

## THE MOST POPULAR DOMESTIC ANIMAL SPECIES IN AGRO - TOURISTIC FARMS IN POLAND

**Ewa Kuznicka**

*Sheep and Goat Department, Warsaw Agricultural University, Poland*

**Key words: agro-touristic farms, domestic animals**

### **Introduction**

The necessity of associate with animals is the important factor stimulating contacts of contemporary city inhabitants with the nature and village (Kuznicka, 2004). Direct contact with animals is possible in the agro-touristic farms. The animals give the inspiration to recognise particular species, provide mental relax, form personality of children and teach them (Van Houtte and Jarvis, 1995).

The spaces of domestic animals, which are of frequent occurrence in the tourist farms in Poland, have been presented.

### **Material and methods**

The 586 polish agro-touristic farms have been observed.

All of them have got they own Internet pages.

The purpose of this study was to examine how many of those farms keep animals and which species of domestic animals are of frequent occurrence.

The questions, which received the owners, were:

Question
Are there domestic animals on the farm?
If yes, which species?
Are there pet animals in the farm?
If yes, which species?
If the visitor's nourishment is preparing on the bases of natural, ecological products from the farm?
Is the horse riding is possible on the farm?

## Result s

Horses are the species of domestic animals, which are of most frequent occurrence in the tourist farms in Poland.

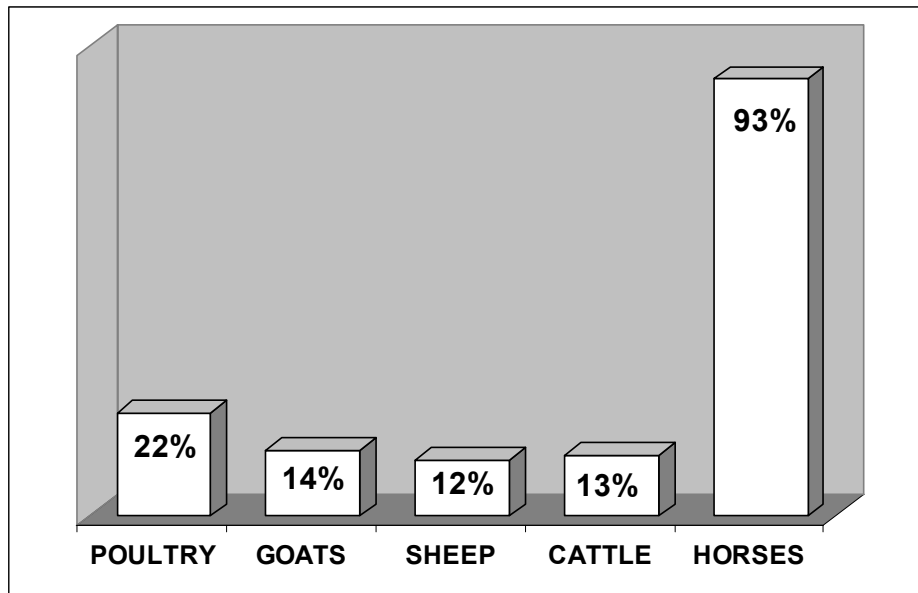
From among 586 agro –touristic farms the horse riding is offered in 93% of them. The owners of 64 farms have got the other domestic animals (fig.1). All of investigated farms kept dogs and cats and visitors were enable to bring they own pets. The possibility of fishing declared 89% considered farms. If the fishponds were as water reservoirs the waterfowl species has been kept. From decorative poultry species the most popular representants are guinea fowl, pheasant and peacock.

Only in four tourist’s objects was the bee yard.

Three of the farm’s owners have got exotic animals lake lam, camel, mancky, emu as well as donkey.

Among the farms, which had sheep and goats, most of them kept 5 to 10 heads. Only 2 flocks had more then 100 ewes. One of them kept rustical breed of sheep “Swiniarka” and received the first price on the competition for polish regional product.

Fig.1 The percentage of farms with different species of domestic animals.



## Discussion

The horses in the agrotourism have got as well active as passive part. The horse riding is a very good advertising product in each tourist object. The fact that in 93% of investigated

farms the horse riding was possible confirms the conclusion. That charming, moving with grace animals influencing on emotions riders as well as observers (Kopka, 2003).

The horse riding helps to improve posture, balance, mobility of children and preadolescents. It also provides significant emotional and cognitive benefits. It is the sport especially for busy people, whose work is physically and mentally very demanding. The riding sessions are great for people, which are tired from driving, sitting in the office and all those, which feel that they are not sufficiently physically active or those, who have back problems (Kosewska, 2003).

Sheep and goats that were kept on 26% analysed farms supply healthy, ecological products.

These small ruminants because of little body size and friendly character are the most attractive spaces. The city people who did have earlier any contact with farm animals are not afraid of sheep and goats. Their calm nature provide mental relax and increase self-esteem of children (Blythe and Monroe Traeger, 1983).

Domestic animals like rabbits, sheep or goats are not aggressive; they defence themselves by escape so the possibility to have close contact with them requires patient and confidence to each other (Kosewska, 2003).

The view of grazing flock calming and draw away from problems and indispositions of older people (Brickel, 1984).

The indigenous breeds are very useful for agro-touristic farms because of their adaptation to regional environment and low greatness of flocks. The contact with them gives the inspiration to recognise those valued breeds and promote them. The most significant in the popularisation and education have the classes organised in farms for schools (Kuznicka, 2004).

The presence of lambs during the holiday time makes visit more attractive. Children willingly feed lambs by milk. It's taught responsibility, friendship, fun and knowledge about sheep.

On the other side during the staying on the farm children can learn about production methods and food processing (Kopka, 2003).

The guests have the possibility to participate in many attraction confirmed with conquering different skills like wool spinning or rugs manufacture. The colour wool is a very good row material for artistic weaving and hand knitting.

The show with the sheepdog and shearing wool are the additional attraction on the sheep farms (Kuznicka, 2004).

## Conclusion

The animals make staying on the farm more attractive.

The most attention of guests takes farm species like horses, sheep and goats.

Horse riding is one of the possible active resting, grazing sheep makes landscape more picturesque and ecological products assure healthy food.

Direct contact with animals give the inspiration to recognise particular species and provide mental relax.

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