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COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE IN POLAND

Example of short food supply chain.

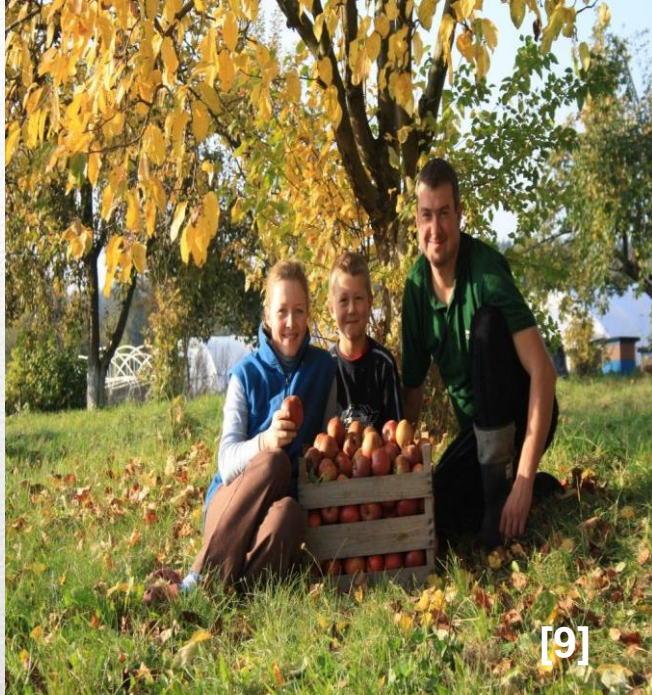


18th Summer Academy

**“COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE:
COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT”**

Euracademy Association and Széchenyi István University

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Short food supply chains definition

What is CSA?

Definition of CSA in Poland

Poland. Country context

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Short history of CSAs in Poland and in Europe

The first CSA groups in Poland - 2012

Legal setup of CSAs in Poland

Characteristic of CSAs in Poland

Benefits for farmers and consumers

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Conclusion and discussion

Example : CSA Wojciechówka – farm „EkoMania”

Literature

Short food supply chains are defined as a consumption of self-produced food, or direct sale of locally produced food.

The sale can be made:

- 1) either upon a prior agreement between farmer and consumer (CSA model)**
- 2) or without such prerequisite for ex. :**
 - at the farmers' market,**
 - on-farm,**
 - at the local food hubs**
 - or on-line).**

Definition of CSA in Poland

Native name:

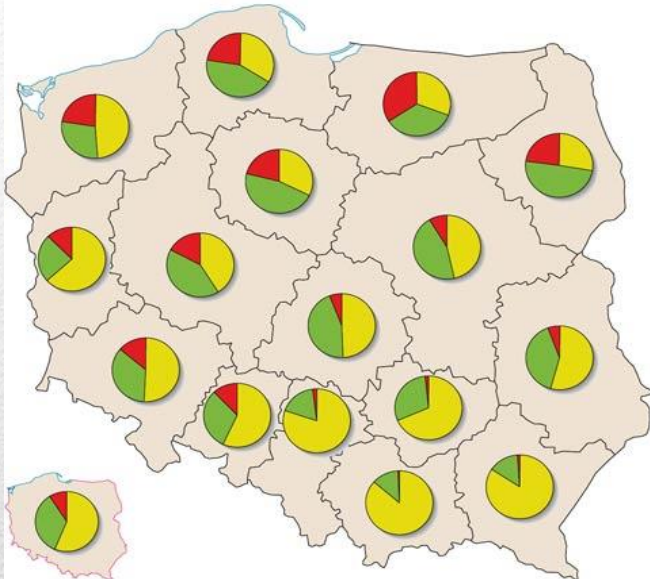
Rolnictwo Wspierane przez Społeczność – RWS

There is no common definition of CSA in Poland, but most of the CSA groups use this statement at the beginning of their CSA agreements [7, p.]:

"We, the members of an informal group of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), which connects consumers and (name of the person), the owner of the farm in..... (name of the place), decide to mutually support and share the risk of food production. The aim of the CSA is to support the development of small-scale, family-operated organic farms and the direct sale of food to the consumers."

Poland. Country context (2018, Statistics Poland)

WIELKOŚĆ GOSPODARSTW ROLNYCH
w województwach



[6]

- Poland is inhabited by 38.41 million people.
- The total area is 312,679km² and is divided into the following land use:
 - agricultural - 60%; built-up and urbanised areas - 5.3%; about 60% of Poles live in the cities.
- **Number of agricultural farms – 1.429 milion used 1,467 mln ha of of arable land [1] .**
- **The percentage of the largest farms, with an area of 50 ha and more, was only 2.4%. [1]**
- The average area of agricultural land on the farm has been maintained at the level of about 10,3 ha.
- Organic agriculture farms number: 2017 – 20257, 2013 – 26598 (6341 less/ aprox. 24% less).

Despite the specialization and concentration of production farms are very fragmented. In the structure of farms, **more than a half (53.3%) were the smallest farms, ie. up to 5 ha of agricultural land [1].**

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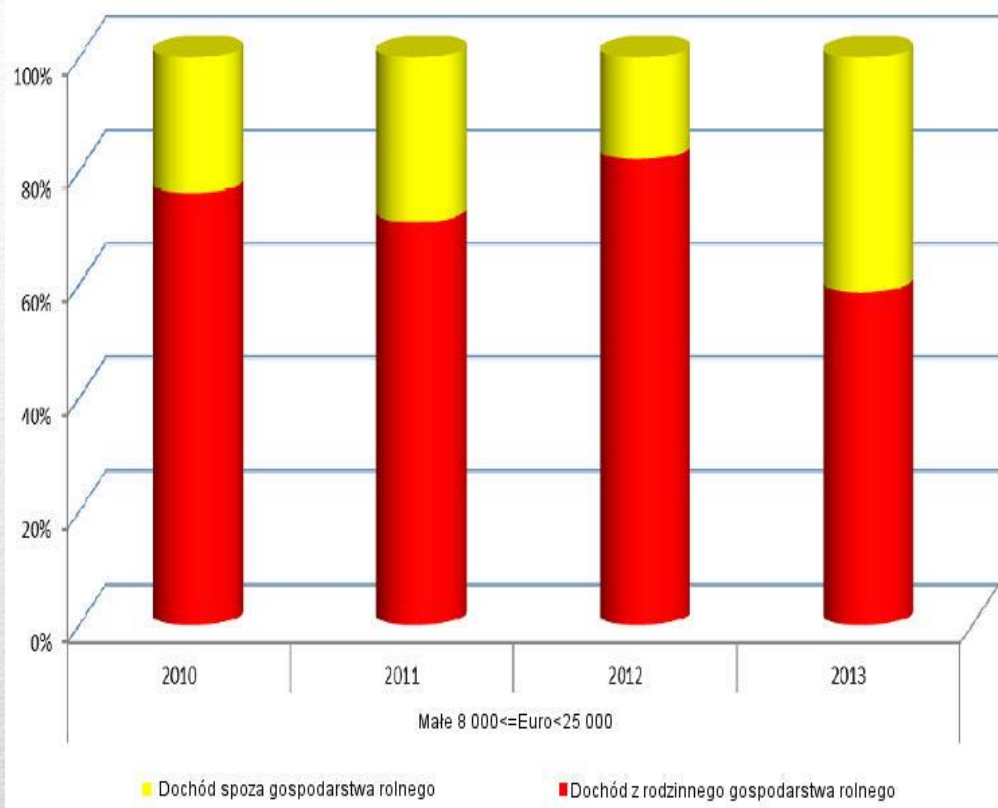
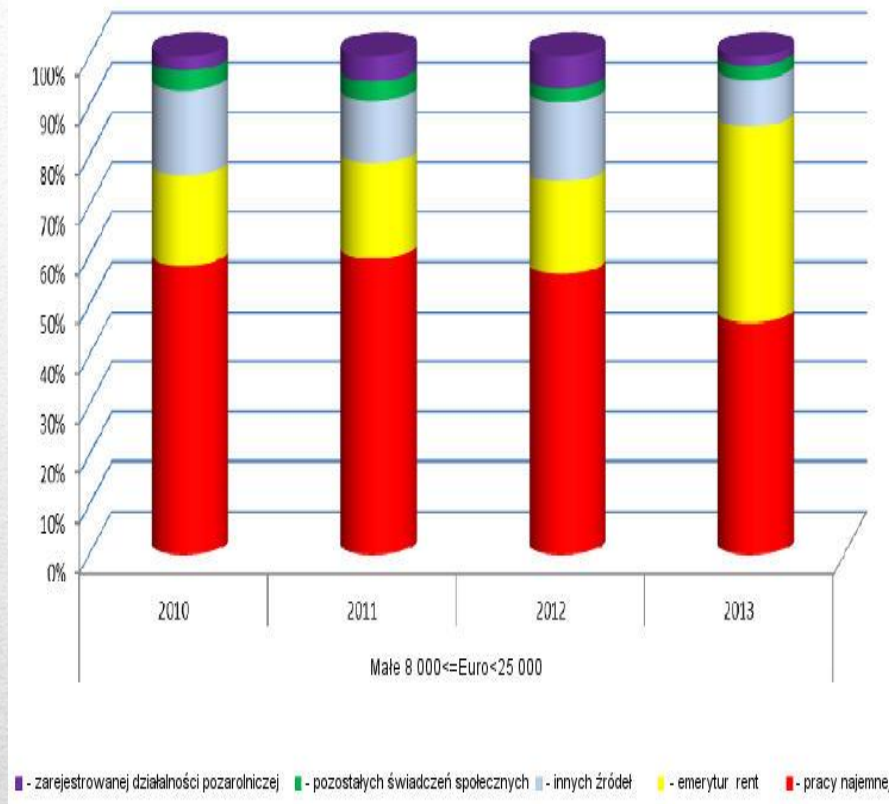


Fig.1. Agricultural family income by economy size class - "small" in Poland -Wielkopolska and Silesia Region); income from outside the farm/ income from a family farm (Polish FADN [3].

The income situation of farms, compared to 2017, worsened.

- **According to the “Economic Accounts for Agriculture” estimates, the income of the agricultural entrepreneur decreased by approx. 15% while the income from production factors per 1 AWU – by approx. 12%.**
- **In the same period, subsidies on production decreased by approx. 6% [1].**

Poland. Country context (2018, Statistics Poland)

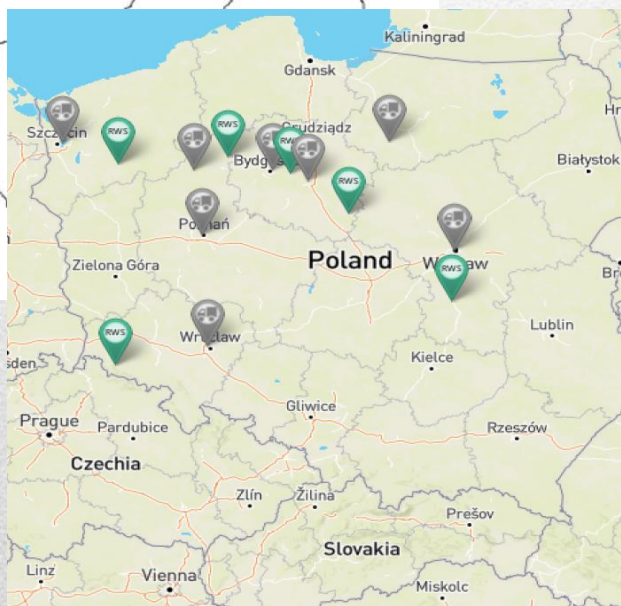


Estimated, based on data collected in the Polish FADN system the income from the family farm was smaller by almost 10% compared to 2017 [2].

At the same time, mentioned the average income calculated for a full-time family member was lower than the average annual net salary in the national economy by 30% [1].

Fig.2. Income from outside a farm by economic size class - "small" in Poland– Wielkopolska and Silesia Region; registered non-agricultural activity; other social benefits/ other sources/pension/wage labour (Polish FADN). [3]

Short history of CSA in Poland and Europe



Number of CSAs?	8 farms, which support in total 11 consumer groups
Since when?	2012
National umbrella organisation?	None
Estimated eaters and farms involved?	700–800 eaters are estimated, 8 farms

By the end of autumn 2015, there were eight farms in Poland cooperating with local consumers on the basis of the CSA model in six voivodeships: Zachodniopomorskie, Wielkopolskie, Kujawsko-pomorskie, Mazowieckie, Dolnośląskie and Opolskie.



The first group was established in 2012 by some members of the Warsaw Food Cooperative with two leaders: Piotr Trzaskowski and Wojciech Mejor.

- They were, guided and supported by the experienced CSA practitioner, Jan Valeska, from the Czech Republic.
- The initial groups didn't get any financial support from their local or regional government. It was a grassroots initiative, as an act of consumer activism.
- The group consisted of 15 households from Warsaw and 2 organic farmers and activists: Sonia Priwiezienczew and Tomasz Włoszczowski.
- The CSA was treated as a pilot project to test this idea in the Polish context. The farmers declared that they did not want farming to become their primary occupation. The pilot project turned out to be successful enough to encourage new farms to try out this model of cooperation with consumers.

The members of the first group devoted their time and effort in spreading the word about the initiative to help set up new groups. **The idea was promoted through a voluntary-run blog (www.rws.waw.pl)** which described the idea of CSA and the first experiences of the pilot group, Świerże-Panki. Some of the members of this first group, also as volunteers, were spreading the word about their initiative during public events related to sustainability and ecological farming.

In 2014, three new farms decided to set up their own CSA groups:

- Bartłomiej Kembłowski set up a CSA group with more than twenty households who were members of the Southern Food Cooperative in Warsaw.
- Małgorzata and Sławomir Dobrodziej, organic farmers from the northwest of Poland, established two CSA groups in the cities of Poznań and Szczecin.
- Wanda Nowicka, an organic farmer from the southwest of Poland, started her small CSA group in the midst of summer 2014.

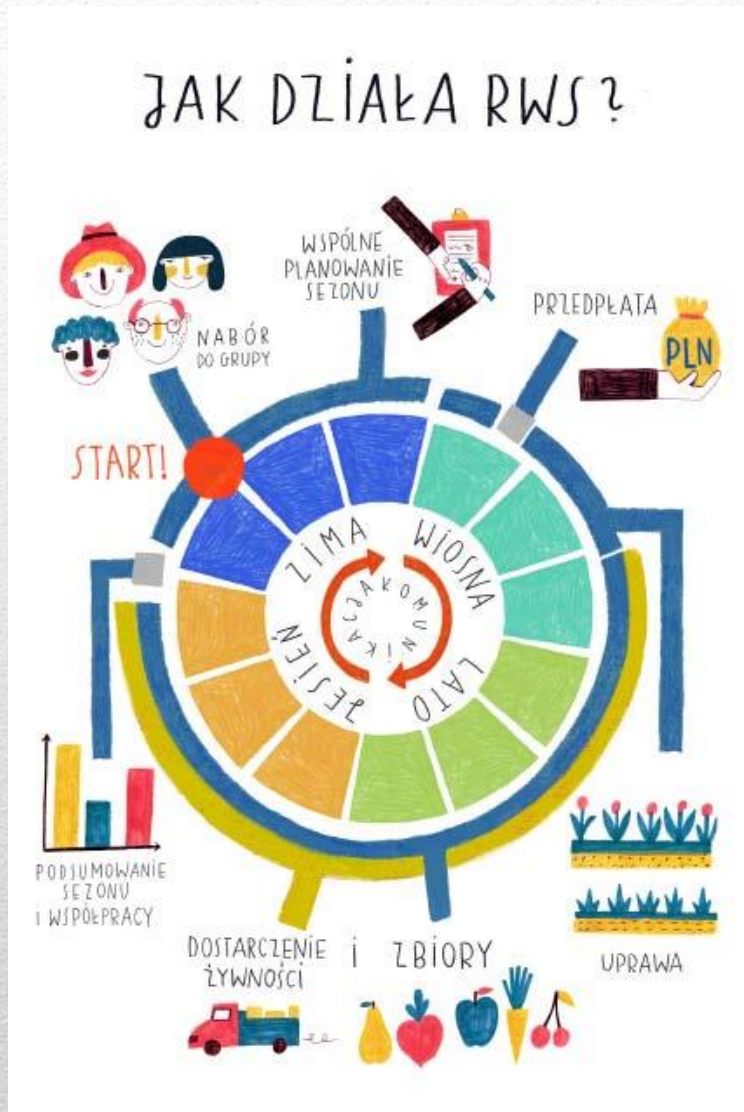
The year of 2014 was the last year for the first CSA group, Świerże-Panki, because the founders of this pilot CSA group came to the conclusion that it had served its educational purpose.



CSAs in Poland are established as informal groups.

The sale of food produce is treated as a direct sale between the farmer and each individual member of the group. The farmers in Poland are allowed to conduct such direct selling of unprocessed produce without any major restrictions.

When it comes to the written agreements which are signed between consumers and farmers, their validity as binding legal documents was questioned by some of the members. This is why CSAs to avoid the word “contract” and use the word “**agreement**” instead.



Agreement is an expression of the goodwill of the two parties and is a summary of the main rules of the cooperation: the price of the share, means of delivering the produce, obligations of the parties towards each other and, most importantly, the stipulation of how the risk is being shared between the two parties.

This statement was used later on in the template agreement of at least three other CSAs.

Common features of all functioning CSA groups are:

- direct sale of food produced at the farms,
- pre-payments made by the members,
- the length of the cooperation is minimum 20 weeks,
- delivery of the produce, at least, weekly,
- Communication channels: E-mail, mobile, Facebook, direct contact
- Most differences across various CSA groups in Poland arise from the

following questions:

- Do the members have the liberty to choose the produce or are they are given a box of produce selected by the farmers?
- Is there a collection point or do the farmers deliver the produce directly to the doorsteps of the members?
- Do the members express some kind of engagement and take up some responsibilities connected to the farming or distribution of the produce?

The characteristics of the CSA groups in Poland [4, p.204]

Characteristic of the CSA/Number of responses	11	10	9	6
Shared rewards of farming activities	x			
Formal or informal agreement	x			
CSA aims at providing high quality food	x			
Long-term agreement		x		
Production in an agro-ecological way		x		
Direct partnership cooperation			x	
Risk sharing			x	
Responsibilities sharing				x

The characteristics of the CSA groups in Poland [4, p.205]

Involvement of the consumers in the activities of CSA groups in Poland

Types of activities CSA members can be involved in/ The number of responses	11	7	5	4
Buying shares	x			
Helping with the administration and organisation		x		
Exchanging recipes		x		
Attending open days or social events			x	
Helping to grow produce				x
Decision making				x

Benefits for farmers and consumers [4; 8]

For farmers

- financial support at the beginning season guaranteed by recipients food
- more time to focus on crops instead of searching customers and outlets
- higher earnings resulting from direct sales
- no waste produced food - direct contact with the recipient provides me with faster information feedback on food
- support consumers in their choice cultivated species and variety

For consumers

- weekly fresh delivery, high-quality seasonal food from a proven source
- providing a varied, a healthy diet based on unprocessed products
- saving time spent for shopping during the delivery period
- deepening knowledge about food growing methods and theirs impact on the environment and health gained during communication with farmers and visits on the farm
- possibility to try new ones fruit and vegetables which, no 'we wouldn't buy'
- being part of a local neighborhood society

Challenges for farmers and consumers [4;8]

For farmers

- finding a group of recipients ready for several months cooperation
- conducting regular communication with food recipients on the subject crop status and planned deliveries
- very diverse planning agricultural production, including estimation size and composition varied Doughnut
- ability to solve potential general conflict situations, e.g. in the case of reduced yields
- organizational issues arising from recipient visits to the holding
- organization of the meeting summarized end of the season

For consumers

- payment in advance
- in the case of poor crops consent to receive a smaller one amount of food without refund
- help in organizing collections food
- limited selection food you get what is not what you choose
- a commitment to regular pickup food
- Creativity in development food - fresh food requires either quick consumption or creating it

Is located about 80 km from Warsaw in the direction of Radom.

The farm since 2013 it has ecological certificates, it is subject to the Agro BioTest certifying unit No. PI-EKO-07- 11049.

Ania runs her farm with her mother with invaluable help from her brother and family growing various vegetables in the field and in tunnel cultivation as well as fruit: strawberries, blueberries American, black and red currant.

In turn, in the farmyard you can meet the cow Helcia (Polish red with character) and Łaciata, Polish horses Dusia and Cyril, rabbits and chanterelles.

Since 2015, RWS - Wojciechówka has been delivering packages every week to a group of farms in Warsaw Mokotów.

Receipts: once a week

Package composition: vegetables and fruits

Package price: PLN 40 per week (around 20 deliveries during the season)

Place of pickup: one, fixed pickup point

Communication channel: anna.posnik.sie@gmail.com

1. Consumers are fully engaged in the model at the basic level of paying for and receiving the produce.
2. They, however, are not very engaged at the decision-making and investment level. This result may be stemming from both consumer and farmers' attitude, experiences, and tradition. All of the mentioned challenges can constitute a significant obstacle to further development of CSA groups.
3. **CSA model brings mutual benefits for both** consumers and farmers that are not available in other forms of cooperation. **For consumers**, these include educational value, resulting from communication with farmers, saving time associated with planning purchases, affordability of the food they buy, and integration with the local community. **For farmers**, this is primarily a guarantee of financial stability and simplification of the issues related to logistics and distribution of food.



- 4. The severe drought tested both farmers and consumers on the aspect of risk sharing. In many cases, consumers had to accept smaller crops than expected, for which many of them turned out not to be prepared.**
- 5. However, farmers express their willingness to continue CSAs because they have learnt to appreciate the benefits of such a model of cooperation. It should be underlined, however, that they are still learning how to communicate with eaters, especially those who are not used to buying organic produce. Although all CSAs in Poland are following a very similar set of rules, the way they operate varies from one group to another.**
- 6. This is because each CSA is still looking for its own way to establish relations and rules that are accepted by both producers and consumers.**
- 7. The CSA model contributes to the supporting of both organic farming and provides access to affordable fresh foods to consumers in Poland**

The changing socio-economic transformations are both a threat and an opportunity for harmonious rural development. Due to its role, rural areas should follow the path of sustainable development. However, this development requires greater innovation, which can be achieved both by generating innovation and by absorbing them.

However, it should be remembered that innovation is not the goal of action but merely a tool for implementing sustainable development. Therefore, it is important to divide innovation into **constructive innovations (consistent with sustainable development)** and destructive (non-sustainable). At present, in the countryside, destructive innovations are predominant, preferring solutions that increase labor productivity, and thus implicitly giving priority to the social sphere.

An example of constructive innovation may be Community Supported Agriculture. Realization of CSA assumptions can lead to stable rural development that does not compromise between the individual spheres and within each one.

- [1] *Agriculture in 2018*, Statistics Poland, Warsaw 2019
- [2] *The Polish FADN system* (<https://www.ierigz.waw.pl/prace-badawcze/fadn.html>)
- [3] Błaszczuk Z., *Characteristics of farms by selected economic size - small farms from 8,000 to 25,000 euros*, <http://www.wodr.poznan.pl/powiaty/powiaty-r-z/zespol-doradczy-w-sremskim/itemlist/user/203-zbigniewb%C5%82aszczyk> (15 czerwca 2016)
- [4] Marta Sylla M., Olszewska J., Świader M., *Status And Possibilities Of The Development Of Community Supported Agriculture In Poland As An Example Of Short Food Supply Chain*, *Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development*, 1(43) 2017, 201–207
- [5] TEIKEI system (1993). *The producer-consumer co-partnership and the Movement of the Japan Organic Agriculture Association*. Country Report for the First IFOAM Asian Conference 19-22. Aug. 1993 in Hanno, Saitama, Japan.
- [6] Schlicht S., Volz P., Weckenbrock P., Le Gallic T., *Community Supported Agriculture: An overview of characteristics, diffusion and political interaction in France, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland*, *Research For Sustainable Regional Economies*, 2012
- [7] *Food, People, Environment*, Instytut Globalnej Odpowiedzialności, Warsaw 2016
- [8] *Overview of Community Supported Agriculture in Europe*. European CSA Research Group, May 2016; <http://urgenci.net/the-csa-research-group/>
- [9] RWS-y w Polsce; www.wspierajrolnictwo.pl/rwsy-w-polsce
- [10] Struś M., *Community supported agriculture– an example of constructive innovation in rural areas*, *Problems of Small Agricultural Holdings* • No. 1 • 2018, 63–71

1. What is CSA?



[9]

“CSA is a direct partnership between a group of consumers and producer(s) whereby the risks, responsibilities, and rewards of farming activities are shared through a long-term agreement. Generally operating on small-scale, CSAs aim at providing quality food produced in an agroecological way”.

Project “Common Ground – CSA Census” coordinated by the international organization URGENCI (2015) - definition prepared by researchers from 19th country. [4]

2. Short history of CSA in the world

CSA is a specific model of a direct cooperation between customers and producers which began to develop [4] :

- **in Japan in 1978** - Organic Agriculture Association developed 10 principles of teikei (meaning “work”, “joint venture”, “connection”): mutual support, acceptance of crops, joint decision-making about the price, deepening friendly relations, self-distribution, democratic governance, mutual learning, maintenance of the group scale and the continuous development [5].
 - **in Switzerland 1970's** - in Geneva, a food-alliance of producers and consumers was launched; Jan Vander Tuin started the first project, a biodynamic farm near Zurich, named Topanimbur, having the same principles like CSAs nowadays [6].
 - **in United States in 1986** were founded the first farms: in Massachusetts by John Vandertuin, Robyn Van En and Susan Witt [4] and by Groh - he started a community supported farm, the Temple Wilton Community Farm, on the model of the Buschberghof, where he had worked for 20 years [6] .
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Short history of CSA in the world

Main points of criticism of agriculture in the 20th century are [6]:

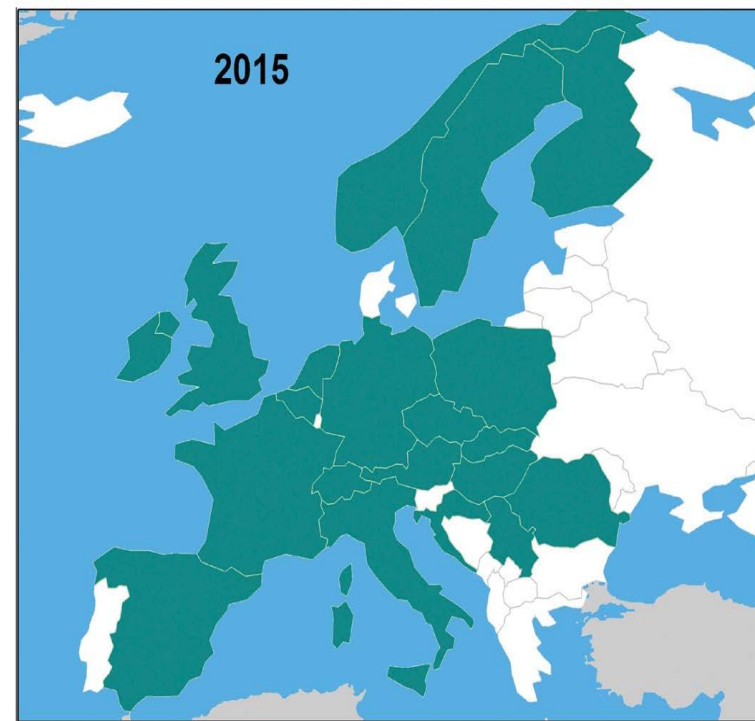
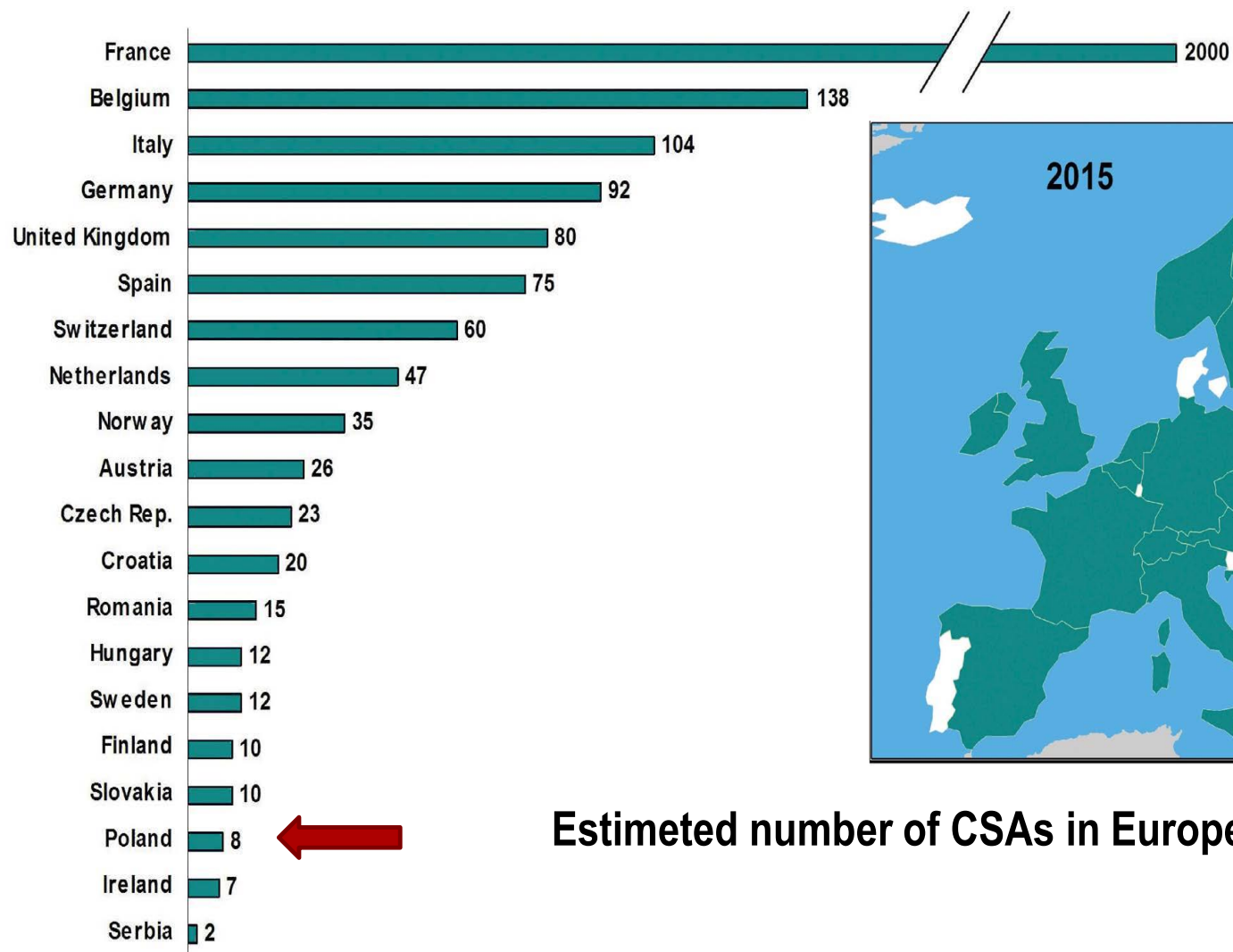
- conventional large-scale industrial agriculture include the high environmental externalities and the reliance on high levels of external input such as fertilisers, pesticides, herbicides and fossil fuels, the expulsion of small scale multifunctional farms and thus the change of landscapes and employment structures, problems with the logistics of food transport and distribution and the increased speculation and commodification of land and food.

As a reaction to this, new models of agriculture have developed or re-developed in Europe especially a recent shift to:

- certified organic production,
- local food supply chains (LFSC)
- and new consumer-producer relationships (CSA).

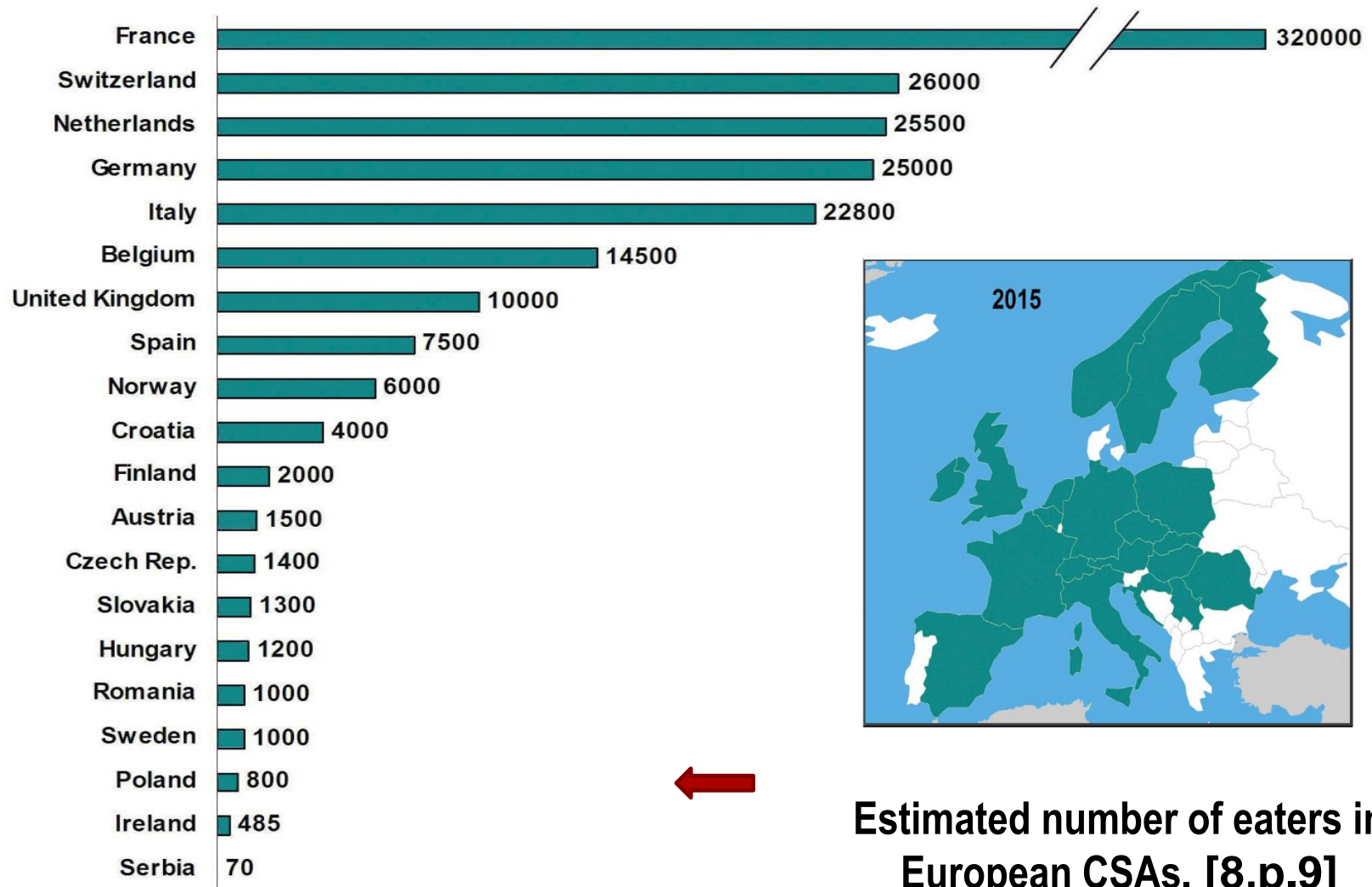
In contrast to intensive industrial farming and centralised food industries, **CSA promotes a sustainable and diversified pattern of regional and local production with closer connections and solidarity between farmers and consumers, and with a high care for public health and environment as it is recommended by the Agricultural and Rural Convention (2010).**

Short history of CSA in Poland and Europe



Estimated number of CSAs in Europe [8, p.9]

Short history of CSA in Poland and Europe



Thank You for attention

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What time is it?



Time for CSA!!!

<http://humor.nf.pl/Ciekawostka/7316/panie-doktorze>

