

SAVE eNews 2/2013

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



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20th Anniversary of SAVE – a milestone in the conservation of endangered livestock breeds and cultivated plants!

In the last issue of the eNews the first five years of the existence of SAVE and the transition from an idea to a Foundation were covered. To continue in the story this eNews looks at the years 1998 – 2003.

The end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st century heralded many changes in the world. Internationally, the world of communications was changing as the internet became more established, the era of Google began and computer operating systems and devices survived the perceived threats of the Millennium Bug and evolved further into the connected world we experience today. The world population reached 6 billion, the “anti-globalisation” movement gained strength and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development saw states unite in focussing on “the worldwide conditions that pose severe threats to the sustainable development of our people”. Meanwhile, the events of 9/11 heralded the “war on terror” and the geography of the world began to change.



In Europe, changes were felt as countries in Eastern Europe were invited to join NATO. Continued conflict in the Balkan region resulted in long-term changes to borders and country names. The Euro currency was introduced, providing a level of homogeneity in a still heterogeneous continent. The flooding of many European rivers in 2002 highlighted the interconnectedness of our environment and the problems of animal disease - Blue-Tongue and Foot and Mouth – raised important issues for the conservation of indigenous breeds.

SAVE was active in the discussion about rescue in the event of disease and took part in the discussions of the EU Regulation 1467/94. The project “**European Network of Rescue Stations**” was already planned and a pilot study was conducted, the aim of which was to make an inventory of the various existing stations, to check their suitability and integrate them into an overall concept. The aim was to make it possible that endangered breeds facing emergencies could be



saved via a rescue operation that had already been planned, therefore saving time and effort. The concept included short and medium term conservation strategies and also a sophisticated database with information, about the available rescue stations. In the project "rescue stations" act as "transit stations" in emergencies or a "care station" which should be within a breeding programme. This concept is a good, rational use of limited resources, increases the chances of success and reduces the overall costs of conservation. The project was finally launched, in modified form, as the **ELBARN project** in 2007.

By the end of 2002 the SAVE Network had 12 organisations as members and many individuals were involved in the SAVE bodies and projects. A workshop on "**Rare Breeds and Plant Varieties in the Carpathian Mountains**" had been held, along with monitoring tours of the area. Coordination of the **Mangalitsa pig**, continuation of the work to conserve the **Turopolje pig**, awareness raising for the need to act in the case of the **Girgentana goats** and the publication of the **SAVE Report** (predecessor to the eNews) were some of the main activities of the SAVE Project Office.



The new project "**Balkan Network**" was conceived, a project that is still on-going and successful today. Plant genetic resources, whilst overshadowed by the many animal projects, were not ignored. A special publication "**NGO Zoom Fruits**" about NGOs working for fruit conservation was prepared, a comprehensive, **historical inventory of Swiss cultivated plants** was made within the framework of the National Action Plan as a resource for researchers and the **Agricultural Genetic Resources in the Alps** focussed on plant genetic resources as well as animals. With the study **Risorse genetiche agrarie in Italia** the situation of animal breeds and cultivated plant varieties in Italy was intensively addressed.



Although SAVE is a pan-European network, priority has been given to the Eastern European countries that have experienced massive structural changes over the last 20 years. At the end of the 2nd five years of the existence of the SAVE Network much had been achieved and structures were put in place that still exist today. SAVE celebrated its 10th anniversary with the "Rhine Valley Meeting" in Liechtenstein and with an impressive party in the medieval castle in Sargans, Switzerland.

7th European Seminar on Agrobiodiversity 2013: “Agrobiodiversity within the CAP: a chance for rural and social development”



20 Years SAVE Network

The SAVE Annual Meeting and the 7th European Seminar on Agrobiodiversity will take place from the 19. -21. September in the Beukenhof Biezenmortel, Netherlands. The Beukenhof is an old Capuchin monastery in the heart of Noord-Brabant, in the south of the Netherlands. The SAVE Network is closely connected to the Netherlands. We are therefore

very happy to be organising this year's Annual Meeting together with SAVE Network Partner SZH (Stichting Zeldzame Huisdierrassen). The theme of the European Seminar is very relevant as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) after 2013 will have an effect on agrobiodiversity. The current legislative proposals of the European Commission provide for, in addition to greater competitiveness, sustainability and a strengthening of the anchoring of agriculture throughout the rural areas. Therefore, official representatives of politics and rural development are invited to speak at the seminar. In addition to the SAVE events (meeting of the Project Committee and the Council of Cooperation Partners, Board meeting) there will also be interesting excursions in the area: practical sheep breeding and keeping, the conservation breeding of crops as well as other local breeds and their conservation by SZH members.

Provisional programme

Thursday 19 September

13.00 – 14.00 Arrival and Registration

14.00 – 17.00 European seminar on Agro-biodiversity “Agro-biodiversity a chance for rural and social development”

18.00 – 19.00 Dinner

19.00 – 21.00 guided tour in horse carriages in the National Park
“Loonse en Drunense duinen ”

Friday 20 September

08:30 - 10:30 open meeting project commission and council of cooperation partners

11:00 excursions to “De Schapenheld”, old cereal species, Ad Taks official Breeding Centre SZH (Chaams hoen), Walnoot hoeve (Chaams hoen)

16:00 - 18:30 Closed session of the SAVE board of directors

18:30 - Barbecue at t'Schop Hilvarenbeek , presentation of the Arca Deli awards

Saturday 21 September

10:00 – 14:00 Visit (including lunch) to the breeders and friends day of the SZH at the “Schaapskooi” Schijndel

14:00 Farewell, end of the Annual Meeting

Optional: for those that are interested participation in several workshops and optional: Zeldzaamlekker diner

Information and registration: www.save-foundation.net/pdf/SAVE_2013.pdf (soon available)

ArcaDeli® Awards 2013



The Arca-Deli Awards are presented annually to products and services of locally adapted livestock breeds and cultivated plants. The award is presented to products and services seen as being recommendable as a model or example of good practice. The Arca-Deli Award logo can then be used on labeling of products and services as a means of adding value. Detailed information of how to enter your products and services will be sent out directly to those producers eligible to enter. For more information please contact the SAVE Project Office: office@save-foundation.net

Genetic Diversity of Livestock Breeds: what should be supported?

The live conservation and breeding of local breeds should be subsidised by the state. This is regulated in both the EU legislation (Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005) as well as in almost all European countries. However, opinions are divided about what this means. Should one use promotion to make the breeds better known and increase the stocks through finding new farmers for the movements and improving marketing opportunities? Or is it the performance such as the milk yield, the fattening speed or ability to increase the number of eggs per year? These questions are often viewed differently by the authorities and the NGOs. Philippe Ammann of the Swiss partner organisation ProSpecie Rara has been giving this some thought:

Genetic Diversity within the Breed



Genetic differences exist not only between the breeds but also within a breed. For example, the "Graubünden Oberland" sheep: some are lighter and some are more meaty or they have differences in the quality of the wool. It is a central feature of old breeds that they have a certain degree of difference. And this inner diversity of physical characteristics and performance levels makes the old breeds

what they are: They can be kept in many areas and can adapt, due to the variety of characteristics, to future environmental changes. ProSpecieRara strives to conserve all of this diversity.

Careful Selection

Nevertheless, a selective breeding takes place even for rare breeds. There are, for example, more males than are required, thus it must be decided which males are needed as breeding animals. For the ProSpecieRara breeds, standards were created that define the direction in which to develop a breed. The performance, such as the quantity of milk produced, is only one of many criteria. Equally important are robustness, agility, frugality, and many more - depending on the breed other characteristics are added or are weighted differently.



Conservation or Performance?

In Switzerland, the subsidies for conservation of rare breeds are regulated by the same animal breeding regulation as the modern, high-performance breeds. Performance breeds need to be productive and profitable. Accordingly, in the so-called genetic evaluations, quantities of milk and weight gain etc. are measured. The most productive animals are chosen for breeding. In this context, diversity within a breed is undesirable.

Even in the ProSpecieRara breeding associations there are individuals that say one must take care that a breed e.g. increases weight faster – i.e. be much stricter in breeding selection. The approach of the State encourages this. However, by focusing on a single selection criteria there is a risk that a variety of properties is lost and thereby, a substantial part of the gene pool within a breed.



Lobbying for Diversity

The conservation of endangered livestock breeds should be taken more seriously by officials. An important step in this direction is to anchor the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources in the state legislature. The old breeds should not be viewed as "annexes" of classical breeding performance, state intervention

should be tailored to the specific breeding goals of old breeds in small populations. Only then do Booted Goats, Busha Cattle, Landrace Pigs and co have a chance to remain what they are: unique breeds with individual talents.

Do you have experience on this theme? SAVE Foundation would be pleased to receive your opinions or examples of experience from other countries. Send your statement to: office@save-foundation.net.

30th anniversary of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture: World's gene pool crucial for survival



The **Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture** is an intergovernmental forum established in FAO in 1983 to deal with issues related to plant genetic resources. Since 1995 the work of the Commission also covers other components of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture such as animal genetic diversity, forest genetic diversity, aquatic genetic diversity, micro-organisms and invertebrates. The Commission is the only intergovernmental body to specifically address all matters related to the world's gene pool for food and agriculture. On the 30th Anniversary the FAO stated that "adaptation of the agriculture sector is not merely an option, but an imperative for human

survival, and genetic resources will form an essential part of any adaptation strategy, ensuring food security in the face of climate change is among the most daunting challenges facing humankind," FAO Deputy Director-General Dan Gustafson said.


The Commission will be considering a Roadmap on Climate Change and Genetic Resources for an initial phase through 2017. Activities foreseen include awareness-raising, developing guidelines on integrating genetic resources for food and agriculture into adaptation planning, identifying hotspots where biodiversity is under particular threat from climate change and developing an action plan to conserve crop wild relatives from the threat of extinction.



FAO estimates that in the last century, about 75 percent of crop genetic diversity was lost as farmers worldwide switched to genetically uniform, high-yielding varieties and aban-

doned multiple local varieties. Having recourse to genetic material is however essential to adapt and improve agriculture in the face of threats, such as diseases or warming climate that can alter growing conditions. For example, a variety of Turkish wheat, collected and stored in a seed gene bank in 1948, was rediscovered in the 1980s, when it was found to carry genes resistant to many types of disease-causing fungi. Plant breeders now use those genes to develop wheat varieties that are resistant to a range of diseases.

The situation of genetic resources is currently:

- Plants account for over 80 percent of the human diet. Some 30 crops account for 95 percent of human food energy needs and just five of them - rice, wheat, maize, millet and sorghum - alone provide 60 percent. Yet more than 7000 plant species have been gathered and cultivated since people first learned to do so many millennia ago. And there are as many as 30 000 edible terrestrial plant species in the world.
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- According to the most recent FAO data, 22 percent of livestock breeds are at risk of extinction. However, the local breeds that are least understood often carry genetic characteristics that enable them to walk long distances to watering holes, survive with reduced water and fodder intake or fight off tropical diseases. Many 'industrial' cattle breeds - for example, the high output dairy animals - often don't make it under such harsh conditions.
 - The world's aquatic ecosystems are made up of approximately 175 000 species of fish, molluscs, crustaceans and aquatic plants. Just ten species account for the world's haul in capture fisheries, while ten species account for half of global fish farming production;
 - There are 80 000 tree species worldwide, but just 1 percent have been studied in any depth. Forests are home to 80 percent of terrestrial biodiversity, while forests are being cleared at an alarming rate - with consequences for global warming;
 - Invertebrates constitute 95 percent of all animal life, while the hidden treasure trove of biodiversity of micro-organisms is incalculable.

The Commission strives to halt the loss of genetic resources for food and agriculture, and to ensure world food security and sustainable development by promoting their conservation, sustainable use, including exchange, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use. We congratulate the Commission on this anniversary and look forward to many more years of good collaboration between State-level and the NGOs. For more information see: <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/174330/icode/>

Germany meets Denmark: Crossborder Networking

At the SAVE Meeting 2012 in Urnäsch, Switzerland representatives from Denmark and Germany (Society for the Conservation of Rare Livestock Breeds, GEH) had the opportunity to connect and exchange experiences. The result of this exchange was a trip by GEH to Denmark in May 2013.

The situation in conservation work in both countries was compared. It was clear that the experiences are very different. On one hand, the situation in dealing with the authorities is very different and, on the other hand, the structure of agriculture is very different and determines the possibilities of live conservation. In contrast to Germany, high-performance, industrial breeding predominates in Denmark. Small-scale farmers are the exception. Breeding in small populations therefore gets little recognition and interest. The Danish conservation organization "Foreningen Gamle Danske Husdyrracer" (<http://www.gamle-husdyrracer.dk>) has been established for more than 25 years, but still has a lot of lobbying to do both to the state and the general public. Despite the frequent

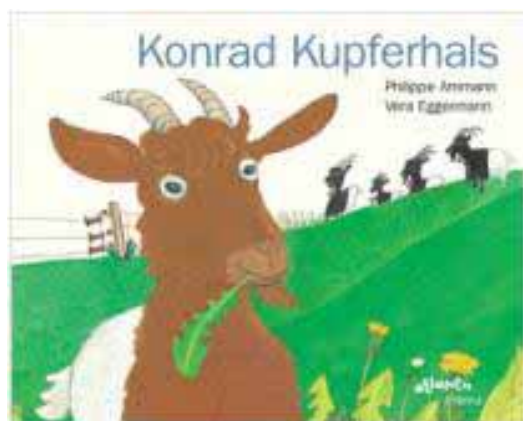


lack of recognition of their achievements the Association has achieved a lot since its inception, and can count on the dedication of its members. Therefore, the cross-border exchange of experience is very important.

A highlight of the visit was seeing the re-discovered Island Cattle, the Økvaeg. This breed was considered extinct until animals were discovered on a farm on the island Agersø. A genetic study revealed that this is indeed a separate breed. The stock is of about 70 animals. They are quite small and are therefore suitable for landscape maintenance.

“Konrad Kupferhals” – Teaching children about rare breeds

There is - at least within Europe – not much material available for teaching children about the diversity of old and endangered breeds. However, it is important that children and



young people understand the importance of agrobiodiversity as it is they who will be responsible for managing this genetic treasure chest in the future.

Now a German-language children's story on the theme of rare livestock breeds has been published. Philippe Ammann from ProSpecieRara tells the story of “Konrad Kupferhals” (Konrad the Copper-necked Goat). This is the story of the goat Konrad who, with the help of the Rhaetian Grey Cow, the Woolly Pig and the Diepholzer Goose manages to find himself. The story is an enthusiastic plea for the endangered Copper-necked

breed and is complemented with photos and short explanatory texts about indigenous livestock breeds. Additionally, there is a download available which gives information about the breeds and links to the breeding organisations. The book fills a gap, in a friendly, entertaining way, in the understanding of agricultural biodiversity - children (and parents) are thus able to gain an understanding of this important subject. This is an area which should be focused on more, so that the theme of live conservation of our breeds and varieties becomes a better known subject, as is the case today for nature protection - which was made popular by the WWF through children and youth programmes.

Proceeds from the sale of the book go to the animal projects of ProSpecieRara: Philippe Ammann, Vera Eggermann: Konrad Kupferhals; Atlantis publishing, 32 pages, ISBN 978-3-7152-0648-6. The book can also be ordered directly from: info@prospecierara.ch

ProSpecieRara also makes various information and task sheets available as downloads to go with the book: <http://www.prospecierara.ch/de/news/konrad-kupferhals>. SAVE is interested to know of other similar initiatives aimed at children and/or school classes. Please send any information to: office@save-foundation.net.

Newsflash

SAVE Foundation – Variety Savers Facebook Group

These days, social media is a part of life for many people, even those who appreciate the importance of traditional, rural lifestyles. In order to reflect this and to provide networking space for people interested in the conservation of indigenous livestock breeds and cultivated plants, SAVE has created a group on Facebook called “SAVE Foundation – Variety Savers”. We hope that you will take part in this group and post your news, photos, events and questions and take part in the discussions!

The link to the new group is:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/626516310695064/>

Please feel free to add people from your own networks to the group!

The official SAVE page can be found here: www.facebook.com/agrobiodiversity



10 Years Carpathian Convention



The Carpathian Convention was adopted on 22 May 2003 by the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine. The Interim Secretariat for the Carpathian Convention, together with visionary government representatives and a great number of stakeholders, contributed to the success of the Convention. Recently, the Protocol on Cultural Heritage was discussed at the meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Cultural Heritage in Krynica, Poland. SAVE Foundation welcomes the Protocol, especially the proposed Article 14 “Preservation of the Carpathian local breeds of domestic animals and cultivated plant varieties”, as a useful structural framework to support SAVE and SAVE Network Partners in their work in the Carpathian region. SAVE would like to congratulate the Carpathian Convention team on this 10th anniversary and looks forward to future collaboration.

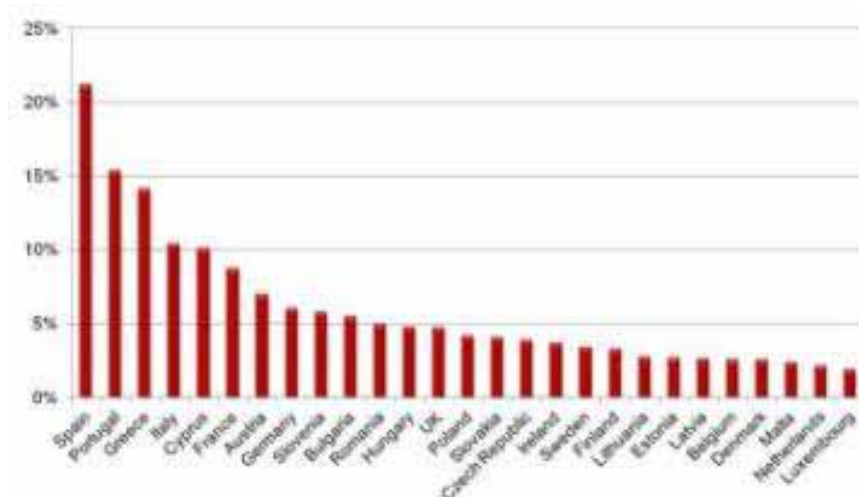
Indicators for Biodiversity in Organic and Low Input Farming Systems



Ecological and extensive farming systems offer wild plants and animals space to live. Well-known examples are the Black Vultures in the Spanish dehesa or orchids on the extensively used mountain pastures. These farming systems also use old breeds, such as the Welsh Black Cattle. In this way they contribute to a significant extent in to the conservation of biodiversity in Europe. The goal of the research project BioBio (Biodiversity Indicators for Organic and Low-Input Farming Systems, EU FP7, KBBE-227161, 2009-2012) was to find a set of biodiversity indicators applicable at European level based on scientific principles, and relevant and useful for the interest groups. A report on the indicators, data sheets, the manual 'Biodiversity Indicators for European Farming Systems' as well as an extensive summary in 12 languages can be downloaded for free:

<http://www.biobio-indicator.org/project.php>

New analysis by the IUCN of threatened species in Europe



The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has published an analysis of the endangered species in Europe. In various factsheets a detailed overview of the species in all 27 European Union countries is given. The analysis shows that the most endangered species occur in the Mediterranean countries. Spain, Portugal and

Greece have the highest proportion of endangered species (see chart). More information: <http://iucn.org/about/union/secretariat/offices/europe/?12903>

European patent for "red hot chili peppers"

The European Patent Office (EPO) has granted a patent on chili plants from conventional breeding (EP2140023). In the patent, the plants, the seed and the fruit is claimed, even the growing and harvesting of the plant are considered to be an invention. The patent was granted, even though two million people recently protested via a petition against patents on conventional breeding and the European Parliament has called for a stop to such patents. Precedents relating to patents on tomatoes and broccoli, are pending at the EPO for more than five years and are still not decided. The coalition No Patents on Seeds! and other organizations call upon the political authorities of the member states of the EPO, this patent to stop now. For more information:

<http://www.no-patents-on-seeds.org/en/node/239/insekten-resistente-pflanze>

Important dates (extract)

3-6 June: Internat. Symposium "Agriculture & Food", in Elenite (near Burgas), Bulgaria. Contact: agriculture@sciencebg.net, Web: www.sciencebg.net/en/

6-7 June: Sustainable Foods Summit, Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Contact: info@sustainablefoodssummit.com; www.sustainablefoodssummit.com/programme.htm

9-11 June: International Conference on Natural Fibers - Sustainable Materials for Advanced Applications; at Guimarães, Portugal. Contact: secretariat@icnf2013.com, Web: www.icnf2013.com/

10-12 June: 5th Symposium for Research in Protected Areas; Mittersill (Salzb.), Austria. Kontakt: nationalpark@salzburg.gv.at, Web: www.hohetauern.at/symposium2013

12-15 June: 2nd Meeting in Italy: "Let's cultivate diversity" at Azienda Agricola Bio Floriddia, Peccioli, Italy (Tuscany). info@semirurali.net, Web: <http://www.semirurali.net>

17-19 June: 8th Organic Marketing Forum, Warsaw, Poland. Web: <http://www.organic-marketing-forum.org>

19 June: Green Care - New Ways, new Chances, Wien-Schönbrunn, Austria. Web: <http://www.greencare-oe.at/tagung2013>

20-24 June: European Federation of City Farms - Conference 2013; in Bodø, Norway: Contact: ingeborg.tangeraas@4h.no, Web: www.cityfarms.org/events/view/23

29 June: Opening of the seed multiplication garden at the "Kraizschouschteschgaart", in Leudelange, Luxemburg. Web: www.kraizschouschteschgaart.info

5-6 July: Conference "Social and economic problems of small agricultural holdings in Europe", Krakow, Poland. Contact: Conf2013@ur.krakow.pl, Web: <http://www.ecbdgr.ur.krakow.pl/aktualnosci.html/1914>

8-9 July: International Conference on Sustainable Agriculture, Environment and Forestry, London, UK. Web: <http://www.waset.org/conferences/2013/london/icsaef/index.php>

8-10 July: IFOAM EU's 7th European Organic Congress, in Vilnius, Lithuania. Web: <http://www.organic-congress-ifoameu.org>

25 August: Living Heritage Expo, Show of all Belgian Livestock Breeds in the Provinciaal domein Puyenbroeck-Wachtebeke, Belgium. Web: <http://www.sle.be>

26-30 August: EAAP 2013 Annual Meeting; Nantes, France. Web: www.eaap2013.org

1-4 Sept.: 7th EPSO Conference 'Plants for a Greening Economy'; at Porto Heli, Greece; Contact: Katerina.Karkala@epsomail.org, Web: <http://tinyurl.com/cmcr8wm>

12-15 Sept.: Problems and Perspectives of Hilly Mountain Areas, Internat. Symposium in Ohrid, FYR Macedonia; mgs.symposium@gmail.com, <http://ohrid2013.igeografija.mk/>

13-15 September: 12th International Meeting of Pomologues, Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic. Contact: odborne@czsos.cz, Web: <http://www.zahradkari.cz/pomo/>

19-21 September: Let's Liberate Diversity; International Meeting in Basel, Switzerland. Contact: info@prospecierara.ch

19-21 Sept.: 20-Year Jubilee of the SAVE Foundation and the European SAVE-Network at Biezenmortel, the Netherlands. E-mail: office@save-foundation.net



20-21 Sept.: 7th Seminar on Agrobiodiversity: "Agrobiodiversity - a chance for Agriculture and Rural Development" at Biezenmortel, The Netherlands; Contact: office@save-foundation.net, Web: www.save-foundation.net

24-29 September: Second BiodiversityKnowledge Conference, Berlin, Germany. Contact: info@biodiversityknowledge.eu, Web: www.biodiversityknowledge.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=76

26-28 Sept.: Interdisciplinary Symposium "Biogeography of the Carpathians: Evolution of Biodiversity in a Spatiotemporal Context"; in Kraków, Poland. Contact: carpathians-biogeography@botany.pl, Web: <http://bio.botany.pl/carpathians-biogeography/>

28 Sept.: International Alpine Cheese Olympics: Food and Drinks, Tradition and Culture, at Galtür, Tirol, Austria. Web: <http://tinyurl.com/cklgdky>

29 September: European AgroBiodiversity Day (EAD), Topic 2013: "Agrobiodiversity - a chance for Agriculture and Rural Development". PR event for AgroBiodiversity with various activities of all kind of stakeholders in their respective countries. Web: http://www.save-foundation.net/EAD/EAD_en.htm

29 Sept. - 2 Oct.: First International Conference on Global Food Security; at Noordwijkerhout, The Netherlands; Web: <http://www.globalfoodsecurityconference.com>

3-5 October: BALNIMALCON 2013 (Balkan Animal Science Conference) in Tekirdag, Turkey. Contact balnimalcon2013@nku.edu.tr, Web: <http://balnimalcon2013.nku.edu.tr>

4-5 October: Conference: Living Animals in Museums Activity, Szreniawa, Poland. Contact: u.nowakowska@muzeum-szreniawa.pl, Web: <http://www.muzeum-szreniawa.pl/?q=en/node/535>

4-6 October: EUROPOM 2013, Hamburg, Germany. Web: <http://www.europom2013.de>

23-25 October: Fourth International Mountain Forum, in Zakopane, Poland. Contact: promocja@tatry.pl, Web: <http://www.forumgorskie.pl/en.html>

10-14 November: International Plant Breeding Congress. Antalya, Turkey. Contact: info@intpbc.org, Web: <http://www.intpbc.org>

=> Further Dates see: <http://www.save-foundation.net/english/actual.htm#Events>