

The opportunities for joint development of ecological farming in the transborder region of Poland and Ukraine

This paper presents the role and importance of healthy food produced on organic farms for the human being. The article also presents the results of Polish and Ukrainian researchers concerning the knowledge and opportunities for the development of organic agriculture in the transborder region of Poland and Ukraine. The researches confirm that ecological farming and organic food are very important for both countries: Poland and Ukraine. In both cases, these two countries are eager to deepen knowledge of ecology, to promote healthy food for organic products consumption.

Key words: ecological farming, ecological farm, cultivation structure.

Introduction. The political changes that took place in the last two decades in Poland and Ukraine as well as in other Central and Eastern European countries, including the independent states that were formed after the collapse of the Soviet Union, have created a relatively good conditions for the movement of people and goods across the borders of neighboring countries. These changes increased the direct cooperation between entities, companies, enterprises, social and economic organizations in the border regions [1]. Currently, the regions belonging to the border areas are important participants in the processes of regionalization, including territorial cooperation [2]. International trans-border cooperation as well as interregional one is an important element of our regional development. It favors the experience exchange between these regions, facilitates the development of agriculture and tourism, ensures coordination of infrastructure development on both sides of the border, leading to the cultural and educational development of the region. All these functions resulted in international cooperation of regions contribute to economic development and agriculture.

The diversification of agriculture in the Polish-Ukrainian trans-border area can be seen in natural conditions, especially in the structure of land for farming. In addition, economic conditions as well as political ones have great influence too. Socio-political changes that have occurred over the last two decades in Poland and Ukraine can be considered as positive ones for the development of agriculture.

It doesn't go only about nature protection in the system of organic farming, but also about the protection of soil by maintaining and increasing its fertility, landscape care, preserving the traditions and culture of the village, as well as the activities leading to the production of high quality agricultural products. Ecological farming is characterized by natural methods of food production in a clean and safe environment, without chemical fertilizers and synthetic pesticides, without antibiotics, hormones of growth and genetically modified organisms. Due to the exclusion of pesticides and fertilizers usage from ecological farming, it is avoided the risk of contamination of soil and groundwater, and in addition, it is reduced leaching of nutrients from the soil. Such kind of farming leads to the maintenance of biodiversity, requires less energy and produces high quality food [3].

Nowadays, there are more than 2000 certified ecological farms in Podkarpatsky region and that resulted in the occupying the fifth place in the country. It should be noted, that there were only two such farms in the region 10-13 years ago. Ecological farming is developing more dynamically, new farms are arising and small factories are being built near them. Because of its natural and social specificity, the observed trans-border areas are a good place for the development of ecological agriculture based on the use of natural resources, without the use of chemical fertilizers and chemical pesticides.

Material and Methods. The aim of the study is to assess the scope of knowledge relating to Poland and Ukraine in the view of such concepts as: ecology, farms and organic food; to present the basic aspects of trans-border cooperation concerning agro-ecological issues. The basis of the study is a survey, which was conducted among Poles and Ukrainians within the last six months and the data of the Statistical Offices of Poland and Ukraine, as well as studying the subject literature. The study involved 192 people from each side. Such Ukrainian towns as: Yavoriv, Mostyska, Sambir, Lviv, Sokal, Horodok were involved in the study; in Poland the researches were made in Lubaczów, Jarosław, Przemyśl, Ustrzyki, Przeworsk, Leżajsk, Rzeszów and Tomaszów Lubelski (Fig. 1).

Study Results and Discussion. The spatial diversity of natural conditions in the cross-border area influenced significantly the state of land use in the structure of which predominate farmland (Table 1). The above mentioned trans-border area can be included to less urbanized regions that are in other parts of Poland or Ukraine. It is specified by land fragmentation, poor marketability of agricultural production, manpower excess and considerable variation of the soil, climate and topography. Soil condition of the region is characterized

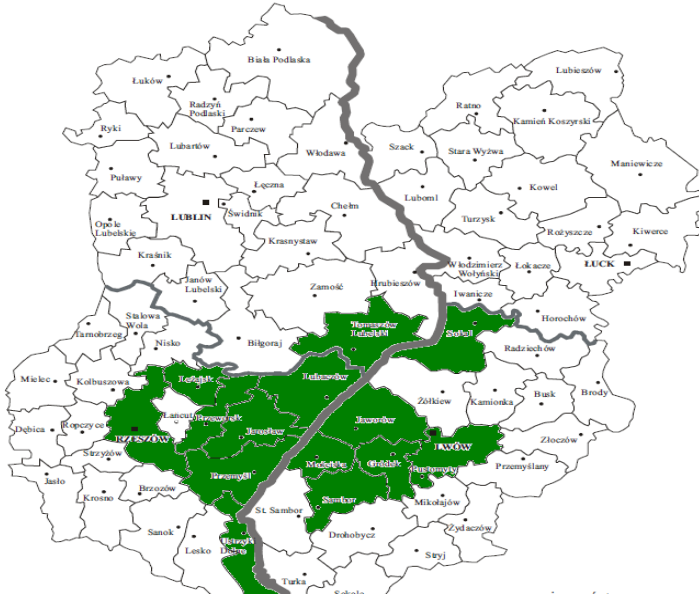


Fig. 1. Research area

Source: own.

Table 1

Land use in trans-border area

Voivodeship/ Region	Total	Farm land	Forests	Land underwaters	Built-up land	Unused land	Other
Podkarpackie	100	53,1	40,5	1,1	4,4	0,9	-
Lwowskie	100	52,1	34,6	2,3	2,9	6,5	1,6
Lubelskie	100	70,6	22,9	0,8	3,6	0,9	1,2
Wołyńskie	100	57,9	31,8	2,0	5,1	1,8	1,3

Source: own. Statistical Office in Rzeszow, Rzeszow 2012, p.288-312, Euroregion Bug in numbers, Lublin 2012, p. 22.

by considerable typological variability associated with geological structure, relief, water conditions, the nature of the vegetation and human activity. The diversity of natural and soil conditions causes that very rich and poor soils are used for cultivation [4]. Such kind of farming in the trans-border area influences the development of ecological farms, Podkarpacki and Lubelski voivodships serve as examples.

The comparative analysis of agricultural land in the above statement proves that Podkarpacki voivodship has a similar number of agricultural land (53,1%) in relation to Lviv region (52,1%) and to Volyn (57,9%) (Table 1). The largest number of agricultural land one can see in such towns of Lviv region as Kamianka-Buzka, Sambir, Mostyska and Horodok; in Volyn region – Ivanychi, Manevychi and Horochiv. Lubelski voivodship is characterized by the largest number of agricultural area (70,6%).

Analyzing the study results, it was found out, that knowledge of Ukrainian people in the field of organic farms and the ecology itself, differs significantly from the knowledge of the citizens of our country (Figure 2). This analysis shows that 68% of respondents understand the meaning of the term «organic farm» and from Polish side this indicator constitutes 92%. This difference can be resulted in the innovative development of Polish agriculture over the last fifteen years. In early 2000, there were only two registered organic farms in Podkarpacky voivodship, while in 2012 – there were 2045, in Lublin voivodship – 2065.

With respect to this situation, the predictions are likely stating, that at the turn of the next few years the number of farms engaged in organic production in Poland will grow in tenfold.

This number resulted in deep and extensive knowledge of Polish people in comparison to the Ukrainians. Only 24% of Ukrainian respondents know about organic farms location in the place of the residence. More than half of

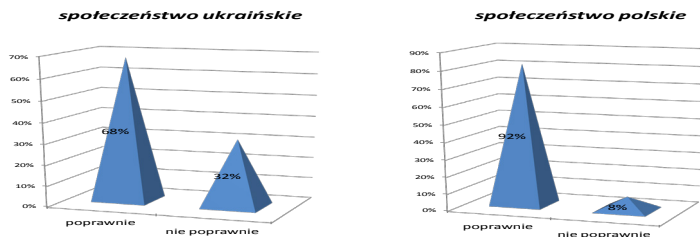


Fig. 2. Co oznacza pojęcie gospodarstwo ekologiczne?

Source: own.

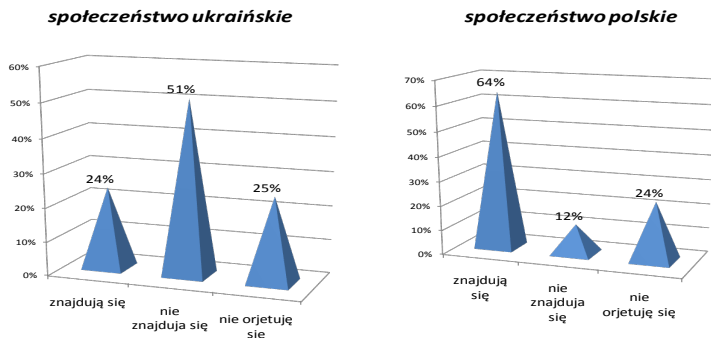


Fig. 3. Czy w swojej okolicy znajdują się gospodarstwa ekologiczne?

Source: own.

respondents (51%) state, that organic farms are not located in place of their residence, while 25% don't have the foggiest idea about it. (Figure 3).

The situation relating to Polish people differs from that of Ukrainians – 64% of people know about the location of organic farms, 12% – don't know and 24% – don't have the idea.

The next two questions are very important due to a big interest in deepening the ecological know ledge and in volvement in actions promotin gecology, healthy food and innovative development of organic farms (Figure 4 and 5).

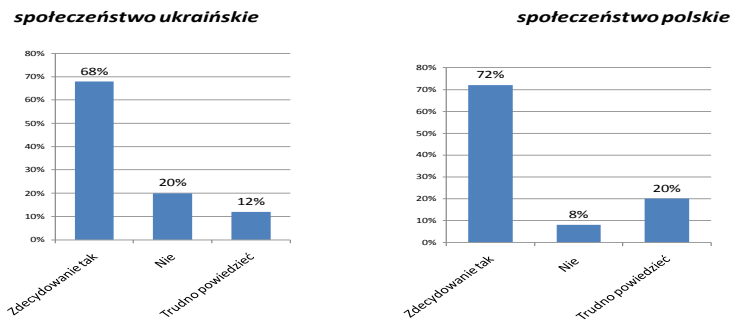


Fig. 4. Zdolność do poszerzania wiedzy z zakresu żywności ekologicznej

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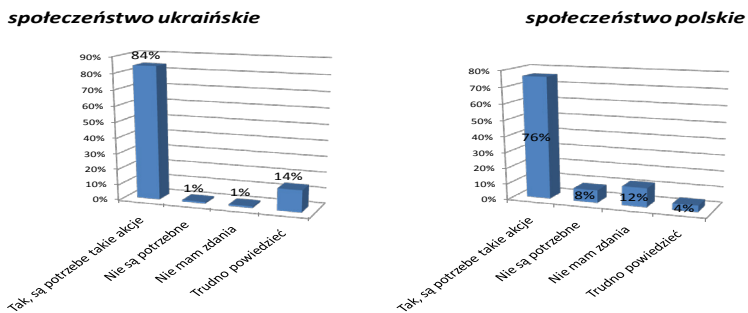


Fig. 5. Czy potrzebne są na Ukrainie/Polsce akcje promujące gospodarstwa ekologiczne i spożywanie żywności ekologicznej?

Source: own.

More than 68% of Ukrainians want to get more knowledge on ecology and only 20% do not have such need, 12% don't know if they want. A similar situation is from Polish side (72% definitely want to learn more about it and only 8% did not express such a desire, while 20% did not decide). 84% of Ukrainians support healthy food and organic farms promotions through various actions such as: advertisement, organizing fairs and school workshops for children, teenagers as well as for adults. So much interest in the above mentioned sphere should encourage the various public institutions for effective activity.

Polish and Ukrainian people have also great differentiation in relation to information about places of ecological products purchase (Figure 6).

The study results show that 72% of the Ukrainians have no idea about the place of buying such products, 76% of Poles, however, know about the



Fig. 6. Czy w badanym regionie znajdują się miejsca/punkty sprzedaży żywności ekologicznej?

Source: own.

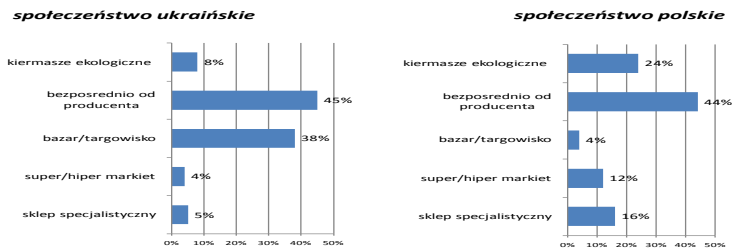


Fig. 7. Gdzie najłatwiej można kupić żywność ekologiczną?

Source: own.

places, where one can buy ecological products and only 24% did not have the idea about it.

The question relating to the place, where one can buy easily organic food allowed respondents to choose five answers (Figure 6). Nearly half of the respondents from both sides state, that it can be easily purchased directly from the producer (farmer). In the second place the Ukrainians indicated bazaars and marketplaces (below 40%), while the smallest number of people indicated the supermarkets. According to Polish respondents, organic food can be bought at ecological fairs (over 20%) and in the super / hyper markets and specialized stores. Bazaars and markets were indicated only by 4% of respondents.

Conclusions

1. Trans-border collaboration of Poland and Ukraine should be focused mainly on the implementation of joint initiatives for the entire areas separated by the border, in particular, on the development of cooperation between the communities inhabiting these areas.

2. The presented study results can be used by both parties to take actions informing the public about the importance and development of ecological farming and organic food. This problem is partly achieved through the ability of Ukrainians to study at Polish universities.

3. In order to reinforce the benefits of trans-border cooperation for both sides, one should alleviate effectively still numerous barriers hindering the development of partnership relations in agricultural sector as well as in the economic, legal and social ones.

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Мазяж П., Харасім Е. Можливості для спільного розвитку екологічного сільського господарства у транскордонному регіоні Польщі та України.

Представлена роль і значення виробництва екологічно чистих продуктів харчування. Наведені результати досліджень представників Польщі та України, які стосуються використання можливостей та знань щодо розвитку органічного сільського господарства у прикордонній території Польщі та України. Дослідження підтверджують, що виробництво екологічно чистих продуктів має дуже велике значення як для Польщі, так і для України. Сторони виражають готовність до розширення знань в області екології, пропагування вживання екологічно чистих, органічних продуктів.

Ключові слова: екологічне сільське господарство, екологічна ферма, структура вирощування.

Мазяж П., Харасим Э. Возможности для совместного развития экологического сельского хозяйства в трансграничном регионе Польши и Украины.

Представлены роль и значение производства экологически чистых продуктов питания. Приведены результаты исследований представителей Польши и Украины, касающиеся знаний и возможностей для развития органического сельского хозяйства в трансграничной области Польши и Украины. Исследования подтверждают, что экологическое развитие и органические продукты питания очень важны для Польши и Украины. В обоих случаях, стороны выражают готовность расширения и углубления знаний по экологии, поощрения употребления здоровой пищи органических продуктов.

Ключевые слова: экологическое сельское хозяйство, экологическая ферма, структура выращивания.