore, security doubles are to be established at a second and a third site. An interim project report (only in German language) can be loaded down from the SAVE Website as pdf document. <http://www.save-foundation.net/deutsch/projekte.htm>. In order to enable Semperviva to present itself in the Internet, SAVE has - as for its other partners as well - assured support for the first years. The draft of a web presentation (in English) is found under URL: <http://www.save-foundation.net/semperviva>.

Historical inventory of Swiss cultivated plants

The Monitoring Institute has developed a new working instrument for persons and institutions active in the area of in-situ conservation of cultivated plants: the "Historical inventory of Swiss cultivated plants" (OldSeeds database). The inventory which exists in form of a database offers historically authentic information about vegetable, potato

and spice herb varieties which were cultivated, traded or examined in Switzerland between 1800 and 1960. Altogether, 5'528 varieties with 43'407 types of variety information (variety catalogues, literature, newspaper articles) were recorded. The database is available on CD-ROM. Information about 5'500 varieties are thus easily and uncomplicated available, e.g. time period and type of the historically authentic information, original texts ranging from individual characteristics to papers consisting of many pages. The user is able to retrieve a "variety description", compiled from different sources easily and without problems.

First tests have shown that the database is a practical working instrument to gather information on the cultivation or for the historical examination of a variety. Within the frame of the project, it was stated again that seed trading was and still is linked with different countries. It would probably make sense to investigate in other countries as well and to complete this OldSeeds database with international information. But the database already offers an extensive working aid for the neighbouring countries, particularly the German-speaking and French-speaking region. The CD-ROM includes a German and a French version of the database (for Macintosh as well as for Windows). The project was financed by the Swiss Federal Ministry for Agriculture, within the frame of the National Plan of Action for the conservation and sustainable use of the plant genetic resources for nutrition and agriculture. The CD-ROM may be ordered (by adding Euro 10.-) from the Monitoring Institute, Schneebergstr. 17, CH-9000 St.Gallen.



SaveNews archiv

For three years, the SaveNews are quarterly distributed in an English and a German version by e-mail to numerous interested readers in the whole of Europe. The interest in the news about the conservation of endangered livestock breeds and cultivated plant varieties with particular consideration of the activities of NGOs is great, the distribution list becomes more and more comprehensive. In order not to be caught by certain filters, the news have to be distributed in packages of not more than 50 subscribers. The most recent news were always available on the SAVE web presentation, under "Actuality". After 3 months, they had, however, to give way to more recent news, even when the news were still of interest. In order to make continuous access to older SaveNews possible, the "SaveNews archive" has now been set up. At the following Website <http://www.save-foundation.net/english/news.htm> the contents of earlier SaveNews are summed up and can be downloaded as pdf-file. A link from the "Actuality" site leads directly to the archive.

Important dates (extract)

22-23 February: European expert fair „Agricultural direct marketing“ at Hannover, Germany; Contact: manuela.zimmermann@fh.messe.de

24-26 April: European Workshop on National Plant Genetic Resources Programmes, held in Allnarp, Sweden. Organiser: Swedish Biodiversity Centre in collaboration with IPGRI, FAO and others. Web: <http://www.ipgri.cgiar.org/regions/europe>

6-8 May: International Workshop on underutilized plants; Leipzig, Germany. Organised by IPGRI/GTZ/InWEnt. Contact: i.zeledon@cgiar.org

15-16 May: ‚La Domestication‘; Journée d’Etude of the Société d’Ethnozootecnie and the Société Zoologique de France at the ‚Grande Galerie du Museum‘ in Paris. Contact: François Spindler, Tel. +33-04/73 91 58 24

5-7 June: XII. Mediterranean Symposium: Animal Production and Natural Resources Utilisation in the Mediterranean Mountain Areas; Ioannina, Greece. Contact: andgeorg@agro.auth.gr

28-29 June: Symposium "The importance of regional botanical gardens for the conservation of cultivated plant varieties"; at Templin, Germany; Organizers: VERN & Botanical Association Berlin-Brandenburg; Contact: rudi.voegel@lags.brandenburg.de

31 August - 3 September: 54th Annual Meeting of European Association for Animal Production, Rome, Italy. Contact: eaap@eaap.org, Web: <http://www.eaap.org>