



Country Report for Poland

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Topics of demonstration

Plant production (65%)

- New varieties
- Conservation agriculture
- Machinery
- Soil fertility management

Animal husbandry (31%)

- Animal nutrition
- Animal health and welfare

Others (4%)

- CAP/state subsidies
- Social care
- Agritourism

Providers and purpose of demonstration

In Poland the majority of agricultural demonstrations are set-up by farmers and public advisory services. Demonstrations are often carried out jointly by advisors and farmers.

Purpose :

Related to information sharing: educational and training opportunities, information gathering/sharing; Specifically related to innovation promotion: Innovation development, innovation uptake, knowledge creation; Others related to improvement of economic performance of farming: competitiveness/ productivity, monetary/financial, technology promotion/product sales.

History

The current stage of demonstration farm developments in Poland is influenced by three main factors:

- 1) Before the transition from central to market economy (before 1989) public advisory services managed their own demonstration farms. Most of them were closed as a result of socio-economic transformation in the nineties. Agricultural advisors, therefore, had to maintain the network of farmers involved in sharing demonstration venues;
- 2) Accession of Poland to EU accelerated development in agriculture. Commercial companies developed networks of dealerships and applied a dual approach to demo farms, a) running their own company managed demo farm and b) signing contracts with farmers to use part of their farms for demonstration activities;
- 3) Long tradition of demo farms run by research organisations which collaborate with public advisory services to among others organize open days for farmers.

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Types of Demonstrations

Majority of demonstration farms belongs to field walk type with farmers, owners of demonstration farms acting as guides. In many cases they are supported by agricultural advisors from the public advisory service as initiators/facilitators of farmers involvement in demonstration activities.

Access Issues

Gender: The very visible dominance of male amongst visitors clearly confirms the overall trend of farming as sector mainly managed by men.

Age: Generally the main trend amongst visitors represent two main age brackets – 25-40 and 40-55 years of age. It covers two types of professional activities in any profession: fully active professional farmers and younger generation taking over farms to start farming at their own.

Geography: In regions (e.g. West and North-central part of Poland) with a strong farming sector (commercially oriented farms) more demonstration activities compared to South-East and East part of Poland (more small, semi-subsistence agriculture). In addition, activity of public advisory services is linked to farm areas with high potential (i.e. commercially oriented farm areas).

Other Issues

A limitation of this study is that demonstration farms managed by company producing/selling material for farming are clearly underrepresented within our inventory. The main reason is confirmed by experiences of many other social researches in Poland, trends amongst commercial companies to not participate in any research is due to the non-direct relation with their core business.

Distinguishing Characteristics

- Demonstration activities are undertaken by commercial and experimental farms with 80/20 partitioning;
- Demo farms do usually not participate in regional and national networks;
- Networking only makes up one percent of the reasoning of visitors to attend demonstration activities which is very low compared to the fraction of farmers organising and conducting demonstration activities;
- Demo farms managed by farmers organise on average nine demo activities gathering 273 attendees per year. Demo activities run by organisations are bigger with 102 events and 4500 attendees per year.



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