



Dear Breeders, Dear Sirs,

Polish dairy sector is one of the main pillars of Polish agriculture due to our natural and historical background. A constant development of activities in the sector is the necessary condition for its functioning. That increases technical and economic efficiency of breeding and rearing dairy cattle which leads, among others, to scaling up milk production. The highest yields are truly desirable which beside giving the farmers satisfaction from their herds' production, will also give them profits.

Breeders who are proud of their animals and their very high yields are aware that the management of dairy herds and running milk production is not possible without milk recording. Production parameters control allows not only to react in time to a potential threat but also gives a possibility to produce reasonably and, what is now particularly important, allows to calculate production costs. It is hard to imagine that you can make money on milk, without milk recording. It is not possible! It is just enough to set together two average values: a cow's average performance without milk recording and the one with milk recording. Definitely the second wins.

Basically, a current full liberalization of the EU milk market carries some risks, but mainly it enhances competition. Polish Federation of Cattle Breeders and Dairy Farmers is an entity that provides dairy farmers with new tools to manage their herds and their production and so it will remain, because the world - this breeding one - still runs forward. We do not want to chase it, we want to join it.

Those breeders who have been with us for a long time, can see how milk recording is transforming and in which direction it is heading. We want to know more and more about animals.

The direction of undertaken actions and PFCBDF's development are determined by breeders. That is why we work on introducing new services i.e.: we are in the process of creating a model to point out cows threatened by subacute acidosis, secondly on the development of an accurate model estimating cows' milk yield based on lactation curves, and also creation of a herd management programme, which uses a huge amount of data stocked in SYMLEK system and other possible sources of information at a farm, or a constant improvement of our method applied for pointing out cows threatened by subclinical ketosis. We are now introducing % of casein determination within milk recording etc.

They who do not develop, stay where they are. That is why Polish Federation plans to create a Genetic Centre and intends to further develop genomic selection of dairy cattle along with breeding value estimation. The first actions aimed at achieving this goal were undertaken in the beginning of last year by creating our own Cattle Genetics Laboratory in Parzniew. Its creation was a "bull's-eye". Breeders could not wait any longer for genomic technology and its application for cattle breeding value estimation in our country. In 2015 nearly 4 thousand females were evaluated by DNA decryption. Our plans for 2016 are even more ambitious. Without watching for anyone and while beating any difficulty, we want Polish breeders to use innovative solutions.

Genomic selection is the basis for milk production. We are aware that more and more traits are the subject of research, such ones which not so long ago we wouldn't even have thought about. Now

breeders worldwide can already select their cattle for feed intake and eliminate those cows from their herds in whose genes a tendency for metabolic diseases has been “read out”. In Poland cows are still culled due to fertility problems mainly. It concerns nearly one-third of females removed from herds. We must pay attention to these traits in our research and in further development of the above mentioned Genetic Centre .

We are setting up new breeding goals for the future. However, in order to develop, money alone is not enough. Anyone can buy technology, but cattle is reared in different environments. Know-how is important, but data collection about cattle rearing is equally important; i.e.: data regarding reproduction for instance, recording and processing them into such a version which might be practically useful for breeders. Cooperation is necessary on many levels: between Polish Federation of Cattle Breeders and Dairy Farmers that represents farmers, scientists and veterinarians. We also need to exchange information on genotypes and phenotypes of females between breeders’ associations and research consortia. Having that in mind, we co-work with European organizations, such ones as we are. We exchange experiences and learn from one-another.

Our breeding and production achievements are appreciated worldwide. Therefore, people from around the world who are involved in animal performance recording gathered in Krakow, where Polish Federation of Cattle Breeders and Dairy Farmers organized ICAR Technical Workshop (International Committee for Animal Recording). We were pleased to welcome the members of this non-governmental organisation worldwide, whose primary role is to standardize the guidelines for animal recording. Hosting this event was a great honour for our farmers. It was not only a prestigious event but also a possibility to show our farms and our dairy sector to the entire world.

In 2015, it has already been 20 years since the cow symbol on the white-and-red flag became an indispensable symbol of milk recording in Poland. Today, we do not even think about the point, we started from, just look into the future. We want to influence the future shape of Polish cattle breeding even more than today, because it is what dairy farmers and milk producers expect.

The large and small milk producers are equally important for us. Some of them own herds of more than 1,000 cows, others - such with several heads only. Everyone puts their hearts in what they do, their passion, love for animals matter. And in return, those loved ones give what best they have. A long time ago milk yields already exceeded the level not imaginable beforehand. There is no upper limit for cows’ milk performance. We do not know where the possibilities end.

We congratulate the breeders on the results achieved. Applause to everyone!

We are pleased to know that really conscious milk producers are more and more numerous, those who can manage their herds smartly and produce milk really efficiently thanks to co-operation with the Polish Federation.

**President of Polish Federation of Cattle
Breeders and Dairy Farmers**



Leszek Hądzlik