

SAVE eNews 2/2003



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

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European Donkey Monitoring

The numerous European donkey breeds are barely noticed by anybody. In more recent times, the shaggy French breed Poitou has become well known in Europe. The breed is well taken care of by several institutions, but not all breeds are conserved in this way, most others are forgotten, have been crossbred or die out slowly. Among these, very peculiar breeds are found whose singular qualities must be conserved for future generations.

Donkeys have continuously been replaced due to motorization in agriculture and transport. This is an ongoing process. During the last three decades, even in Southern Europe donkey keeping has been subject to strong decline. In 1997/98 already SAVE



Foundation and the Monitoring Institute have therefore recorded stock development for the whole of Europe. Meanwhile, the situation of the species donkey has further changed and monitoring is re-started.

By means of a recently started stocktaking of the different breeds in the individual countries, an overview on the most recent status of donkey breeding, the efficiency of conservation measures, and the need to develop strategies for *in-situ* conservation of this traditional livestock breed shall be created. Contact persons of SAVE Foundation and donkey specialists in the individual countries take part in the study.

Anyone who has not been contacted yet and who may supply information on the individual breeds is kindly asked to contact the Monitoring Institute (scientific branch of SAVE Foundation) e-mail: monitoring@swissonline.ch. Thank you very much.

Agricultural genetic resources in Italy



One year ago, we announced the completion of the monitoring study "Agricultural genetic resources in Italy – risk status, conservation initiatives, need for action" and published a short version in form of a synthesis in Italian and German (can be downloaded from the Internet). The complete version is now available. The study describes the situation of genetic resources of livestock breeds and cultivated plant varieties in Italy. It deals with the risk status, portrays the governmental, university and private conservation initiatives and estimates the need for action. The report is deliberately designed as handbook.

In order to reach a broad public in Italy, the study has been published in Italian language and mailed to all larger libraries, university libraries with agricultural and veterinary departments, NGOs active in conservation, governmental and scientific institutes and public authorities active for the protection of genetic

resources. The study (225 pages and 77 coloured illustrations) is now available at the Monitoring Institute, Schneebergstr. 17, CH-9000 St.Gallen.

A German version of the study is also available on CD-ROM (separately or included in the book). By means of the integrated "navigation aid", the CD-ROM (with 340 A4 pages) can easier be used than the printed form. By using the search function, for example, it is possible to retrieve all information on a certain breed without reading the whole text. Web and e-mail addresses in the text are activated. Via mouseclick, the browser or the e-mail program is started and provides access to the desired link.

The price for the illustrated book in Italian language is Euro 25.-. The German version on CD-ROM is available separately for Euro 10.- (included in book Euro 30.-). Shipping for Switzerland and neighbouring countries is Euro 5.-, for all other European countries Euro 15.-. The total amount may be included in the ordering letter in banknotes or has to be transferred in advance to account no. 725410.38 (Monitoring Institute); Raiffeisenbank (bank code 80005), CH-9001 St.Gallen, Switzerland.

Further information on the Monitoring Institute: <http://www.monitoring-inst.de>

Variety database of Arche Noah online



Arche Noah, the Austrian society for the conservation and promotion of cultivated plant varieties, has recently made its database available in the web. The project was developed within the frame of a project for PR-work in the area of biodiversity which was sponsored by the Federal ministry for agriculture and forestry, environment and water management (BMLFUW).

Anyone interested in the topic may get an insight in the diversity under the following link: http://www.arche-noah.at/Sortendatenbanken/Sortendatenbanken_Einstieg.htm

Data and photos are taken from continuous description work of the Arche Noah variety archive. Arche Noah's active conservationists have provided observations and photos at disposal, too. Data are - according to the availability of most recent information - updated and completed periodically. The variety database thus provides information from long-term propagation and description activities available.

SAVE Annual Meeting at Cavalese (Trento)

The next Annual Meeting of SAVE Foundation will be the **10 year jubilee** of the organisation. There will be activities on every field of agrobiodiversity (plants, animals, NGOs, sciences). Please make reservations for **September 18-22, 2003**.

The meeting will take place in the **Trentino Alps (Italy)** at Cavalese (Val di Fiemme) in collaboration with our national rare breed partner organisation in Italy, the Associazione R.A.R.E. and the 'SoZooAlp'. SoZooAlp is an Italian university society for the „studying and the valorisation of the Alpine livestock systems“ and based at the Agricultural Institute of San Michele all'Adige (Trento). The Meeting is connected to the famous „Desmontegada de la Caore“ (return of the goats from Alpine pastures) with interesting traditional behaviours and folkloric events.

The provisional programme:

- Technical meetings of SoZooAlp, RARE and SAVE
- Exhibition of breeding animals (sheep and goats)
- Fair of alpine cheese varieties, taste of cheese varieties
- Excursion to farm gardens with cultivation of traditional plants
- "Desmontegada de le Caore" (return of goats from Alpine pastures)
- Traditional festivity with many folkloric events

Except of the closed sessions of the SAVE bodies, the meeting is open to the public. People interested in participation may ask for the registration form by mailing to: office@save-foundation.net

1467/94: A new Council Regulation takes its course

Again one year was gone, before there was some progress in the work on a "Council Regulation establishing a Community programme on the Conservation, Characterisation, Collection and Utilisation of Genetic Resources in Agriculture". But now it seems as if the work goes on in a very fast way: On February 24, 2003 a meeting with the member states took place to which also NGO's were invited. Mainly the proposal was appreciated. Suggestions and remarks had been worked out and were included in the proposal by the Committee already four weeks later, when the next meeting, a meeting of experts, took place.



On March 24, 2003 a first expert group meeting to set up a work programme was held. The number of participants was limited for having a constructive meeting. SAVE took part as I-NGO. This meeting was very productive. The main result of the meetings and discussions is the fact, that in the new regulation, NGO's are accepted as one of the important factors of in preserving agricultural biodiversity. In situ/on farm projects shall be promoted and more attention will be given to animal projects. We hope, that there is a big motivation for NGO's to listen to the next call for proposals. SAVE Foundation will further inform you and is at your disposal.

Important dates (extract)

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

26-27 May: Symposium Bundesinformationssystem Genetische Ressourcen – BIG – ; Bonn, Germany. Contact: harrer@zadi.de

5-7 June: XII. Mediterranean Symposium: Animal Production and Natural Resources Utilisation in Mediterranean Mountain Areas; Ioannina/Greece. 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>

19-22 September: Annual Meeting of SAVE Foundation in the Trentino Alps at Cavalese Val di Fiemme, Italy, in collaboration with R.A.R.E. and SoZooAlp. SAVE 10 year jubilee. Contact: office@save-foundation.net