



SAVE foundation



European Agrobiodiversity Day

29th September 2009

Arca-Net (www.arca-net.info)

The theme of this year's European Agrobiodiversity Day is Arca-Net – the online guide to institutions, open to the public, which have a show of local and traditional agrobiodiversity. Under the banner of this theme the SAVE Foundation wishes to promote all the city farms, working farms, parks, nature reserves and so on which work so hard to promote agrobiodiversity by showing it to the public.

Public awareness is important!

There is still very little awareness of the enormous diversity of breeds and varieties found in European agriculture – public awareness of our subject helps on all levels: it helps producers of traditional produce find a market for their products or, it reminds our politicians about their international obligation to create strategies to protect the national agrobiodiversity.

It would seem that “people will only protect what they know well” - this knowledge has triggered the development of Arca-Net. Rare and endangered livestock breeds and old cultivated plants are disappearing from agricultural production units but they continue to live on numerous Ark-farms, livestock parks, open-air museums and other institutions. Arca-Net makes these institutions known and initiates visits.

Arca-Net offers correct but understandable background information as a complement to the information already available through international databases such as EFABIS.

Arca-Net is for everybody!

Arca-Net acts as a “tourist guide” for anyone interested in seeing interesting animals and plants but, not only that – many interesting excursions for families are on offer as well as farm holidays and educational outings for schools or a chance to see how traditional products are made. All Arca-Net institutions are open to the public.

The accessibility of the internet allows for many target groups to be addressed: people interested in environmental issues and nature protection, friends of rural life. Access to and listing in Arca-Net is free. Arca-Net can be used to promote your work even if you don't have your own website.

Arca-Net will be linked broadly, e.g. to tourism organisations, regional associations, nature protection circles and many others more. If you wish to link to Arca-Net, please contact SAVE at office@save-foundation.net

Arca-Net is international!

Arca-Net is a database-supported Internet presence with comprehensive search functions and numerous extension options. Arca-Net is available in English, French, German and Italian. It contains today (summer 2009) some 330 institutions in 35 European countries from Iceland to Malta North-South and from the Azores to Ukraine West-East. A Google map (with zoom) of all the locations see under column "Ark-Network" on URL: www.elbarn.net

Arca-Net will have country-specific sections set up in close cooperation with national organisations. Country representatives linked to Arca-Net can update information at any time via an online terminal. The editing process is of course password-protected and not openly accessible. Arca-Net will thus be a Europe-wide network of institutions in the conservation sector, the inclusion is free of costs for stakeholders.

Arca-Net is growing!

In the beginning mainly institutions with livestock breeds were recorded, priorities have now shifted towards the extension of the plant sector, including variety gardens, arboreta and other institutions in the area of cultivated plants => www.arca-net.info

Products on sale such as seedlings, young plants or sausage products, wool and furs can also be included in the descriptions and will increase the motivation to visit an Arca-Net institution.

Help Arca-Net to grow – tell us about institutions in your country!

=> Establishments must have (OBLIGATORY conditions):

- Collection or permanent exhibition of rare livestock breeds or varieties of cultivated plant open to the public (also viewing by arrangement only).
- Pedigree breeding with participation in a breeding programme. Animals must be kept in such a way that the welfare of the animal is respected.

=> and also should have (DESIRABLE conditions):

- Establishment recognised by the national organisation (e.g. GEH's Arche-Höfe, RBST's Approved Farm Parks) or a city-farm, open air museum, eco-museum, nature park centre (with membership of relevant professional association).
- The differing characteristics of the breeds and varieties should be documented (using information boards, labels or numbered to use in reference with a brochure).
- It is possible to also include interesting processing points which use traditional means to manufacture and market products from traditional breeds and varieties.

Plants:

- It must be a collection of, at least, regional importance
- Or an important cross-section of one species (e.g. Limonaio, Olivaio)

Animals:

- Breeding groups from at least three species from two size categories (see below)
- Or an important breeding station/stud of only one breed if this establishment has a significant part of the breed.
- Or an important cross-section of one species, e.g. Donkey farm with national breeds.

Processing point:

- Processing point open to the public (e.g. wool workshop, mill) which uses traditional and complete production methods and also declares the products accordingly.

Contact SAVE at office@save-foundation.net

Please add here an example of an establishment from your own country that is found in Arca-Net (have a look at www.arca-net.info!)

SAVE foundation



In many countries in Europe, there are organisations supporting and promoting the conservation of Agro-Biodiversity. The SAVE Foundation, founded in 1993, acts as a European umbrella organisation for these organisations. It promotes and coordinates activities to conserve endangered breeds of domestic animals and cultivated plant varieties. The SAVE Foundation does not work with a romantic ideal of how it once was, rather the SAVE Foundation undertakes practical work to ensure a sustainable future for the diverse genetic material stored within the traditional breeds and species of Europe. The SAVE Foundation supports, plans and realises on-farm conservation projects alongside collecting and disseminating information about the traditional and endangered European Agro-Biodiversity. This work is undertaken in conjunction with the SAVE Partner Organisations. The European Monitoring Institute for Rare Breeds and Seeds is the scientific research unit of the SAVE Foundation.

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