

SAVE-News 4/2000

This newsletter is issued four times a year by SAVE Foundation (Safeguard for Agricultural Varieties in Europe)

New Head Office for SAVE Foundation

In October the Head Office will be moved from Witzenhausen to Konstanz (Southern Germany) and combined there with the Project Office from St.Gallen/Switzerland. Waltraud Kugler - the programme co-ordinator - remains in St.Gallen and joins the Monitoring Institute. She already has overtaken there the OldSeeds-project. She is ready to work in future in a honorary way for SAVE Foundation.

The SAVE PR-Office in Dornbirn/Austria is not touched by the change.

The address of the new office in Konstanz is:

- > SAVE Foundation
- > Head Office
- > Paradiesstr. 13
- > D-78462 Konstanz/Germany

The new office in Konstanz will be led by Mr. Thomas Schneider. Thomas Schneider was born 1967 in Germany and has studied agricultural sciences (Diplom-Agraringenieur) at the University of Kassel (Witzenhausen). He has then specialized on nature conservation and landscape ecology. On this topic he worked the last 4 years as project leader with the <Bodensee-Stiftung> (International Lake of Constance Foundation). Before had worked on an agricultural project in Peru. The new office is running from mid of October. In the meantime the Project Office in St.Gallen still stays at your disposal.

Podgorska Red cattle => Back in Polish hands

The Polish red cattle, Poland's single autochthone cattle breed, was a victim of the economic structural changes in the country. The population, which until the sixties represented ca 20% of the entire cattle population of Poland, was reduced to just 50 animals of the Podgorska strain (hill cattle). This last purebred herd was placed at the state farm of Hanczowa in the Beskidy mountains. As the Polish government had no more budget for keeping genetic resources in live populations, SAVE Foundation and the German partner organization GEH bought half of the herd (the most important breeding lines) in a rescue action in 1994. An in situ conservation project was initiated. The animals remained in the privatized state farm and the farmer committed himself to keep the cattles in accordance with SAVE's instructions. In co-operation with the Zootechnic Institute in Balice/Krakow (Prof.J.Trela) and the Genetics Institute in Mrokow (Prof.Z.Reklewski) the scientific and technical supervision and the fertilization with purebred semen was guaranteed.

In the meantime the herd didn't become bigger, but sharing of old cows with young offsprings was possible. In 1999 the herd needed to be displaced due to problems with the farm. Because of a severe problem with a leukaemia-positive animal the herd could not be moved until Spring 2000. It is given back now in Polish hands and situated in the Hutsul stud at Gladyszow nearby the old place. The handing over of the herd was facilitated by the fact, that the financial situation in Poland has changed fortunately and there are again subsidies available for live conservation of genetic resources.

Thanks to SAVE's engagement during a difficult period, a national genetic and cultural heritage of Poland is still alive.

ECP/GR In-situ and On-farm Conservation Network: first meeting at Perugia

The first joint meeting of the 'In Situ' Conservation Task Force and the 'On Farm' Conservation Task Force of the ECP/GR took place from the 18 to 20 May 2000 on the island of Polvese near Perugia, Italy. Representatives from about 30 European countries discussed how to put into action the decisions taken at the Leipzig conference of 1996 concerning the themes of 'in situ' and 'on farm' activities. At the beginning of the meeting, definitions of terms were agreed upon and potential misunderstandings cleared up. 'In situ' conservation was limited to wild plants related to cultivated varieties where as 'on farm' or 'in garden' conservation concerns cultivated varieties themselves. The participants then divided into two groups, one concerned with 'in situ' and the other with 'on farm' activities. The next conference gave an overview of organisations active in Europe and their methods. There were recommendations on data-bases and classification criteria and finding ways to include the rich experience of farmers on genetic resources and making it generally available. Finally, there were recommendations on the means to improve relations between NGOs and the State.

One point was the need to request reports on legal restrictions on the conservation of biodiversity. A more detailed inventory of activities should be made and a working group is tackling the task of improving the data-base of ECP/GR for in-situ conservation. The atmosphere during the meeting was very constructive and gave the participants more insight into the varied projects and problems of conservation. The results will be available in a report towards the end of the year 2000 at IPGRI in Rome or on internet (<http://www.ipgri.cgiar.org/system/page.asp?theme=5>). The meeting was a milestone for NGOs. Of particular importance was the fact that Martin Bossard, who works for Pro Specie Rara (Switzerland), was officially invited to take part in a working group of ECP/GR, a first for a NGO representative. This is a welcome initiative which opens up many opportunities for conservation work of NGOs.

Italy:

Establishment of a national co-ordinating committee on rural conservation (on-farm) and dissemination of local varieties

On July 25th and 26th, 2000, at the Cornale Co-operative in Magliano Alfieri (CN), experts and representatives from farmers, organisations and associations involved in local projects for the development of our rural heritage took part in a meeting with the primary objective of setting up a network organisation to connect people who work with farmers in local initiatives for the conservation and safeguard of biological diversity and, in particular, of the genetic and historic heritage of local varieties of vegetables, fruit and cereal and abandoned cultivars, and a second objective consisting in the preparation of a national catalogue for the dissemination of these varieties, with full respect for the rights and benefits entitled to the rural communities who through the generations have selected them and handed them down to present day communities.

Information c/o Cornale, coop. agricola - corso Marconi, 64 - I-12050 Magliano Alfieri (CN); Fax +39-0173/26 68 35; e-mail: semi.rurali@libero.it

Important dates (extract)

7-8 October: Day of the fruit varieties. Exhibition and determination of fruit varieties. Contact: Arche Noah, Schloss Schiltern, A-3553 Schiltern. Info: www.arche-noah.at

9-11 October: "Ressources Génétiques: Connaissances et Gestion", Toulouse. 3rd national Colloquium of the Bureau des Ressources Génétiques. Email: brg@inapg.inra.fr

23-29 October: "Pomillennium 2000" International exhibition of apple varieties and preservation of orchards; Burg Güssing, Burgenland, Austria. Info: www.wiese.at

27-29 October: "Biodiversité et Agriculture", Vichy, France. XI Congrès d'Espaces Naturels de France. Email: cren-auvergne@espaces-naturels.fr

16 November: "Animal's nourishment; historic and evolutive aspects" Journée d'Etude SEZ; Académie d'Agriculture, 18 rue de Bellechasse, Paris (start 9 am)

17-19 November: Annual Meeting of the bodies of SAVE Foundation in Konstanz, Germany. Official inauguration of the new SAVE Head Office, excursions to conservation projects around the lake of Constance. Email: office@save-foundation.net

20-24 November: 5th Global Conference on Conservation of Domestic Animal Genetic Resources (RBI), Brasilia-DF, Brazil. Info: www.cenargen.embrapa.br or www.rbi.it

=> Further information is available from:

SAVE Foundation, Head Office, Paradiesstr. 13, D-78462 Konstanz / Germany

Web: <http://www.save-foundation.net> ; E-mail: office@save-foundation.net

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