

The Role of Traditional and Regional Food Products in Rural Development in Poland¹

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Abstract

The paper is an attempt to describe the role of Quality Policy and private sector to create and develop traditional Polish products. The author analyzed the meaning of PDO, PGI and TSG in Poland and showed that the initiative is an efficient method of involving local communities in the process of co-deciding the direction and implementation of a conception for the development of their rural areas. Perhaps initiative is an important way to the revitalization and transformation of the Polish village. The article attempts to present the current state and development possibilities of the traditional and regional food market in Poland. It describes legal regulations allowing registration and protection of these kinds of products in Poland and the European Union, it also defines the terms of PDO, PGI and TSG. It indicates past and future potential dangers resulting from the initial phase of creation of niche food market in Poland.

Keywords: PDO, PGI, traditional and regional food products, rural development.

Introduction

Measures developed within Common Agricultural Policy and within EU food safety policy have, since the early 90s, contributed to the reorientation of the hitherto perception of the role and directions of rural development and food production, especially as to the scale of this production and product quality delivered to the consumer through the whole food chain 'from farm to fork'. The problems resulting from earlier actions taken between 1960s-1980s within the Community contributed inter alia to: overproduction of food (especially industrial), instead of orientation towards the self-sufficiency goal, increasingly higher costs of subsidies, and the numerous food scares due to marketing products infected with diseases (foot and mouth disease, BSE, dioxins, etc).

Moreover, disadvantageous structural and demographic changes in rural areas, resulting e.g. from depopulation, migrations from villages, small density and geographic dispersion revealed environmental, social and economic problems of rural areas, which are currently inhabited by more than 56% of EU population. Furthermore, critical opinions on the hitherto actions of the EU institutions allowed for providing more active help to those areas – which are a vast reservoir of human, capital and natural resources, not always used effectively and to the fullest possible extent. Reforms introduced in these areas have been reinforced by the specific nature and level (or lack) of profitability of agricultural production, declining living conditions of rural population versus urban population, as well as agrarian situation. Rural areas, while being food providers to urban areas, featured worse technical and technological infrastructure of, e.g., services, worse level of education of inhabitants, poorer job conditions, and worse living standards. Due to these reasons changes were instituted aiming at, e.g., improving, or rather making up for, or eliminating, huge disparities between employment and living conditions of rural and urban populations. Undertaken initiatives are of a horizontal and multi-dimensional character; they take account of not only economic domain of life, but also the social, cultural and environmental ones.

It is worth here to recollect solutions concerning the improvement of conditions and ways of agricultural producers' competition in the internal market of the EU and internationally, and related to high-quality traditional and regional products. EU-27 is one of the largest areas of food production and consumption in the world. Its market accounts for over 500 mln consumers living mainly in highly developed countries. This situation creates variable needs of the consumers, and drives the producers to change and satisfy the client, especially in the terms of food production in rural areas (which account for approx. 90% of the EU territory).

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Thanks to quality policy, in the early 90s solutions were suggested in the EU, which, through relevant instruments, provide for an alternative and counterbalance for industrial highly processed products. EU quality policy focuses on the creation of optimum conditions for traditional and regional products, and indirectly for their producers, too. It provides for a competitive counterbalance in the world market, and guarantees safety of consumption to the consumers, in accordance with relevant quality standards and protection system, certification and control of products bearing geographical indications and those produced according to a traditional recipe.

Using France's² several-decades experience in the field of the oldest official indications which guarantee quality of food, a system of protection has been worked out, involving certification control and promotion of products manufactured within a given area (a sort of culinary guarantees). Moreover, indications were introduced to certify that a given product conforms to its specification (as e.g. in the case of wines and alcoholic beverages). Furthermore, to protect culinary heritage, the Community has taken actions providing for protection and promotion of genuine specialties bearing PGI, PDO and TSG marks, and which could never, due to objective assumptions resulting from the process of their production, compete with mass industrial offer. An idea came into being which, rather than promoting the manufacturing of huge numbers of homogenous and conventional foods, promotes specific products which are exceptional due to unique features of a given region and almost forgotten methods of production, traditional recipes. Moreover, the system in question provides for legal protection of these unique products against unfair competition (falsification, or counterfeit products) sold at relatively lower prices than originals and in this way generating income from unfair practices. On the one hand, the instituted system gives legal protection to high quality, exceptional agri-food products originating from and specific to a given region, distinguished for their method of production (usually long, traditional manual production), and on the other hand it enables the farmers (e.g. small, family farms) to compete in a saturated food market, not only in Europe. Moreover, the system reinforces cooperation among the producers of the same food-product within the region, contributing to improvement of their economic strength, as well as provides for an opportunity for income diversification while engaging in non-agricultural activities. At the same time the consumers have

better access to products having unique sensorial (organoleptic) characteristics (via certification and special labels), the demand for which has been growing steadily year after year.

Research problem and relevance

Rural areas of the European Union are inhabited by over 56% of the total population and account for 90% of the EU territory. In Poland rural areas are inhabited by 38.6% of the total population. Polish farms are geographically scattered, they feature disadvantageous agrarian structure as well as poor economic strength, especially as far as small farms are concerned. Moreover, overt and covert unemployment, insufficient availability of modern farm machinery and devices as well as low level of farmers' education, together with a slow pace of farm modernization, decrease the possibility of broader development of non-agricultural activities as an alternative source of income for surplus population of rural areas (Duczkowska-Malysz, 2007). In addition, a traditional Polish rural family is a multi-generation social unit, and farm households include 5 or more persons, accounting for 24.5% of all rural households. Villages in Poland are quite scattered in terms of geography, and feature poor infrastructure and poor availability of services and social gathering places, e.g. cultural centres or educational establishments. However, a demographic asset of rural areas is undoubtedly the average age of a rural dweller – approx. 35. Apart from a number of negative characteristics of this area there are also numerous advantages that should be employed by the local population for accelerating the dynamics of rural areas development. An alternative includes a development of a market for traditional and regional products, not only those with PDO, PGI and TSG marks, but also other products listed in the MARD List of Traditional Products. The issue of traditional and regional foodstuffs is a new domain, resulting from Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004. Due to this fact it is worth to get acquainted with hitherto difficulties and experience of Poland in the area of developing the market for these high-quality products and their influence on more dynamic and sustainable development of rural areas.

Research subject

EU-27 is one of the biggest areas of foodstuffs production and consumption worldwide. Its market includes over 500 mln. consumers living in highly developed and developing countries. This results in constantly changing needs, both in terms of quality and quantity, and as regards both consumers and pro-

² AOC (the oldest French Mark: Appellation Origine Contrôlée) has been in use since 1935 r. See: Winawer Z. (2005): Francuskie oznaczenia produktów żywnościowych a system europejski. [w:] O produktach tradycyjnych i regionalnych. Możliwości a polskie realia. Fundacja Fundusz Współpracy. Warszawa, s.159

ducers. Rural areas and safety and quality of foodstuffs offered on the market play a major role in the satisfaction of these needs. These areas are a huge reservoir of human resources, capital and natural resources. Their potential is, however, not used to the fullest extent. Reforms of the rural areas were forced by the special character and the level (or lack) of profitability of agricultural production, declining living conditions of rural inhabitants versus urban inhabitants, and deteriorating agrarian situation. Rural areas, which in Poland also serve as a base of food supplies for urban areas, featured worse technical and technological infrastructure of e.g. services, lower level of education of inhabitants, poorer working and living conditions. For these reasons changes introduced within the framework of Common Agricultural Policy were also targeted at quality and food safety policy, so that conditions be created for a better use of these resources and for their competitiveness in the world market – by means of products having more and more added value. These include PDO, PGI and TSG foodstuffs.

Research aim

The aim of the study is to present the role and importance of traditional and regional foodstuffs in the concept of rural development in Poland – the EU Member State. The scope of the analysis includes hitherto experience of Poland in this area against the background of the leading Member States in terms of registration of high quality traditional and regional products in the EU. Moreover, one of the ways of farm income diversification was shown, along with the example of interaction between the sector of agriculture and that of business, local communities and public authorities, taking account of activities undertaken in the rural areas. Attention was also paid to the integrated approach of the EC quality policy in terms of educating communities, reviving rural communities, care for the preservation of local cultural heritage of the rural areas, development of a catalogue of ancient skills and interests of rural inhabitants, and targeting actions at tourism development, etc.

Research objectives

At the first stage of the study a review was done of the reference literature concerning the status and role of food quality policy and the system of traditional and regional foodstuffs protection in the EU. Essential keywords were defined based on the legis-

lative provisions in force. At the next stage a reference was made to the current situation and the importance of the above-mentioned products for the development of rural areas in Poland, taking account of economic aspects and advantages to be enjoyed by EU Member States which are leaders in the registration of their products as PDO, PGI and TSG in the European Union.

Research methods

Essential reference literature was used in the scope of the research subject, including: Rural Development Programme for 2007-2013, European Commission publications, FAPA publications, MARD reports, bulletins and magazines focused on PDO, PGI and TSG issues and information available on the internet. The author of the analysis has used descriptive and comparative method of research – with factographic material groupings.

Theoretical framework of the research – the system for protecting regional and traditional food products

The European system of registration and protection of high-quality traditional and regional food products evolved gradually. It was launched in 1992; however, first legal regulations to this end had not entered into force until July 14, 1994. Let me once again underline that food quality policy takes account of actions aiming at providing the consumer with original, repeatable and safe agri-food products, and guarantees conditions for producers to responsibly operate in the market by making them liable for the quality of the goods offered for sale. While elaborating on the EU system of protection of designations of agri-food products one must elaborate on two legislative acts; the first one is Council Regulation (EC) 510/2006 of 20 March 2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin of agricultural and food product, and the second one is Council Regulation (EC) 509/2006 of 20 March 2006 on agricultural products and foodstuffs as traditional specialties guaranteed³. Pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) 510/2006 we discuss topics concerning Protected Designation of Origin and Protected Geographical Indication, which relate to the regional products, while pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) 509/2006 we are acquainted with the special requirements concerning Traditional Specialty Guaranteed as a traditional product. Under the name of Protected

³ Earlier: Council Regulation 2081/92/EEC and Council Regulation 2082/92/EEC.

Designation of Origin⁴⁵ – PDO, we can have an agricultural or food product, with a designated name of a region or a specific place, or, exceptionally, the name of a state, which is used to describe a product originating from this region, specific place or state. It is important that the quality or characteristics of a given product are mainly or exclusively related to that specific geographical setting including certain genuine natural and human conditions. **The manufacturing, processing and preparation of the product should take place in the so-called geographical area.**

Another label which can be given to a product is Protected Geographical Indication (PGI). Products labelled with this mark include foodstuffs and agricultural products, the name of which indicates the name of a region, a specific place or, exceptionally, a state, in which a given product is manufactured. Such a product should feature exceptional, particular and specific quality, recipe and fame. Among others, it can have other qualities relating to its geographical origin, especially those resulting from natural conditions such as climate, landscape, fauna and flora or the manner and tradition of manufacturing. ‘Geographical setting’ is understood as natural or human setting, including climate, water, soil quality or local know-how. The most important difference between the above mentioned two marks is vested in the degree of relationship of a given product with the place of origin⁶. Protected designations of origin are applied to products which are very closely related to a given geographical area, and the production of ingredients as well as the whole processing until the end product must take place in the defined area. The third mark to be granted by the EU to a product is Traditional Specialty Guaranteed – TSG⁷. This mark is given to an agricultural product or food article which has a feature or a set of features distinguishing it from other products of the same category. The name of a product must express its specific character, resulting from a traditional recipe (ingredients), the manner of production or processing relating to and reflecting tra-

ditional methods. Thus, products may be produced in the whole country (in Poland as well) based on old, historical recipes. By saying that a given name has a ‘special character’ we mean features or set of features which clearly distinguish the product from other similar products of the same category. However, the presentation of a product is not treated as a distinguishing feature. Special (traditional) character must not be limited to quality or ingredients or the manner of production established in the EU law, national legislation or the norms set up by standardization bodies⁸.



Fig. 1. Types of labels for regional and traditional EU products

Source: MARD (20.09.2009)

Regional and traditional products in Poland

The system for protecting high-quality traditional and regional food products is regulated by the EU law. Moreover, it prevails over various quality systems and promotion of exceptional products nationally. For example, Poland, following accession to the EU, launched a scheme called ‘Quality Tradition’, while France has for a long time had its Label Rouge, Certification de Conformite, and Germany has ‘Original Thuringer Qualitat’ label, etc. The accession of Poland to the EU in 2004 forced Polish MARD to officially publish a List of Traditional Products (LPT), following Italian example. The publication of LPT is aimed⁹ at, among others: identifying products forgotten but characteristic of a given region of Poland, which are original because of their recipes, traditional method of production, processing or storage. Another aim was to allow producers for proper preparation and documentation of an application for registering a given agricultural product, food article or alcoholic beverage at the EU level as PDO, PGI or TSG. In addition, possibilities were created for furt-

⁴ See: Rozporządzeniem Rady (WE) nr 510/2006 z dnia 20 marca 2006 r. w sprawie ochrony oznaczeń geograficznych i nazw pochodzenia produktów rolnych i środków spożywczych oraz Rozporządzenie Rady (WE) nr 509/2006 z dnia 20 marca 2006 r. w sprawie produktów rolnych i środków spożywczych będących gwarantowanymi tradycyjnymi specjalnościami. One has to mind earlier applicable regulations: Rozporządzenie Rady (EWG) nr 2081/92 z dnia 14 lipca 1992 r. w sprawie ochrony oznaczeń geograficznych i nazw pochodzenia produktów rolnych i środków spożywczych (as amended, repealed by Rozporządzeniem Rady (WE) nr 510/2006), Rozporządzenie Rady (EWG) nr 2082/92 z dnia 14 lipca 1992 r. w sprawie świadectw o szczególnym charakterze dla produktów rolnych i artykułów spożywczych (as amended, repealed by Rozporządzeniem Rady (WE) nr 509/2006), Rozporządzenie Komisji (EWG) nr 1848/93 z dnia 9 lipca 1993 r. ustanawiające szczegółowe przepisy wykonawcze do rozporządzenia Rady (EWG) nr 2082/92

⁵ www.umwd.pl/portal (20.04.2007r.)

⁶ Chronione Nazwy Pochodzenia, Chronione Oznaczenie Geograficzne, Nazwy Specyficznego Charakteru oraz Lista Produktów Tradycyjnych. Wyd. FAPA, Warszawa, 2005 s.7-10

⁷ Earlier: Certificate of Specific Character

⁸ www.minrol.gov.pl

her application for certain veterinary or sanitary derogations while producing the above mentioned products, as well as influencing social and economic condition of rural development, etc.

On the one hand, The List of Traditional Products provides an opportunity (but not requirement) to participate in registration procedure for products which shall apply for EU labeling, and on the other hand, is a distinguishable feature of all the products on the Polish market, which shall not apply for further qualification and are unique. For a product to be listed a dossier has to be presented certifying the history of at least 25 years of existence of the product, its production or origin. Currently there are 681 products listed, and MARD has been waiting for several dozens new products to be listed. Products on the list are classified into 10 categories: cheeses and other dairy products, fresh meat and meat products; fishery products, including fish; nuts, seeds, cereals, ve-

getables and fruit (processed or not); bakery and confectionery products; oils and fats; honeys; ready meals and dishes; beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) and other products. 'Other products' category includes products not categorized in the former categories but listed in Annex 1 to the Treaty Establishing European Community, in Annexes to Council Regulations No. 2081/92 and 2082/92 (as amended, repealed by Council Regulations (EC) No. 509/2006 and 510/2006).

A product listed in LPT¹⁰ is defined as 'a traditional food product, i.e. agricultural product or food article or alcoholic beverage, the quality or exceptional features and characteristics of which result from the use of traditional production methods, i.e. methods in use for at least 25 years, and moreover, products which contribute to the identity of a given region.

Table 1

Number of products listed in LPT in Poland (by categories and provinces)

Item/province	dolnoslaskie	kujawsko - pomorskie	lubelskie	lubuskie	lodzkie	malopolskie	mazowieckie	opolskie	podkarpackie	podlaskie	pomorskie	slaskie	swietokrzyskie	warminsko - mazurskie	wielkopolskie	zachodniopomorskie	Total
Total	19	21	55	8	46	33	19	44	78	42	100	104	23	18	63	8	681

Source: own analysis based on www.minrol.gov.pl (29.09.2009).

Thus, while discussing traditional products we mean only those products registered in the EU as TSG, and regional products registered as PDO and PGI, pursuant to the EU regulations, or those applying for registration in the EU system (they are subject to temporary national protection). Also, products listed in LPT may be colloquially referred to as traditional or regional products. It is worth to mention here that a product listed in LPT does not need to apply for registration in the European Commission. Experience of other countries enjoying their own food quality and protection systems, e.g. France, Italy, Spain,

⁹ Jasinski, J. (2005). Wyznaczanie produktow regionalnych na rynku i wynikajace z tego korzyści. [w:] Gasiorowski M. (ed.). O produktach tradycyjnych i regionalnych. Możliwości a polskie realia. Fundacja Fundusz Współpracy. Warszawa, 200.

¹⁰ Act on the registration and protection of names and designations of agricultural products and food articles and on traditional products (Journal of Laws of 2005, No. 10, item 68) ...produkty żywnościowe to produkty rolne i środki spożywcze oraz napoje spirytusowe, których jakość lub wyjątkowe cechy i właściwości wynikają ze stosowania tradycyjnych metod produkcji, za które uważa się metody wykorzystywane, od co najmniej 25 lat oraz stanowiące element dziedzictwa kulturowego regionu, w którym są wytwarzane oraz będące elementem tożsamości społeczności lokalnej, zwane dalej „produktami tradycyjnymi”, mogą być wpisane na listę produktów tradycyjnych.” <http://www.minrol.gov.pl>

shows that several thousands or hundreds of food products characteristic of a given region and produced according to traditional recipes and methods may be registered within such systems, while only a few or a dozen, or exceptionally a few dozens of these are protected by the EU as PDO, PGI or TSG.

The case of Poland is similar. Notwithstanding the fact that the first product was registered by the EC in 2007 (Poland has registered 12 products at the present), subsequent products apply for registration while they are not listed in LPT, e.g. kabanosy (luncheon sausages), jalowcowa (juniper scented dried sausage), myśliwska (hunter's dried sausage) (Table 2).

Products registered and applying for registration as PGI, PDO, TSG

Mark	Registered	Pending registration
PDO	Bryndza Podhalanska cheese, Oscypek cheese	Zamorski carp, Wrzawska beans, Piekny Jas z Doliny Dunajca beans, Sejnenszczyzna honey, Lozdzia honey, Drahimski honey, Podkarpacki honey-dew honey, Redykolka cheese, Szydłowska plum, nadwisłanka sour cherry
PGI	Bory Dolnoslaskie heather honey, Wielkopolski fried cheese, Andruty kaliskie wafers, St. Martin's crescent roll	Pradnicki bread, Korczyńska beans, Grojeckie apples, Kolacz slaski pie, Lackie apples, liseicka sausage, kurpiowski honey, Obwarzanek Krakowski (Cracow bagel), Suska Sechłonska dried and cured plum, kaszubska strawberry
TSG	Meads: Poltorak, Dwojniak, Trojniak, Czworzniak, Camelina oil, Pierekaczewnik	Luncheon sausages (Kabanosy), jalowcowa (juniper scented dried sausage), myśliwska (hunter's dried sausage), Pierekaczewnik Tartars' pie

Source: own studies.

Economic importance of quality traditional and regional products in selected EU member states – research results

While analyzing basic reference literature in the scope of economic benefits to be enjoyed by PGI, PDO and TSG products in the EU one can draw a conclusion that regional products account for approx. 10% of agri-food production in Europe. Due to professional marketing and advertising this share can increase to 15%¹¹ within the next few years. Leaders in this respect include producers from Italy, France, Spain, Greece and Portugal. At the end of September 2009 a total of 848 products were registered, including 462 as PDOs, 386 as PGIs and 22 as TSGs. Accession of ten new member states to the European Community, including Poland, in 2004, opened for them a way to apply for registration and protection of original, natural food within quality policy. It turns out that not only Poland, but also the Czech Republic is extremely active as far as such actions are concerned. Products may be registered in 13 categories, but the most frequent categories include: fruit, vegetables and cereals (204), cheeses (179) including curd cheeses, ripened cheeses, blue cheeses or cheese spreads, also meat products, fresh meat and giblets (98 and 113), oils and fats/olive oil (107); table oils; breads, pasta, cakes and beer.

Advantages enjoyed by producers – entrepreneurs but also farms – of traditional and regional products covered with protection of the EU legislation imply that choosing this type of production might prove quite profitable in the future, also to Polish producers, although one should not forget other stakeholders within the industry, namely wholesalers, re-

tailers, hotels, restaurants, catering service providers and other entities related to e.g. HoReCa.

To give an example – the turnover value of Italian PDO/PGI products in 2002 reached almost EUR 7,773 bln accounting for approx. 7% of the total value of agricultural production in Italy¹². The biggest share of this value (accounting for a total of approx. 65%), is taken by the following products: Prosciutto di Parma, Prosciutto di San Daniele, Grana padano and Parmigiano Reggiano. Assuming that the turnover value of PDO and PGI regional products is 100%, then cheeses account for 58.1%, and meat products account for 39.7%. As for olive oil, fruit and vegetables and other products, none of them separately exceed 1%. The majority of Italian production of regional products labeled with PDO and PGI is scattered in terms of geographical location. This is chiefly a small scale production pursued by small local firms or farms, e.g. tourist farms. Unfortunately small scale production of some articles is a certain significant difficulty as regards broader export as well as the existing sales structure.

In 2003 the total turnover value of PDO and PGI labeled products in France was estimated at EUR 3.15 bln. The production accounted for, directly, from 53 to 65 th. jobs. The production of the above mentioned products kept over 21000 producers busy, along with 765 processing plants and more than 25000 distributors, wholesalers, etc. France is world renowned producer of various cheeses (Comte, Roquefort, Cantal and Reblochon) or wines¹³.

In Spain, like in other countries, quality regional products are produced in various areas of the country and on various scale. Despite this, the turno-

¹¹ Goszczynski, D. (2006). Uwarunkowania rozwoju rynkow produktow tradycyjnych i regionalnych. Handel wewnetrzny. Marketing. Rynek. Przedsiębiorstwo. Nr 6 s. 6

¹² Project DOLPHINS 2001, Contract QLK5-2000-00593, OLP sector in Italy....; Nomisma (2000), VIII Rapporto Nomisma sull'agricoltura italiana, Bologna, November 2001

¹³ Project DOLPHINS 2001, Contract QLK5-2000-00593, OLP sector in France. INRA, Le Mans, France

ver value of PDO and PGI labeled products amounted to EUR 542.6 bln in 2002 and was the biggest within the sector of processed meat products (i.e. ham, other meat products and preparations) and cheeses. As for Portuguese market for regional quality products, the last decade has brought a dynamic increase in the value of the total turnover, which in 2003 amounted to EUR 70.09 bln¹⁴. Fruit sector was the biggest one in terms of the turnover of quality regional products (EUR 38 mln.), followed by cheese sector (EUR 12.39 mln.), beef, olive oil, meet products and mutton (interchangeably), honey and goat meat. The lion's share of these products is consumed within the state, most of regional food (beef, goat meat, processed meat) are not exported outside the region of production. However, as much as 86% fruit produced in 2003 was exported, which might justify an opinion that this very sector relies heavily on international trade.

As underlined by Vinaver et al.¹⁵, referring to the calculations of Nomisma Institute '... disparities in the sales value of particular products are enormous. As an example, the annual amount generated by the sales of as much as 50% of registered products is lower than EUR 5 mln; five biggest producers of cold meats and cheeses sell approx. 90% of all the products of the sector.' What is important, the sales value of the products concerned grows approx. by 5-8% year by year. In Great Britain approx. 65% of traditional and regional food products were sold on local markets and 33% on national market, while the remaining 2% were exported. The value of these products was estimated at GBP 3.75 mln. and accounted for nearly 6% of the value of British turnover of food articles¹⁶.

Traditional and regional products in Poland – market development possibilities

In Poland, like in other new Member States of the EU, the traditional and regional food market is only being established. In the European Union the products in question are an important element of production diversification, not only in the case of farmers. They are an important source of income for local populations, they influence economic development of rural areas, they help preserve and create new jobs (job

activation) in production, processing as well as distribution of the products. They prevent depopulation of rural areas, and thanks to dissemination of knowledge of the goods concerned they are an attractive way of (rural) tourism promotion in the region concerned and they help establish powerful brands which are recognizable worldwide.

In Poland the production of the products concerned is perceived as an opportunity to stimulate rural areas, although Polish agriculture is still notorious for its very low productivity, fragmentation of farms, ineffective use of manpower, relatively low level of farmers' education and equipment in farm devices and machinery, which is usually outdated and its value has long ago depreciated. Although the conditions in which we must modernize and restructure our agricultural sector are quite specific, positive trends, taking account of multifunctional and sustainable development, are already observable. Considering a low level of farm specialization, underinvestment, fragmentation and poor competitiveness of production, an opportunity is sought in diversification of farm activities toward income diversification, especially non-agricultural income, e.g. tourism, packaging, small scale processing, trade, advisory services, alternative services, handicraft, etc. As an alternative one should bring niche activities into attention, such as organic production or integrated production, as well as the production of quality traditional and/or regional food. There is a chance for diversified activity in rural areas (especially peripheral areas, or LFAs) to strengthen economically the farms and enable local population to become more active in the fields of identifying themselves with rural culture and tradition of their home region. It is hoped that agricultural production shall increase its added value in the future. The aim is that a product undergo (as much as possible) at least a simple processing into a half-processed good or final good, e.g. jams, cheeses, butter, bread, processed goods, and ready-made dishes, etc. and not be sold, like now, as a raw material – which is the reason for its relatively lower real price. An equally important aspect of sustainable rural development in Poland is, apart from economic functions and good conditions for social development, the role of the rural areas in the preservation and revitalization of landscape values and natural resources, i.e. preservation of good environmental condition of waters and soils, diversity of habitats and biodiversity of fauna and flora, as well as cultural heritage of rural areas and revitalization of social bonds.

We must remember that an analysis of the market of traditional/regional products in its current shape is quite constrained. On the one hand, producers, and most of all, individual producers, are not willing

¹⁴ Project DOLPHINS 2002, Contract QLK5-2000-00593, OLP sector in Portugal. Antonio Fragata, Maria Manuela Leitao. INIA-EAN_DE-EESA. Oeiras, Portugal

¹⁵ Vinaver, K., Jasinski, J. (2004). Rynek produktow regionalnych w wybranych krajach Unii Europejskiej. [w:] Rzeczpospolita produktow regionalnych Wyd. NOS.FFW, „AGRO SMAK”, MCBnSiR, SSFP, Paryz, s.36

¹⁶ Rzytki, M. (2005). Sprzedac produkt tradycyjny. [w:] Gasiorski M. (red.). O produktach tradycyjnych i regionalnych. Mozliwosci a polskie realia. Fundacja Fundusz Wspolpracy. Warszawa, s. 335.

to share economic information (e.g. concerning annual production volume, average price of product sold, cost of production, number of staff employed in production, or types of marketing strategies used (if any), etc.) in the scope of problems concerning products that are usually produced at home, occasionally, during the season. On the other hand, consumers interpret the notion 'traditional' or 'regional' quite individually, they might not know the exact definition, and they might not be able to objectively tell the difference between an original product and a counterfeit. Thus, these terms are usually identified intuitively with such expressions as: 'produced according to a traditional recipe', 'regional', 'grandma's or grandpa's', 'home made', 'traditional', 'rural', 'old Polish', etc. Products labeled with such expressions are positively associated by consumers. Thanks to this emotional assessment they immediately gain a comparative advantage in terms of marketing. This situation, i.e. lack of knowledge about difference between PGI, PDO, TSG products and 'traditional', etc. labeled products, must be changed and efforts must be made to educate consumers towards informed choice.

This problem is addressed by means of national and local actions, e.g. advertisement campaigns,

TV commercials, radio broadcasts aiming at dissemination of knowledge about the advantages and on the very existence of original traditional and regional food in Poland. Moreover, Polish consumers have hitherto been acquainted with food quality marks during campaign 'Originality Protected'. Hundreds of authentic foods are already identifiable in Poland thanks to a contest 'Our Culinary Heritage' held since 2000. Various schemes are implemented by MARD, Agricultural Market Agency, ARMA, Extension Centers, local animators, foundations, associations, Association of Provinces, Polish Chamber of Regional and Local Products, etc. Promotion of products has become a permanent event organized as a tourist attraction such as a day of ... (certain product), culinary route, fair, various folklore events. Events are organized at the level of provinces, poviats, gminas and in smaller localities, which show abundance and bounty of cultural heritage, including culinary heritage of local communities. These events are held in cycles or as individual events and are related not only with food, but also with e.g. handicraft, which also gives potential for creating bonds of a given food product with a given region, which contributes to developing a complete tourist product.

Table 3

Selected aspects of operation of traditional and regional products' market in Poland

Description	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no mandatory registration of business for agricultural raw materials (quotas) - culinary heritage - information in mass media - direct sale of goods - awareness of higher price of the goods - products and their producers are no more anonymous - product quality – unique - consumer connotations - top trends: tradition and 'back to the roots' trend - growing interest of consumers - governmental support schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of consumer information, lack of information about recipient, no knowledge of competitive position, or expansion possibilities on a given market, or market absorbance - lack of continuous supplies - lack of equal treatment of products (raw material, half-processed, highly processed product) - lack of equal treatment of firms and farms - seasonality of product dominates - non-synchronized actions, mainly individual actions - distribution channels - small scale of production - small firms have high growth potential thanks to a strategy to operate in market niches - insufficient marketing and management skills - stronger position of agent and sometimes quasi monopolistic position in terms of soft price setting - high production costs - supply and sale of products

Development opportunities	Risks for further operations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - activating joint creation of local initiatives - alternative source of fair income - for farms, micro and small firms - for local community, job market, local activities groups - integral element in the development of an attractive tourist product - possibility of applying for veterinary, sanitary or hygienic derogations from production requirements - niche market - certification, protection against counterfeit - profitability of production, trading activities - initial stage of market development - growing demand - funds/measures in the framework of PROW 2007-2013 - implementation of "Quality Tradition" system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - legal and administrative obstacles - less and less support from public administration institutions - scale of "green zone" - initial stage of developing a system for product control - lack of products in shops - lack of development strategy at governmental and local levels - lack of training and advisory system for producers on tax law, veterinary, hygienic and sanitary provisions concerning business and marketing actions - lack of support for product - time - economic factors - individual actions rather than integration - lack of knowledge on product identification

Source: own studies.

In the recent decade, especially more intensively after joining the EU, Poland has been trying to revitalize and develop the identity of 'rural homeland' – a heritage quickly forgotten by those migrating to big cities in order to seek a job or better living conditions. All currently undertaken initiatives (social and cultural, recreation and sports initiatives) serve promotion of rural areas, including dissemination and preservation of natural and historical heritage, tradition, art and culture, e.g. through Leader Axis 4 in RDP 2007-13. They shape public domain and are a strong asset in identifying original traditional products by consumers (referred to as 'bastions of tradition'). By organization of training, workshops, meetings, courses, fairs, contests, product days, local craftsmanship is promoted, local tradition is cherished (rites and customs, vernacular language) skills and handicraft are protected from being forgotten by demonstrating how to produce regional specialties. Various shows, presentations, expositions display products, the recipes of which have been forgotten, creating an opportunity to taste and purchase them. Such meetings are a reminder of a different culinary culture, of making products based on herbs collected in nearby forests, meadows and grounds, including fungi, berries, grasses, etc. Preservation of local cultural and historical heritage through reconstruction, renewal and labeling of various architectural sites, recording of local ancient buildings, equipping local mu-

seums, village clubs, initiating the marketing of products and services based on local resources – thanks to all these actions farmers, rural communities, small family businesses and other village dwellers feel needed, while they can profit from market economy at the same time.

In such an attractive way tourism may develop in the region. In addition, entrepreneurial behaviors of rural inhabitants are encouraged through the establishment or modernization of local tourist database, catering database, small business services, creation of interesting websites, preparation and publication of folders, catalogues, maps, cookbooks, albums, culinary guides (concerning e.g. cakes, curd cheeses, cold cuts, wine, meads, ancient ways of bread making, curing of meat), calendars and other publications concerning traditional and regional food.

In addition, by means of construction, reconstruction or labeling of tourist landscape structures (viewpoints, recreation sites, barbecue sites, ski-routes, water-routes, bike routes, horse-ride routes, wandering routes or educational routes), or by means of preservation, revitalization, protection or labeling of valuable local landscape and natural heritage (including Natura 2000 sites) a tourist product is created, which might be an interesting offer to everybody, including adventurers, or gourmets craving for refined tastes of local cuisine – which are available especially in rural areas.

Selected factors concerning economic operations of a producer of traditional and regional products in Poland (PEST analysis)

Factors	
political and legislative	economic and demographic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - food safety legislation - health provisions - environmental provisions - lobbying - production quotas - EU schemes - protection of employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - economic crises - tax policy - monetary policy - consumption expenses and social demands - foreign currency exchange rates - income level and structure and income distribution - demographic changes (market segmentation, e.g. aging society) - market position and market competitiveness - production effectiveness
social and cultural	other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consumer preferences - life style of particular social groups - social education - consumer awareness - integration - role of advertising, PR, marketing - social, national bonds, customs and tradition, system of values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - time - innovativeness and technology - new products and services - access to information - financial aid

Source: own studies.

It is to be remembered that a lot of Polish regions, like in the case of EU-27, feature a typically rural character. This is the rural sector with which many business entities are related. Agriculture is the sector within which over 2.7 mln farms operate due to family traditions and hereditary management traditions. These farms focus on extensive variety of production. The farms differ from one another in the degree of being active on the market (in terms of production volume). A lion's share of farms features small economic potential, which only allows for so-called subsistence production, although any surplus production may be sold on the market. At certain farms the production is withheld for various reasons (especially economic reasons), suspended temporarily or pursued only for the needs of the farm. It is these farms that may become more viable thanks to the production of traditional or regional products, assuming that the managers of these farms are willing to take a chance. The third group of farms is the farms focused on market production, featuring a high degree of specialization, the real businesses. The number of such farms is still too small. Having regard to these entities, especially to their structure and hitherto production scale, one might assume that, in the case of traditional and regional foods, they will become a reliable and equivalent trade partner for distribution networks or for the consumer.

Conclusions

Traditional or regional products registered or pending registration as PDO, PGI or TSG are regarded as a 'novelty' on the Polish market. The position of the majority of these products is well established in terms of brand, especially local brand. They are sometimes well-known within a region, e.g. Kalisz wafers, St. Martin's crescent rolls, Cracow bagel, Oscypek smoked cheese, Vistula sour cherry, heather honey from Lower Silesia Forest, etc. However, the majority of these products are not widely known in Poland – they are known only locally. Thanks to consumers' needs and attitudes the current or future market position of these goods, as e.g. luxury foods, or foods associated with prestige and quality cuisine, may undoubtedly accelerate their production dynamics.

Very often while buying foodstuffs the consumers take account of health benefits, natural environment of production, quality and organoleptic features rather than economic concerns, albeit the latter are still important. It is very important to create positive connotations with a given product and its manufacturing tradition rather than with a price. It is also important that consumers are willing to pay more for this quality product, because they are aware of the value (in their opinions) they purchase with the product concerned. A lot of consumers assess a product's quality by how much it costs. Because of this, one should

skillfully use all the tools available to properly position those foods on the market – through the synergy effect – and to get the most out of it at the same time. An old principle saying that ‘the art is not to produce, but to sell with profit’ also applies to the sector of traditional and regional products.

In Poland, like in other EU Member States, one can see the respect for and high market position of these exceptional products. The production of these products involves the whole technical infrastructure of the producers, contributes to the retention (and creation) of jobs, which require skilled and honest workers. Moreover, the production of these products is based on the use of natural resources as well as various skill-requiring production techniques. The production of traditional and regional products contributes to communities’ integration, cherishes target partnerships which result in better focused production planning, which takes account of market needs, or even anticipates them, and helps decrease the costs related to supplies and marketing.

The rules and tendencies of consumer behavior are particularly important in the construction of marketing instruments – from the development of a new product to a planned distribution strategy, setting the price and promotion. The knowledge of consumer preferences and needs is vital when making decision concerning the marketing of new products, especially in the niche market.

The EU system for protection of quality foodstuffs by means of PDO, PGI and TSG marks is an opportunity for Polish producers to distinguish their products from the flood of mass and conventional production. It is hoped that Poland shall, in the near future, also have a leading position, next to France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece or Germany, in the marketing of these products, which, due to their variety and bounty of culinary or natural traditions, are meant to promote and protect national heritage. Through adequate promotion of the diversity of traditional and regional products, and through intentional education of consumers and adequate marketing strategies, it is possible to build up product brands and in this way to show a positive image of Poland and its exceptional foodstuffs, which shall stimulate the development of rural areas, in which the products concerned are produced and processed as an interesting culinary alternative.

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Tradicinių ir regioninių maisto produktų vaidmuo Lenkijos kaimo plėtroje

Santrauka

Globalizacijos procesas, dažnai vedantis vartojimo standartizacijos link, verčia žmones vis dažniau ieškoti netradicinių produktų, kurie skiriasi nuo kitų prekių. Tai tampa paskata puoselėti vietos ir regiono tradicijas. Kulinarinis paveldas liudija mūsų nacionalinę tapatybę ir individualumą. Europos Sąjungos (ES) šalyse domėjimasis tradiciniu ir regioniniu maistu didėja, o vartotojai vertina originalius, natūralius ir kokybiškus produktus. Regioniniai ir tradiciniai produktai registruojami nacionalinėse sistemose, taip pat ES sistemoje kaip saugomos kilmės vietos nuoroda (SKVN), saugoma geografinė nuoroda (SGN) ir garantuotas tradicinis gaminytis (GTG). Lenkijos gamintojai taip pat turi galimybę saugoti savo šalies kulinarinį paveldą. Jie gali registruoti žemės ūkio produktus, maisto produktus ir alkoholinius gėrimus ES sistemoje ir įtraukti juos į tradicinių produktų sąrašą (TPS). Lenkijos tradicinio ir regioninio maisto rinka dar formuojasi. Žinojimas, kaip potencialūs pirkėjai suvokia šiuos produktus, padės apibrėžti pirkimo galimybes ateityje, o tai ypač svarbu kuriant šią rinką.

Šiuo straipsniu siekiama identifikuoti privatus ir viešojo sektoriaus (ypač savivaldybių, vietos institucijų ir vietinių organizacijų, gamintojų) vaidmenį kuriant ir plėtojant tradicinius lenkiškus produktus. Išnagrinėtas kokybės politikos formavimas ES, ypač Lenkijoje, taip pat atskleista, kad iniciatyva yra efektyvus metodas įtraukti vietos bendruomenes į bendrą sprendimų dėl jų kaimiškųjų vietovių plėtros koncepcijos krypties ir įgyvendinimo procesą. Straipsnyje pristatomi mokslinio tyrimo metu gauti rezultatai (projektas „Bendradarbiavimo fondas“, programa „Agro-Smak 2“), kuriame tirtos vartotojų nuomonės ir jų požiūriai, t. y. polinkis pirkti tradicinius / regioninius lenkiškus produktus. Surinkta tyrimo medžiaga leidžia daryti išvadą, kad rinkos tradiciniams ir regioniniams produktams Lenkijoje sukūrimas ne tik turi daugybę privalumų, bet kelia ir tam tikrų rizikų, kurioms išvengti reikės skirti ypatingą dėmesį, kuriame greičiausiai bus išsami šalių narių, kurios šiuo metu yra SKVN ir SGN rinkos lyderės, patirties analizė.

Tradicinių ir regioninių produktų klausimas Lenkijoje yra naujas, tačiau jis pamažu ir sistemingai tampa kasdiene lenkų gyvenimo dalimis. Todėl būtų įdomu žinoti tyrimų, kuriuos autorė atliko dalyvaudama projekte „Vartotojų nuomonės ir požiūrio į regioninių / tradicinių produktų pirkimą Lenkijoje charakteristikos“, finansuojamame „Bendradarbiavimo fondo“ lėšomis, gautomis pagal programą „Agro-Smak 2“, rezultatus. Praktinis tyrimas buvo atliktas 2007 m. rugsėjo–spalio mėn., taikant tiesioginį interviu su PENTOR Research International S.A. techninės pagalbos darbuotojais. Atlikti du matavimai, kiekviename pasitelkta atskira maždaug 1 000 žmonių reprezentatyvioji imtis. Respondentams pateikti klausimai buvo suskirstyti į 5 grupes. Pirmoji grupė buvo susijusi su respondentų žiniomis apie tradicinius ir regioninius maisto produktus ir jų nuomone apie jų pirkimą; antroji – su šių produktų matomumu rinkoje. Trečioji klausimų grupė buvo susijusi su ketinimais pirkti ateityje, ketvirtoji – su šių produktų nepirkimo priežastimis, o penktoji – su informacijos apie aptariamus produktus šaltiniais.

Atlikti tyrimai parodė, kad 52 proc. respondentų pareiškė žiną apie Lenkijos tradicinius / regioninius maisto produktus. Atsižvelgiant į socialinius ir demografinius ypatumus, galima teigti, kad daugiau moterų (57 proc.) nei vyrų žinojo apie šiuos produktus. Šių žmonių amžius svyravo nuo 40 iki 59 m., jie turėjo geresnį išsilavinimą (dauguma – 67 proc. – buvo įgiję aukštąjį išsilavinimą). Žmonių, sakusių, kad jie žino apie tradicinius / regioninius maisto produktus, grupėje daugiausia sudarė vadovaujantis personalas ir biurų darbuotojai, asmenys, kurių pajamos viršijo 3 000 PLN per mėnesį, taip pat Centrinės-Rytų ir Centrinės-Vakarų Lenkijos dalių gyventojai. Tarp respondentų daugiausia šių produktų pirkimu susidomėjo 30–39 m. asmenys, turintys aukštąjį išsilavinimą, gaunantys didžiausias pajamas, gyvenantys mieste, kurių gyventojų skaičius viršija 200 tūkst. 65 proc. asmenų, tvirtinusių, kad žino apie tradicinius / regioninius maisto produktus, teigė perkantys juos retkarčiais. 60 proc. asmenų, tvirtinusių, kad

žino apie tradicinius / regioninius produktus, teigė perkantys šiuos produktus. Respondentai minėjo skonį kaip vieną pagrindinių veiksnių, įtikinančių juos pirkti produktus, kuriuos jie šiuo metu laiko „tradiciniais / regioniniais“. Jų nuomone, būtent ši vertybė išskiria tokį maistą iš kitų žemės ūkio maisto produktų. Antras pagal svarbą veiksnys buvo vartotojo produkto pomėgis, o trečiasis veiksnys buvo produkto šviežumas ir natūrali kilmė. Be to, vartotojai labai vertino produktų kokybę ir faktą, kad vartodami šiuos produktus jie gali saugoti savo ir šeimos narių sveikatą. Kitas svarbus, nors ir rečiau minėtas veiksnys buvo produkto kilmės žinojimas ir faktas, kad jie žinomi vartotojams jau nuo vaikystės. Minėtieji atsakymai laikytini šio unikalaus, labai kokybiško maisto, kuris ateityje pasirodys rinkoje, požymiais ir didele vertybe.

Produktų kokybė ir kaina, taip pat galiojimo trukmė ir sudėtis taip pat yra svarbūs veiksniai, sąlygojantys tradicinių / regioninių produktų pirkimą. Šiandien vartotojai kreipia mažiau dėmesio į produkto prieinamumą rinkoje, pakuotę ir kokybę liudijančius sertifikatus, tačiau galima pagrįstai manyti, kad tai tėra laikina. Kaip maistą, kuris gali tapti populiarius tarp vartotojų ateityje, respondentai dažniausia nurodė šias tradicinių / regioninių produktų grupes: vytintus mėsos produktus – kumpius, dešras ir kt., duoną, žuvį ir žuvis produktus, vaisius, žalią mėsą ir mėsos produktus, taip pat kaimiškus sūrius. Vartotojai taip pat minėjo daržoves, medų, duonos ir pyrago gaminius – riestainius, apskritas bandeles ar pusmėnulio formos bandeles ir kt., mėsos subproduktus – kraujines dešras, slėgtainius, paštetus ir kt., sultis ir kitus nealkoholinius gėrimus, nokintus sūrius, vaisių ir daržovių produktus – marmeladus, uogienes, slyvų džemus, džiovintus vaisius ir daržoves ir

saldumynus: tortus, pyragaičius, šakočius ir kt. 41 proc. respondentų teigė, kad televizijos programos yra pagrindinis informacijos apie tradicinius / regioninius produktus šaltinis. Tiesiogiai iš žmonių gaunama informacija (asmeniniai kontaktai, šeimos ir draugų rekomendacijos) nurodyta kaip antrinis šaltinis. Beveik kas penktas tyrime dalyvavęs asmuo apie nagrinėjamus produktus sužinojo mugėse, parodose ar išpardavimuose, taip pat iš rašytinių šaltinių – spaudos, reklaminių skrajučių. Kas dešimtas respondentas tvirtino gavęs žinių apie produktą susitikime su konkreto produkto gamintoju. Paklausti, ar žino tradicinių / regioninių maisto produktų ženklimą, daugiau nei 40 proc. respondentų teigė anksčiau tokio nematę. Daugiau nei 20 proc. vartotojų teigė žiną tradicinių / regioninių maisto produktų ženklimą ES. Šie respondentai ženklimą siejo su aukšta ir gera kokybe, konkrečiam regionui būdingomis prekėmis, arba laikė juos kokybės garantija pirkėjui. Be to, jie pabrėžė, kad būtent ES ženklimas informavo apie tradicinius produktus.

Vartotojų elgsenos dėsniumai ir tendencijos yra ypač svarbios pasirenkant rinkos instrumentus – nuo naujo produkto kūrimo iki numatomo platinimo strategijos, kainos nustatymo ir reklamavimo. Vartotojų poreikių ir kam jie teikia pirmenybę žinojimas yra pagrindinis priimant sprendimą dėl naujų produktų rinkodaros, ypač periferinėse rinkose.

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: SKVN, SGN, tradiciniai ir regioniniai maisto produktai, kaimo plėtra.

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