

# SAVE eNews 1/2005

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



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## Fruit-Net: Neglected and forgotten Fruit and Berries

For centuries, fruit, wild fruit and berries belonged to the most important food sources of the people in Europe. Thus, there was an enormous diversity of cultivated species and varieties. As a consequence of the rationalisation of agriculture and of the globalisation of food supply, many local varieties or regional specialities have lost their importance and fell into oblivion.

Whereas conservation efforts for wide-spread fruit species (mainly apples and berries) were very successful in the meantime and co-operation across national borders is linked up very well, it is, however not yet known if there are any conservation initiatives for rarer fruit species (e.g. quinces, nuts, chestnuts and others), for garden berries and mainly for so-called "wild fruit species" in Europe. Co-operation and networking at European level does not exist, an exchange amongst the few conservationists and breeders rarely takes place. To save the genetic diversity of these "forgotten" fruit and berry varieties for future needs, specific efforts are required. The last



still existing diversity of varieties has to be recorded, the individual conservation efforts have to be linked and co-ordinated. New activities and an exchange of information are stimulated by information that is made accessible for everybody.

Therefor SAVE Foundation will take the occasion of the necessary update of the NGO Zoom Fruits, published firstly in 2001, to enlarge this Europe wide directory with conservation organisations of neglected and forgotten fruit and berries. Under the term "Fruit-Net" the information shall be made available for everybody in the Internet. As far as possible, variety lists will be retrievable from the Fruit-Net.

The database-supported online-inventory will be equipped with several search functions, allowing thus optimal use of the information provided. In this project SAVE will collaborate with the „Global Facilitation Unit for Underutilized Species" in Rome and the partners of the SAVE Network of course. The project is financed by the Margarethe and Rudolf Gsell Foundation, Basle.

## International Conference on Animal Disease Control

Last December the European Union organised a two days conference on animal contagious diseases and the control thereof. SAVE was invited to participate at a panel discussion. SAVE Chairman Staf van den Bergh had the opportunity to stress the need for special treatment of rare breeds in case of such an outbreak, for a differentiated approach of animals not kept for commercial purposes and for a more intense involvement of small holders in general in devising eradication programmes.



Europe has experienced major outbreaks of Classical Swine Fever (CSF), Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) and of Avian Influenza (AI) since in 1991 preventive vaccination became forbidden. Past eradication strategies made no distinction between industrial breeds and rare breeds, between commercial farms and small holders. As a result, numerous rare breed animals were culled during the FMD crisis of 2001 in the UK. When the Netherlands were struck with AI in 2003, about 17000 small holders saw their healthy and in several cases valuable poultry collections being destroyed. On both occasions this approach led to total incomprehension and even to public outrage.

Since those last major outbreaks of FMD and AI in Europe, things have started to change however. The World Organisation for Animal Health and the European Commission both have recognised that for ethical, ecological and economic reasons, it is no longer acceptable to control and eradicate disease outbreaks mainly by applying mass slaughter of animals. Vaccination is without doubt one of the most useful single measures which can be used, even more as better performing vaccines have been developed recently.

As a consequence, the latest Council Directive on FMD (2003/85/EC of 29/09/2004) and the Proposal for a New Council Directive on Community measures for control of Avian Influenza of October 2004 emphasise the role of emergency vaccination without subsequent killing of the vaccinated animals to control and eradicate the diseases.

On top, both the recent Directive on FMD and the Proposal for a new Directive on AI and to a minor extend the Directive on Classical Swine Fever (2001/89/EC of 23/10/2001) contain special provisions for zoo's, wild parks and purposes related to the **conservation of endangered species** or farm animal genetic resources. For **officially registered rare breeds** on premises that have been identified in advance as breeding nucleus of animals indispensable for the survival of a breed, the competent authority of a member state may decide to apply the special measures including protective vaccination in stead of culling of the animals. However, these special provisions together with the basic contagious disease control strategies have to be laid down in a "Contingency Plan". Most member states discuss these contingency plans with directly concerned stakeholders, but no official obligation exists to communicate on these.

Prior to the Conference, a short enquiry with SAVE Network partners learned that indeed most were not aware of the national contingency plans, let alone involved in the setting up, and that probably most of these plans do not take advantage of the special treatment that can be reserved for rare breeds and small holders.

The overall recommendations formulated at the end of the Conference reflect this new way of thinking. The vaccination without subsequent killing of the animals shall be the pivotal element in the disease control strategy. The full 16 recommendations see: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/animal/diseases/strategy/recomm\\_material\\_immaterial\\_costs\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/animal/diseases/strategy/recomm_material_immaterial_costs_en.pdf)

For the SAVE Network the following recommendations are most important:

- Socially accepted control of major epidemic animal diseases needs a strong involvement of external stakeholders in the policy process.
- All keepers of animals and related stakeholders (transport, trade) should be stimulated to take their responsibility as regards the prevention and control of the spread of major epidemic animal diseases.
- One of the starting points of control strategies for major epidemic animal diseases should be to limit, to the extent possible, the killing and destruction of healthy animals.
- Vaccination should be accepted as one of the regular options for the control of animal disease outbreaks.
- Differentiated disease control measures may be appropriate for animals not kept for commercial purposes and other special categories.

While the recommendations of the Conference may constitute a blueprint for future control of contagious animal diseases, today we have to live by the present council directives. While the most recent directives provide for special measures in favour of rare breeds, much work remains to be done locally. Rare breeds organisations have to make sure that national authorities integrate these in their disease control strategies.

European rare breed organisations that have not been involved in the discussions leading to the Contingency Plans should:

- ask the competent authority of their country to publish the existing contingency plans
- verify whether special measures for rare breeds have been included
- get involved in the discussion of (future) contingency plans.

Furthermore rare breed organisations have to take care that:

- the breeds they care for, are officially registered and recognised by the member state as important for the conservation of farm animal genetic resources and that these animals are properly identified
- the premises these breeds live on, are certified in advance with the local competent authority
- in case of an outbreak special measures, i.e. saving these breeds as much as possible should be applied.

By way of an example, one can refer to the British contingency plan on FMD which DEFRA put on the internet: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/footandmouth/contingency/contplan.pdf>

## Terra Madre

From the 20th to the 23rd of October 2004 the city of Turin has hosted "Terra Madre", the international meeting "for those who seek to grow, raise, catch, create, distribute and promote food in ways that respect the environment, defend human dignity and protect the health of consumers". In the same days, not far from the "Terra Madre" meeting centre, thousand of people visited the "Salone del Gusto", the international fair of local products.

This first edition of Terra Madre was organized by Slow Food with the support of Regione Piemonte and the Italian Ministry of Agriculture to rediscover the links between agriculture and vendors and to show to consumers that an alternative to the current industrial food production system exists. 5000 people from dozens of countries (the so called "Food Community") discussed for two days in 61 thematic meeting (the "Earth Workshop") how to promote a healthy, dynamic, and diverse food system, how to save seeds and breeds and the meaning of sustainable agriculture.

SAVE and RARE (the Italian Association for Rare Breeds) were among the invited members of the "Food Community" and participated to discussions about endangered breeds. Information on Terra Madre, the list of participants and the conclusion of the meeting are available at <http://www.terramadre2004.org>



## Newsflash

- **Genetic Resources – Implementation of the Community Programme**

On December 28, 2004 the work program of Regulation (EC) 870/2004 was accepted.

It will be published soon at: [http://europa.eu.int/grants/dgs/agriculture/agriculture\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/grants/dgs/agriculture/agriculture_en.htm)

A prior information notice for the call for experts can be found yet under:

<http://ted.publications.eu.int/official/ShowPage.dfl?Template=TED/static/toc/en/toc3c398-2005026.htm>

- **Annual Meeting of the SAVE Network: September 17-18, 2005**

The Annual Meeting of SAVE Foundation and the SAVE Network will take place in Nitra, Slovakia at September 17-18. It will be organised by the SAVE network partner Agro-  
genofond. The tentative programme will cover visits at the famous stud of Topolcianky, at the Slovakian Genebank Piestany and the collection of fruit varieties of Agro-  
genofond at Radosina. The meeting will be followed by the conference "Sustainable Use of Tra-  
ditional Agroecosystems" September 19-21 (please make reservation for these dates).

- **Online platform for the Balkan Network**

To facilitate the exchange of information within the "Balkan Network for Agrobiodiversity" an online platform has been established. There are several sectors open to everybody, and one (secured by password) only for members: <http://www.monitoring.eu.com/balkan>



## Important dates (extract)

30 March - 2 April: Meeting "Plant genetic resources of geographical and "other" islands. Conservation, evaluation and use for plant breeding", Castelsardo (Sardinia), Italy. Contact: [bullitta@cspm.ss.cnr.it](mailto:bullitta@cspm.ss.cnr.it), Web: <http://www.areapuntocom.com/eucarpia/>

7 April: "Rare Breeds: 30 years of conservation, balance und perspectives", Beauvais, France. Conference organised by Société d'Ethnozootechnie and ISAB. Contact: [romain.ferrier@isab.fr](mailto:romain.ferrier@isab.fr), Web: <http://www.isab.fr>

18-19 May: Internat. Conference "Multifunctionality of Landscapes - Analysis, Evaluation and Decision Support, Giessen, Germany. Web: <http://www.sfb299.de/conference/>

9 - 11 June: International Symposium "Introduction and Spread of Invasive Species" at Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany. Contact: [DPG-BCPC@dpg.phytomedizin.org](mailto:DPG-BCPC@dpg.phytomedizin.org), Web: [http://www.bcpc.org/Invasive/Invasive\\_homepage.htm](http://www.bcpc.org/Invasive/Invasive_homepage.htm)

26 June - 1 July: XX International Grassland Congress: "Grasslands - a Global Resource" at University College Dublin, Ireland. Web: <http://www.igc2005.com/index.htm>

5-9 September: "Potato 2005 – trade show, field demonstrations and congress", at Emmeloord, the Netherlands. Contact: [svanbeek@agriprojects.nl](mailto:svanbeek@agriprojects.nl)

7-9 September: Colloquium: "Vegetables, a heritage to hand on and to value", Angers, France. Web: <http://www.brg.prd.fr>

14-17 September: First International Conference on "Crop Wild Relative Conservation and Use"; Agrigento/Sicily, Italy. Contact: [organising.secretariat@pgrforum.org](mailto:organising.secretariat@pgrforum.org) or [scientific.secretariat@pgrforum.org](mailto:scientific.secretariat@pgrforum.org), Web: <http://www.pgrforum.org/conference.htm>

17-18 September: provisional date for the Annual Meeting of SAVE Foundation and the SAVE Network at Nitra, Slovakia. Contact: [office@save-foundation.net](mailto:office@save-foundation.net)



19-21 September: Conference "Sustainable Use of Traditional Agroecosystems" in Nitra, Slovakia (joint with Meeting of SAVE Network). Contact: [dezider.toth@uniag.sk](mailto:dezider.toth@uniag.sk)

20-24 September: Conference "Biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in mountain areas of Europe: the challenge of interdisciplinary research" Ioannina, Greece. Contact: [biosceneconf@bio.auth.gr](mailto:biosceneconf@bio.auth.gr), Web: <http://www.bioscene.co.uk>

24 September: SoZooAlp-Meeting "Historical transhumance between the Alps and the Po-Venetian plains"; Asiago/Trento, Italy. Contact: [michele.corti@unimi.it](mailto:michele.corti@unimi.it), Web: <http://www.sozooalp.it>

25-27 September: International Symposium "Comparative Advantages for Typical Animal Products from the Mediterranean Areas", at Vale de Santarém, Portugal. Website: <http://horta.0catch.com/medsymp/>