

Report Elbarn workshop and field of work of Ank Zegwaard, Stichting Zeldzame Huisdierrassen (SZH) in the Netherlands

My fields of SZH work are:

- Education: coaching people who want to inform children about rare breeds; I have also made educational material for schools and City Farms (I'll bring it with me to Kutna Hora)
- As a member of the SZH Work Group Publicity, Information and Raising Funds: I inform people and write articles about the situation of rare breeds and stimulate contact between breeders and the public; and I drew up a report of projects that the SZH wants to carry out (I will bring it with me)
- I'm also involved in the SZH Workgroup 'Opportunities for Native Breeds' (marketing of product, tourism etc.)

Workshop: Characterization of Ark and Rescue Centres related to my field of work.

Awareness and Ark

1. Promoting awareness for agro-biodiversity and rare breeds is one of the goals of the SZH (the Dutch Rare Breed Foundation). But raising this awareness is only possible if people know the rare breeds. A City Farm is one of the few places where children and their parents can meet our native breeds. The importance of education at City Farms is recognized by the SZH. Last year the SZH started together with The Dutch City Farm organizations a project 'Our Heritage at City Farms'. For this project I prepared information to be used by teachers and created educational material for schools that visit the City Farms. So children are able to discover the differences between the breeds, and in the end, the special qualities of the traditional breeds.
2. The SZH is consulting with one of the Nature Organizations about a Nature Park that shows native breeds to the public. The general idea is to set up one central park with a few traditional breeds and several regional parks with other local breeds. As a member of the SZH Work Group Publicity etc. I am involved in making a proposal for this project, called 'Flevoweide'. In the project we're exploring several possibilities to increase the awareness for agro-biodiversity and the special socio economic, scientific and environmental role of traditional breeds by finding places where the public can see and meet our traditional breeds.

The concept is: involving the public in the traditional breeds for instance: demonstrating products (and the possibility to take part in the process of making butter or cheese), showing traditional farming method, organizing walks and cycle routes to discover rare breeds, permanent exhibitions concerning native breeds, our living cultural heritage, and children can do a search for native breeds. These parks have also an educational goal. Schools can visit the park and children can discover the characteristics of the different breeds, their history and their products and services.

Although it is not likely that this Nature Organization wants to be an Ark and Rescue Centre that will offer emergency places for genetically important livestock (in Holland some

agriculture farms used to do so), we are also exploring the opportunity to keep core breeding groups in those parks. The Park can also offer the public a place for the public to see the animal genetic resources of Europe.

One of the characteristics of an Ark and Rescue Centre can be involving the public in traditional breeds to increase the awareness for agro-biodiversity and the importance of native breeds. Raising this awareness is only possible if people meet and know the native breeds. Involvement can increase if the native breeds become 'popular characters'. For instance: we have created a picture-book 'Lapje', a Dutch Belted calf, and children recognize so called 'Lapjes cows'. The cow from their picture book (I will bring it with me to Kutna Hora). And of course 'Lapje' will meet all kind of breeds. A fluffy sheep with a name will also fit the bill. At least people should be able to recognize a logo of rare breeds. If people will recognize and 'love' native breeds, they want to keep them. So awareness for native breeds is also a kind of Ark.

Ark and net

A part of the project 'Our Heritage at City Farms' was: organizing workshops for owners and cooperators of City Farms and Breeders Centres, who invite schools and inform children about rare breeds. One of the issues was 'if you want to show the traditional breeds to the public, where do you get good examples of them.' I will be involved in making an on line database (a net) of City Farms, hobby-breeders and breeders organizations. The SZH can also be a kind of 'broker' who stimulates contacts between breeders and Education Centres and City Farms that want to show rare breeds to the public.

The ElbarNet can be part of this network, so it will be possible to find new owners for rare breeds that are suddenly without an owner.

I am also involved in the project 'knowledge base for hobby-breeders, teachers and students of agricultural schools'. The digital knowledge base will provide information about rare breeds from (old) books, magazines and clippings. It is possible to add the ElbarNet information work to the database.

A database of breeders, breeders organizations and Education Centres that are looking for rare breeds is also a kind of Ark.

According to the SZH The Netherlands need two A and R Centres.

Elbarn Workshop marketing of products and services related to my field of work

Marketing of products

I'm also participating in the SZH work group 'Opportunities for Native breeds'.

That work group is exploring the marketing potentials of rare breeds.

1. The SZH stimulates people to develop local products of rare breeds. The SZH and the Centre for Genetic Resources (CGN) have organized some work shops to promote local products. The SZH co-operates also closely with the Slow Food Organization. I was involved in the organization of an event 'forgotten meat', for instance the meat of Chaams Hoen (Fowl) and Drenthe Heath Sheep, now Slow Food products.

2. Tourism is another 'product'. We organize cycle tours 'discovering living heritage/rare breeds' and stimulate Breeding Centres to do the same thing. The Dutch Nature Organizations have already discovered the touristic values of rare breeds (herds). We want to stimulate others to do the same (for instance B&B farms that keep rare breeds).

This Work Group has started last year and we are not yet able to realize most projects. But the SZH is planning to make a start in 2008. I expect to be involved in some of the projects.

Other project are:

- Promoting traditional farming methods
- Promoting rare breeds on farms (fitness and other qualities of rare breeds)
- Grazing for environmental management
- Rare breeds: Heritage and Landscape (how and why and which native breeds were used in the Dutch regions)

I realize that this report is not complete. It is difficult to relate my fields of work to the characterization of A and R Centres because it is not yet known what the characterizations exactly will be.

But I hope you get an impression of my fields of work.