

Udržateľnosť malých a rodinných fariem - Sustainability of Small and Family Farms (SOILS)
2016-1-SK01-KA203-022611

Multiplier Event Report 2019

Agriculture Academy of Vytautas Magnus University, Faculty of Bioeconomy Development,
Lithuania

April 3 - 4th, 2019

Within the project „Sustainability of Small and Family Farms (SOILS) – Udržateľnosť malých a rodinných fariem“, No. 2016-1-SK01-KA203-022611, the last multiplier event was held as a part of International Scientific Conference with the title „*Sustainable development: theory and practice 2019*“. The topic of the conference was „Bioeconomy development and Green innovation, Sustainability of Small and Family Farms“. This event has few years' tradition. 3th International scientific conference was dedicated to present results of the project “Sustainability of Small and Family Farms (SOILS)”. The Conference partners were Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, Kaunas University of Applied Sciences, Kaunas Regional Association of Industrialists and Employers. The partnership creates the space to exchange knowledge, experience and present different project results solved within the academic sphere.

The conference deal with different topics of sustainable agriculture, food industry, peripheral rural areas, economic challenges of green technologies development, consumer perception of bio-based products and other topics. The topics related to the project SOILS questions about small and family farms and they are the base of agriculture in most countries of the EU. The event was organised at the Agriculture Academy of Vytautas Magnus University, Faculty of Bioeconomy Development, in Kaunas district at April 3 - 4, 2019. The task was to share experiences and discuss the principles and models of sustainable development, answer the main question - how to achieve sustainability of small and family farms. Participants of the conference were from Lithuania, Poland, Latvia and also from further countries, the event has international character. During this activity results of O1 - The Methodology of Farms Evaluation, O2 - Analysis of Small Farms in the Central European Space were presented. Also partial results of O3 - Software Product, that means the algorithm for calculating farm size, number of animals and other farm indicators in conditions of the Slovak, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Hungary were presented. Information, knowledge and good practise (in Alytus and Druskininkai municipalities) were exchanged by family farmers, experts from practice and universities during the 2 days: 4 family farms and small food business, 5 sessions of presentations, individual discussions of the conference (programme available from internet: https://zua.vdu.lt/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Programa_DV2019_04_03_04.pdf, **Annex 1 and Annex 2**).

The first and second day of the conference started with the registration of conference participants. During the first day, conference participants could choose to go to an excursion in the family farms at Alytus and Druskininkai municipalities or could discuss with experts at the

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Vytautas Magnus University, Faculty of Bioeconomy Development in Kaunas district. About half of all conference participants went to farms and participated in the good practise - education programme. The first two stops were the flowers farm of A. Žemaitis in Punia, diversified family farm and produced products delivered in D. Kvedaraitės sea buckthorn farm in Venciūnai village. Visit of Margiris mound and meeting with community of Punia eldership conference participants bring back to the battle of Pilėnai. Culinary and educational programmes in a cottage of an ordinary resident of Panemunė in Punia, in which an authentic environment of the 19th century life of residents in Dzukija is restored. Tasting of Lithuanian and regional products took place during lunch, business of food purchased from local farmers was presented in the restaurant "Forto dvaras". Participants also visited Augai family farm in the village of Didžiasalis of Druskininkai municipality (Annex 3). After good practice examples programme was discussion and first conference day summary, dinner .

During the second day, conference participants could choose to go to different sessions of conference or to the International Agricultural Exhibition “Ką pasėsi...2019” in Kaunas district. The second day started after registration. In the plenary session Edita Gudišauskienė (director of Kaunas Regional Association of Industrialists and Employers) and prof. dr. Astrida Miceikienė (Dean of the Faculty of Bioeconomy Development, VMU, Kaunas) opened the conference and drew the attention of conference participants to the importance of implementing bioeconomy development principles in the farms and food industry, sustainable development goals, which are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. Dean of the Faculty of Bioeconomy Development prof. dr. Astrida Miceikienė presented information about the project SOILS (see photos from the different sessions, annex 4). The scientists and experts from 5 different countries had presentations after the welcome speeches in 5 sessions: experts from Latvia BA (Banku Augtskola) School of Business and Finance, RISEBA University of Applied Sciences, Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies; experts from Poland Warsaw University of Life Sciences, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn; experts from Slovakia Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra; experts from Czech republic Mendel University in Brno; experts from Lithuania Vytautas Magnus University, Utena College, Klaipėda University, Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Kaunas University of Technology, Vilnius University. The conference participants have good scientific and educational experiences, examples of sustainable development, agriculture and food industry. Many sessions focused on problems of agriculture and rural development sustainability evolution of the European Union policies supporting rural sustainable development, communication, social responsibility, management of different activities in agriculture, accounting and information systems.

Session IV was dedicated to the International project SOILS. There were presented main results of the project “Sustainability of Small and Family Farms (SOILS)” (no. 2016-1-SK01-KA203-022611) and situation of small farms development and sustainability in Lithuania and other countries. The experts from the project SOILS made 5 presentations: *Algorithm for Calculating Farm Size and Number of Dairy cows in Conditions of the Slovak*

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and Czech Republic (doc. Ing. Patrik Rovný, PhD, doc. Ing. Dusan Dobak PhD, doc. Ing. Daniela Hupkova PhD; Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, **Annex 5**); *Price Volatility in Agricultural Supply Chain* (doc. Ing. Daniela Hupkova PhD, doc. Ing. Patrik Rovný PhD, doc. Ing. Dušan Dobak PhD; Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra; **Annex 6**); *Agriculture Production Trends in the Selected EU Member states* (doc. Ing. Ivo Zdrahal PhD; Mendel University in Brno, **Annex 7**); *Tendencies of Public Support to Farms in Slovakia, Czech Republic, Lithuania and Hungary* (assoc prof. dr. Ilona Kiaušienė, prof. dr. Neringa Stončiuvienė, Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas; **Annex 8**); *The Role of Small Farms in the Food System: Case of Lithuania* (prof. dr. Vilma Atkočiūnienė, assoc prof. dr. Ilona Kiaušienė, assoc prof. dr. Gintarė Vazonienė (Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas; **Annex 9**). The presentation were illustrated by the figures and photo pictures. After presentations was deep discussions.

Most questions received presentations „*The situation of small farms development and sustainability in Lithuania*“ (**Annex 10A**) made by Jonas Pupius from The Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania and presentation „*Social sustainability of small family farms in implementing the social functions of agriculture at farm and society level*“ (**Annex 10B**) made by prof. dr. Vlada Vitunskienė (Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas), Jolanta Drozd (Vilnius University), Asta Bendoraitytė (Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas). The Session V was Poster Session. 27 poster presentations were presented.

During the evenings all conference participants attended dinner (social and cultural evening) and Festive dinner where informal discussions continued and allowed creating new contacts and cooperation. The conference participants provided with stationery (paper, pen, folder, USB key) and water, making coffee, lunch and dinner. During the conference was a lot of formal and non formal discussions during 4 coffee breaks, 2 lunch and 2 diner. The conference was held in two languages (Lithuanian and English), with simultaneous translation during both conference days.

The number of participants was 241 (131 local and 110 foreign), from which 100 participants (50 local and 50 foreign) (see list of participants; **annex 11 - annex 14**) were supported by the project SOILS with conference programme, food, accommodation and transport.

Information on the SOILS project and conference was published on the University's website (available from internet: <https://zua.vdu.lt/?s=Mokslinink%C5%B3+akiratyje++-+darnaus+vystymosi+i%C5%A1%C5%A1%C5%ABkiai>).