

Community-based Social Farming (CSF) and its educational functions

Wspólnota Gospodarstwa Społecznego (WGS) i jej funkcje edukacyjne

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Streszczenie. Zróżnicowanie społeczno-gospodarcze obszarów wiejskich skutkuje dysproporcjonalnym rozwojem rolnictwa. Wymusza to podejmowanie przez rolników oraz innych mieszkańców wsi działań uwzględniających dynamicznie zmieniające się warunki gospodarowania. Województwo małopolskie cechuje rolnictwo rozdrobnione, które jeśli nie może skutecznie konkurować na rynku, zaspokaja jedynie własne, podstawowe potrzeby. Szansą dla małych gospodarstw jest poszerzanie działalności rolniczej o dodatkowe funkcje. Przykładem takiego kierunku rozwoju rozdrobnionych gospodarstw jest rolnictwo społeczne. Jego ideą jest gospodarowanie na obszarach wiejskich, które łączy rolnictwo, usługi społeczne, prozdrowotne oraz edukację. To szansa również dla tych rolników, którzy działają już w branży pozarolniczej (np. agroturystyka) i mogą poszerzyć zakres usług o usługi społeczne. Europejskie modele tego rolnictwa są zróżnicowane regionalnie i bazują na wiodącej funkcji, np. gospodarstwo opiekuńcze, edukacyjne i inne. Przedstawiony w artykule innowacyjny model Wspólnoty Gospodarstwa Społecznego (WGS) odwołuje się do idei rolnictwa społecznego. Metoda badawcza zastosowana w pracy nawiązuje do socjologicznej metody Maksa Webera „verstehen”, a konceptualnym narzędziem jest „typ idealny”. Projekt jest realizowany w pilotażowym Gospodarstwie Społecznym „Oaza pod Lasem” w Daleszynie. WGS łączy wiele form działalności oraz angażuje różne podmioty i włącza w swą działalność lokalną społeczność. Bazuje na wykorzystaniu endogenicznych zasobów, poszerza zakres źródeł pozyskiwania dochodu nie tylko rolników, lecz także innych mieszkańców wsi mających określony kapitał. Jest to uniwersalny model, rekomendowany dla obszarów wiejskich rozdrobnionych agrarnie. Oferuje usługi społeczne adekwatne do potrzeb różnych grup społecznych. W artykule szerzej omówiono funkcje edukacyjne, jakie realizuje WGS w ramach Edukacyjnego Gospodarstwa Społecznego (EGS).

Słowa kluczowe: Wspólnota Gospodarstwa Społecznego (WGS) • rolnictwo społeczne • więzi społeczne • edukacja

Abstract. The socio-economic diversity of rural areas results in disproportional development of agriculture. It forces farmers and rural area inhabitants to undertake actions taking account of the dynamically changing farming conditions. The Małopolskie Voivodship is characterised by fragmented agriculture, which – if it cannot effectively compete on the market – satisfies the farm’s own basic needs. Expansion of farming activities with additional functions is a chance for small farms. An example of such a development direction of fragmented farms is social farming. The idea behind it is farming in rural areas, which combines agriculture, social services, health-promoting services, and education. This is also an opportunity for those farmers, who already conduct operations in the non-agricultural industry (e.g. agritourism) and can expand their range of services with social services. European models of this kind of farming are regionally differentiated and rely on a leading function, e.g. care farm, educational farm and others. The basis of the innovative model *Community-based Social Farming* (CSF) presented in the article is social farming. The research method refers to the sociological method “*verstehen*” of Max Weber, and the conceptual tool is the “*ideal type*”. The project is implemented in the pilot Social Farm “*Oaza pod Lasem*” (“*Oasis by the Forest*”) in Daleszyn. The CSF combines many forms of operations, as well as involves various entities and engages the local community in its activities. It is based on the use of endogenous resources; it expands the scope of income sources of not only farmers, but also other rural inhabitants with a specific capital. The model is universal, is recommended in rural areas characterised by fragmentation. It offers social services corresponding to the needs of various social groups. The article more broadly discusses the educational functions performed by the CSF as part of the *Educational Social Farm* (ESF).

Keywords: Community-based Social Farming (CSF) • social farming • social bonds • education

Introduction

Rural areas in Poland differ in their growth rate, degree of urbanisation, dominance of agriculture as the main source of income as compared to other, non-agricultural jobs. Therefore, local development must take account of the special character of the region, the acreage size, the entrepreneurship, and many other factors determining maintenance of an adequate standards of living of the inhabitants. Particularly fragmented farming, which is typical of the Małopolskie Voivodeship, should focus on more profitable projects, i.e. agriculture-related and non-agricultural operations. If it is not possible to maintain the farm using only the income from agricultural activities, it seems necessary to strengthen its supplementary functions. Larger possibilities are created by the prospect of farming combining agriculture with broadly understood social services. Examples of agritourist farms or educational farms show that agriculture does not constitute the main activity there. These farms focus on projects that are the main source of income. There is much evidence to indicate that, by providing social services, which are currently in high demand, small farms will be able to function optimally and normally under conditions of competition and the demanding market of the beneficiaries of these services. This form of farming in rural areas is referred to as social farming.

In Central and Eastern Europe, this form is little known or even new, in spite of the fact that it has been present in Europe for twenty-five years (Lockeretz, 2007).

The notion describing the essence of social farming is very inclusive, broad and continuously evolving along with the incorporation of new forms of social services or farming methods, bringing together the local community, into this type of farming. It is generally assumed that social farming is a form of farming focused on the community, satisfying its social needs, acting for the benefit of social inclusion of people and groups at risk of exclusion. Such activities are most commonly executed in the form of care or educational farms, which constitute a part of the broadly understood social farming (Di Iacovo, 2009; Kinsella et al., 2014; García-Llorente et al., 2016).

Material and methods

The article presents the essence of social farming and its varieties in European countries, where this form of farming has been developing particularly dynamically in rural areas. The applied method of case study concerns the Social Farm “Oaza pod Lasem” (“Oasis by the Forest”) in Daleszyn. This pilot farm implements the innovative project of the author of this article, named the *Community-based Social Farming* (CSF) model. It particularly focuses on one of the leading functions of this model – the *Educational Social Farm* (ESF).

Social farming in selected EU countries

In regard to the particulars of social farming in various regions of Europe, the characteristic areas of activities undertaken by social farms in prominent EU countries are presented below.

In Austria, social farming is not a new phenomenon, even though it had not been mentioned by name prior to 2005. In a publication by Wiesinger, Neuhauser and Putz (2006), the estimated total number of organizations involved in social farming was around 20. The number of individual farms undertaking such activities on the other hand was around 250. Social farming in Austria is supported by farms that have therapy animals for the rehabilitation of individuals with various disabilities, as well as horticultural therapy. Austrian social farming, with its wide range of various activities, is rather disorganised. Many farms work informally, for example in the area of horticultural therapy, hospices for those with physical or intellectual disabilities, the provision of services for elderly individuals or those with a mental illness. This creates a diverse structure, a patchwork of various institutions focused on social farming. There is a lack of a strategic approach to development of this agricultural sector, and some methods that have been worked out are the effect of trial and error. Despite this institutional deficit and relatively meagre public support, many initiatives in the area of social farming represent an innovating, pioneering interdisciplinary approach. One of the most successful varieties of social farming is the programme developed by the “Österreichisches Kuratorium für Landtechnik und Landentwicklung”, ÖKL (*Austrian Council for Agricultural Engineering and Rural Development*). This organization is active in the areas of “Animal Assisted Pedagogy” (AAP) and “Animal Assisted Therapy”

(AAT) offered by certified social farms. The main goals of the ÖKL programme are the implementation and development of the social farming sector in Austria. The program constitutes a pilot research project, both scientific and practical, in the area of the educational and therapeutic effectiveness of the use of farm animals like goats, cattle or pigs in relation to various groups of clients. The results of this research are used to develop professional training for individuals who wish to offer AAP/AAT services themselves (O'Connor, Lai, Watson, 2010).

In Finland, social farming is understood to be all activities in which nature is used as a source or a means to attain or retain psychic or physical health, for rehabilitation, care provision or for education. Social farming in Finland is used as one of many approaches to green care methods, which is supplemented by elements of activity or intervention and social interaction. It takes advantage of the physical, social and cultural resources of farms in providing rehabilitative, educational or care-related activities. In Finland there is great interest in social farming as a significant instrument for the development of rural areas, equally on the part of scientific researchers, entrepreneurs, NGOs, politicians administration as well as beneficiaries. The Finnish Innovation Fund, SITRA, is engaged in the development of social farming, especially in regard to the introduction of entrepreneurship in the area of different forms of care provision, rehabilitation and education. In Finland, around 200-300 farms are currently engaged in social farming activities. On the other hand, little is known about their character or the scale of their activities due to the lack of specific information or statistical data. It is known, however, that care homes for the elderly, foster homes and nurseries exist that take advantage of the services of social farms in the area of horticultural therapy as well as equine-assisted therapy. Social farming in Finland enjoys public prestige – it is promoted and supported by the state, in particular various forms of riding and socio-educational therapy in which horses are used. Nevertheless, until the present the links between the actors and network mechanisms have not been adequately developed. And yet, there are pioneers who work toward such networks. One example is “The Rural Policy Committee/Theme Group of Rural Welfare Services”. The “Theme Group” is a cooperative whose members represent administration at the national and regional levels, research agencies as well as social and economic actors in rural areas. This organization is responsible for creating a development strategy and disseminating information, and it organises seminars and is a representative of rural actors in various public fora (O'Connor, Lai, Watson, 2010).

In Sweden, “green care” or social farming is understood as an activity based on the linking of care provision with the resources offered by farms directed toward individuals who for various reasons fall under the Social Services Act (Swedish abbreviation: SoL) or the Support and Services Act (Swedish abbreviation: LSS). In Sweden, there are farms already in operation that embody the principles of social farming, and creation of new ones of this type is supported by the Federation of Swedish Farmers (Swedish abbreviation: LRF). In Sweden there are around 100 actively operating social farms. Yet the interest from other farmers in this kind of activity is growing dynamically. The Swedish government as well as local authorities are involved in promoting these. The state is responsible for ensuring support and service for individuals who are covered by the Support and Services Act. The local authorities are seen as the main beneficiary of

social farming. The Swedish model of this type of farming links the basic functions of farming with the provision of care services to individuals with physical or intellectual disabilities, as day centres for those with addiction issues or criminal records, as well as offering short-term stays for relatives. The services provided by social farms are diverse, both for clients and for farmers. Among the latter are those who rent out part of their farm (e.g. indoor space, farm animals, or a greenhouse) to local authorities, which then conduct their own care activities. It is also possible for farmers themselves and their employees to provide care services, who in accordance with a contract agreement are then responsible for the quality of services provided. The Federation of Swedish Farmers worked out a range of instruments, including informational materials, checklists and analyses to support social enterprises during the start-up phase. In order to facilitate the signing of long-term contracts with clients, LRF worked out analyses of the profitability of particular social farming activities, which together with a set of instructions is available in brochure form (O'Connor, Lai, Watson, 2010).

In Ireland, the term social farming is not unambiguously defined or understood. And yet, the use of agriculture and horticulture within the provision of care services or closely adapted to them as part of Mental Health Services and Intellectual Disability Services has a long history. In Ireland there are many examples of good practices in the area of social farming, although only few of them can be recognized as social farms. At the end of the 1980s a reform of care provision began which resulted above all in the rise of an institutional model of social care provision. At the same time, starting in the 1990s, a growth in social initiatives based on agriculture and horticulture can be observed. Ireland is one of the main beneficiaries of EU funds used for the development of social farming as part of the *Program for the Development of Rural Areas* and the activities of LEADER. Although there are firms in Ireland that have started social farming as part of their development plans, the predominant type of social farm is embedded in the existing institutional environment. Privately owned farms offering services are very rare in Ireland. In this country, where the economy was based on agriculture until recently, there is the conviction that occupational therapy or long-term care can be much more effective if they are integrated into farming activities. Until the present, the majority of social services (ca. 70%) have been linked with horticultural activities. The remaining part of services (ca. 30%), make use of caring for animals (cows, horses, sheep and other small domestic animals) as part of therapy for individuals with various dysfunctions. The disabled constitute the most numerous client group for social farming (ca. 47%), whereby social integration services constitute 17% of the total. The remaining social services are directed toward individuals with intellectual and physical disabilities, the prison population during the phase of resocialisation, elderly individuals as well as those in recovery from alcohol addiction (O'Connor, Lai, Watson, 2010).

In the British context, the concept of care farming is used interchangeably with social farming, serving to describe the "therapeutic farming practices". According to the *National Care Farming Initiative* (NCFI), care farms in the United Kingdom ensure health care, social or care services as well as educational services for one or several groups of clients with special needs such as individuals with psychological disorders, suffering from mild to moderate depression, adults and children with learning diffi-

culties, children with autism, individuals struggling with drug problems or alcohol addiction, youth, or individuals serving a prison sentence or on probation. Social farms provide supervised, programme of agriculture-related activities, animal husbandry, cultivating vegetables or work in forests as part of care services, rehabilitative or educational programmes. Social farms are authorized by the appropriate social service agencies, health insurance funds, organizations supporting individuals with intellectual disabilities, educational institutions as well as court supervision agencies. Clients of the social services provided by social farms can refer themselves or be referred by a family member. According the NCFI data, in 2010 in the United Kingdom, there were 125 active social farms. A study by the University of Essex showed that 49% of the social farms surveyed receive funds for their activities from charitable foundations, 33% receive a refund of costs incurred by clients of social and care services from local authorities. 38% of farms, however, take advantage of other sources of funding from the *Health Service*, social services, the *Big Lottery Fund* as well as public donations. The overall number of clients using social farm services is around 5,869 per week. However, the range of the level of services offered and the type of farms is wide (O'Connor, Lai, Watson, 2010).

In Belgium (Flanders) the ideas of “caring for” and “providing care” are embedded in the very fibre of farming. Farmers devote a large part of their time to caring for crops and farm animals. This approach, which is full of respect, results in farmers who are quite able to effectively work with people special care and therapeutic needs. In 2000, the number of Belgian social farms was over 100, and the farmers themselves grappled with many problems. In the main, these were focused on financial questions resulting from the lack of public funds from social institutions for the support of social farming. There was also a lack of understanding on the part of the government, which was not able to see the benefits that result from the activities of social farms. Also legal questions arose regarding the necessity of separating “green” forms of care from other social services, as well as the need to resolve the question of insurance for both farmers and clients alike. Finally, the Flemish government undertook appropriate steps toward the study and evaluation of social farms, and started pilot projects designed to determine the possibility of using these farms for social therapy for troubled youth. Also subject to modification were the legal solutions regarding the system of financing offered to social farms. In order to achieve a legal basis for the proposed solutions that would meet EU requirements, these activities were included in the *Rural Development Programme from 2000–2006*. These activities were undertaken in close cooperation with the ministries of Agriculture, and of Social Services and Education, with farmers and agricultural organizations, as well as independent actors that support and promote social farming, and other institutions engaged in questions of care provision and social rehabilitation, and finally with *Green Care*, an independent entity promoting social farming. The effect of these activities was not only legal recognition for existing social farms, but also the creation of a financial support system (which was launched in December, 2005), which is a substantial incentive for other farmers planning to start such farms. The number of social farms existing then, around 100, has multiplied. At present, there are over 400 professional farms in Belgium offering care. That is a growth of over 30% per year. Farmers can obtain subsidies of up to 40 Euro

per day for one or more clients. The size of this support is not linked with the number of patients or the intensity of care provided, but on the amount of time a farmer can devote to those under his care. As a result, some social farms cannot apply for support. Small farms or hobby farms do not receive such subsidies, which is a problem at the root of constant misunderstandings (O'Connor, Lai, Watson, 2010).

In Italy, social farming is an entirely new phenomenon, and yet there are several interesting examples of this type of activity date from the beginning of the 1970s. It is only recently, however, that researchers and politicians have described this with the name social farming. The majority of the present-day social farms take the form of social cooperatives (Fazzi, 2011). In Italy, two types of these are in operation: 1. type A – cooperatives offering social services on behalf of the state; 2. type B – cooperatives supporting people in disadvantaged situations related to the labour market. Some social cooperatives operate in rural areas and/or in agriculture. Individuals working in these cooperatives can become members or be employed. Although there are no official data regarding social farming in Italy, various studies indicate the existence of over 1,000 farms that are deeply rooted in the social and cultural context. They cooperate, above all at the local level, with institutions working in health care services, education, or legal services. There are no standard practices used on social farms. Their activities are tailored to the needs of the local community and are associated with existing social and human capital (Carbone, Gaito, Senni, 2009). This is also a result of the lack of state initiative in the social and care sectors. A range of entities cooperates with social farms from both the public and private sector. In Italy, social farms may also earn from the trade in food products they produce, sold to consumer groups or to wholesalers. Particular regions of this country take advantage of the support of RDP funds. In several cases, social farms are promoted in local strategic plans and supported by events organised to distribute information. Regions such as Tuscany, Friuli-Venezia Giulia or Campania have created the legal framework for social farming, which were then proposed as a national legislative solution. In Italy, there is a strong link between social farming and the development of networks. The first network mechanisms promoted by the regional agency for the development of rural areas in Tuscany and the University of Pisa allowed the creation of a platform for discussion, exchanging experiences, shared promotional efforts as well as raising social awareness. Social farming in Italy is involved in various trainings, professional internships, employment, therapeutic gardens, treatment with the use of plants and animals, as well as education and the care of children (O'Connor, Lai, Watson, 2010).

Community-based Social Farming

The *Community-based Social Farming (CSF)* model is an innovative project of the author of this article, implemented since 2016 in cooperation and within the area of the Social Farm “Oaza pod Lasem” (“Oasis by the Forest”) in Daleszyn. The model refers to the idea of social farming. It differs from the European forms of this kind of farming, described in section “Results and Discussion”, by: 1. incorporation of many social services into farming in rural areas (within one or more combined social

farms); 2. a clear social and philosophical idea uniting the farmers, their families, and the group of beneficiaries of the social activities and services; 3. joint actions of the involved entities (also local governments, non-governmental organisations, consumer co-operatives, and others) focused on bottom-up local development, using endogenous resources, connected through the idea of health and broadly understood education promoting a healthy lifestyle (this idea constitutes the backbone of the CSF, called the *Health Land*), culture, cultural heritage, and local history, strengthening local identity and patriotism. The purpose of the CSF is to create a new community through intergenerational integration of rural area inhabitants brought together by the CSF. They are the core of this community, including in their group the beneficiaries of farms living within the CSF area, the neighbouring villages, the peripherals, and the nearby cities. The CSF pursues a number of integration, cultural and educational projects (the latter form, called the *Educational Social Farm* – ESF, will be described in more detail further in this article). The part of the CSF operations that refers to the idea of cooperative activity through the manufactured products and common use of land should also be emphasised.

Educational Social Farm as the foundation of Community-based Social Farming

The notion of “sustainable development” is used everywhere, where humans undertake actions involving and using natural resources. The combination and optimal management of the potential: ecological, economic and social, constitutes the basis for “sustainable” development. Exploitation of each of these resources does not affect the balance between them, and one source is not used at the expense of another (Alston, 2004).

Sustainable development, as the idea determining social attitudes, ecological awareness, pro-environmental behaviors and actions, requires multi-faceted, systematic and fundamental education of the society (Kilpatrick and Falk, 2001; Smith and Sanchez, 2011).

The entire society should be educated, but the social group with particular significance for the future with respect to selection of the development directions, and thus for the fate of our planet, covers children and teenagers.

These premises became the starting point for *Community-based Social Farming*. The foundation of the CSF is a part thereof, responsible for fulfilling educational functions under the *Educational Social Farming*. The ESF model fits into the guidelines formulated by the European Economic and Social Committee, within the scope of the *Encouraging the inclusion of social farming in education programmes*, this is: “Particular attention should be devoted to the training of those involved – recipients as well as service providers – in order to ensure a high level of quality and skills in social farming operations. It would make sense, therefore, to design and make available continuing education programmes – in close collaboration with teaching and research institutions – to provide a high level of skills to the heads of undertakings and their staff responsible for social farming beneficiaries. It would also be expedient to examine and put in place the sort of training that could be given to these beneficiaries” (Opinion

of the EE&SC, 2013/C 44/07). The idea of the ESF is also based upon the education system presented in the UNESCO reports. As the leading organization for the *Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*, prepared a report, focused on the issues of knowledge assimilation in the context of sustainable development. It distinguished nine learning methods that are partly conventional, but also contain elements of modern teaching, both in terms of the forms of knowledge transfer, as well as the type of the assimilated content:

- **discovery learning** – the student explores the context of the obtained knowledge; it gives deeper meaning to knowledge by own experiences and by broadening of minds as a result of independent searching for additional information;
- **transmissive learning** – use of own teaching abilities and applied techniques, such as presentations, lectures, case studies;
- **participatory/collaborative learning** – active cooperation with other people/entities in the knowledge acquisition process, focusing on common problem-solving (in real and simulated situations);
- **problem-based learning** – focuses on methods to solve problems (real and hypothetical) in order to thoroughly explore and understand them, and to find ways to improve the existing situation; this model utilizes the knowledge of teachers, experts, stakeholders representing the entities concerned with the problem;
- **disciplinary learning** – refers to a specific field of knowledge, constitutes a starting point for exploration of a given science, learning of its specific nature and of knowledge resources;
- **interdisciplinary learning** – the action begins with a consideration/discussion on the given problem, focusing on an interdisciplinary approach in order to reach a common perspective and develop realistic solutions to a given problem or improve the existing situation;
- **multi-stakeholder social learning** – learning based on social aspects of multi-stakeholder actions, aimed at connecting people in the name of a common idea – people representing different points of view, knowledge and experience; the learning gathers and uses their potential resulting from relations and cooperation of these entities under internal and external contacts; this model does not propose solutions ready for implementation;
- **critical thinking-based learning** – exposure of values, approach to some phenomena and problems, represented by particular people, organizations, communities, constituting a challenge, an incentive to reflections, debates and considerations regarding phenomena and problems of a global nature, such as: welfare of animals, ecology, human dignity, sustainable development;
- **systems thinking-based learning** – searching for connections, relations, interdependencies in order to gain a broader perspective, perception of the system more as a whole rather than as a sum of its particular parts; such an approach aims at understanding, and then attempting to modify a specific element that will result in changes in different parts and will finally affect the shape of the entire system (*Shaping the education of tomorrow*, 2012, pp. 25–26).

In Poland, formal education for sustainable development, in a broader context, has been present only since 1999. Before that, mentions of the importance of the natural environment appeared in such school subjects as biology and geography. A noticeable change concerning incorporation of subjects related to environmental protection and environmental problems was observed in 2009. According to the *General Education Core Curriculum*, binding since the school year 2009/2010, subjects referring to the main issues of sustainable development have been introduced to early elementary, elementary, lower secondary and higher secondary education. At the level of early elementary education, it only covers two subjects related to biodiversity, as well as health and diseases of affluence (HIV, AIDS). In grades I–III, seven subjects have been introduced (next to the two previously listed issues, they covered: ecology, water resources, waste, climate changes, prevention and mitigation of the effects of natural disasters). In later grades – IV–VI – eight subjects have been suggested (additional issue: agriculture and forestry); in turn, in lower secondary schools, two more subjects have appeared, tackling the issues of renewable energy and balanced urbanization. In higher secondary schools, the number of subjects referring to sustainable development is approximately ten. However, the important role of informal education of children and teenagers is emphasized; education with the use of the mass media (TV, press, Internet, social media), as well as engaging business representatives and non-governmental organizations. This form of education combined with practice is implemented with the use of the following methods: discussion, case study, simulations, games such as: decision-making, questionnaires, and seems to be more effective (Gajuś-Lankamer and Wójcik, 2013, pp. 30–44).

Education focused on sustainable development in Poland is dictated above all by the *National Strategy of Ecological Education*, developed by the Ministry of Environment. According to this strategy, “Education on sustainable development pursues the following objectives:

1. Shaping of full awareness and awakening of the society’s interest in interrelated economic, social, political, and environmental matters.
2. Allowing every person to gain knowledge and skills necessary for improving the condition of the environment.
3. Creation of new patterns of behavior, shaping of attitudes, values and beliefs of individuals, groups and societies, while taking account of the concern for the quality of the environment” (*Przez Edukację do Zrównoważonego Rozwoju*, 2001).

However, this strategy simultaneously assumes that, in order for the listed goals to be achieved, it is necessary to meet certain requirements. They include: acknowledgment of ecological education as the basic assumption in implementation of the environmental policy of the state; implementation – in all areas of social life – of ecological education respecting and utilizing cultural, moral and religious values; securing the society’s access to knowledge with regard to the natural environment and methods to care for its condition; acceptance of the fact that only ecological education can change the present attitudes of the consumer society. The harmful effect of the consumptionist ideology on the degradation of the environment is especially affected by its unreasonable exploitation (Sztumski, 2014).

Taking into consideration all these premises, the *Educational Social Farm* was established under the CSF.

The structure of the ESF is presented in Figure 1.

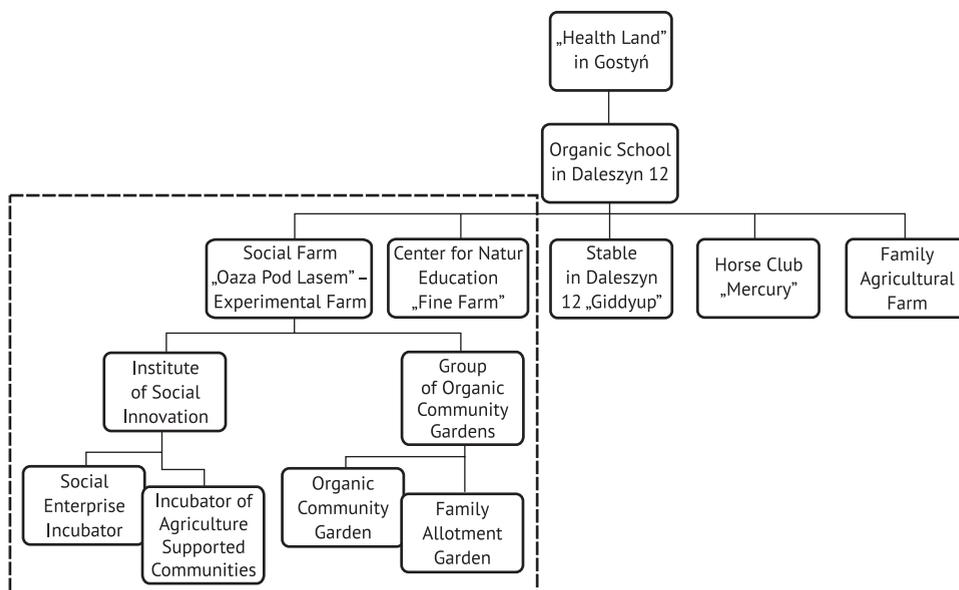


Fig. 1. The model of Educational Social Farm

Source: A new system of education based on the Social Farm “Oaza pod Lasem” is marked with a broken line

The previous structure of the Social Farm “Oaza pod Lasem” includes: Stable in Daleszyn 12 “Giddyup”, Horse Club “Mercury” and a Family Agricultural Farm. These entities are the constituent parts of the Organic School in Daleszyn 12 under the *Health Land* in Gostyń. Within the project implemented together with the University of Agriculture in Cracow, the scope of educational activities offered by the Social Farm “Oaza pod Lasem” was expanded by two elements: 1. Center for Nature Education “Fine Farm”; 2. Social Farm “Oaza pod Lasem” – Experimental Farm. The latter entity is composed of: the Institute of Social Innovation with its back-up entities in the form of the Social Enterprise Incubator and the Incubator of Agriculture Supported Communities, as well as the Group of Organic Community Gardens, gathering the Organic Community Garden and the Family Allotment Garden. The *Educational Social Farm* brought its human resources and experience to the social space in Daleszyn 12 as the common good. It shared farm buildings, animals and land, along with the entire infrastructure, necessary devices, toys, tools, and equipment. The educational institution has recreational and sports areas, arable land, pastures and gardens with the total surface area of 5 ha 8100 m², including 1 ha 1270 m² of the area of the Social Farm “Oaza pod Lasem”.

The *Educational Social Farm* is a social (non-formal) continuing education entity for adults and for bringing up their children. It deals with education related to organic

health culture and multifunctional social agriculture. It spreads organic knowledge and is focused on the future. This organization cooperates with other educational and research units, including the University of Agriculture in Cracow, and is aided with elements of new knowledge by the research and development area. The ESF intends to engage in promotion of its operations and implementation of similar solutions in Poland, and later – in Europe.

The students/trainees of the ESF include (but are not limited to) the inhabitants of rural areas. The teaching process is focused on equipping the students with characteristics adequate to the contemporary civilization challenges, such as: innovative attitudes, creativity, organic development, care for health, activity instead of passivity and entitled attitude, as well as social responsibility. The imperative values for the ESF include: organic education, local culture, family farm and household, good neighborhood, inter-generational integration, health, healthy consumption. The ESF pursues informal education – “learning in practice”, connected with entertainment education (edutainment).

It promotes and implements a system of learning throughout the entire life.

The objectives pursued by the Educational Social Farm include:

- promotion of its own farm;
- implementation of multifunctional social agriculture;
- support for rural and family social institutions;
- shaping of the sense of own identity and respect for cultural heritage;
- promotion of organic health education;
- promotion of active social and voluntary activity;
- development of social competences;
- promotion of entrepreneurial activity among children and teenagers;
- support for innovative educational programs;
- health promotion;
- promotion of learning throughout the entire life;
- popularization of healthy lifestyle;
- establishment of emotional bonds between human and animals;
- popularization of horse leisure;
- promotion of horse breeding;
- promotion of horse riding.

Summary

The *Community-based Social Farming* is the precursor and the avant-garde for a new form of rural entrepreneurship, referring to the idea of cooperative activity, which – using the synergistic potential of individuals and the entire community – functions in the agri-food sector. Apart from provision of social services, it creates other opportunities for acquiring income from non-agricultural and agriculture-related

operations (e.g. direct sales). The new type of social farm is characterised by the mechanisms of creation of permanent relations between various social actors and their role in the versatile development of rural areas. This farm contributes to strengthening of the relations between inhabitants, and at the same time, enables tightening of relations among various actors associated with social farming. It is a place where new binding and bridging bonds are formed, connecting farmers, rural area inhabitants, and beneficiaries of social services. The pilot model is universal and can be implemented at any place. It is particularly recommended in rural areas characterised by fragmentation. It creates possibilities of obtaining additional sources of income, offers services corresponding to the needs of various social groups (children, teenagers, the elderly, the disabled), reinforces local identity, contributes to intergenerational integration, and implements the principles of sustainable development. It is surrounded by nature and educates people at various ages. The motto of the CSF is: social bonds, health, healthy lifestyle, and common actions for the benefit of the “little homeland”.

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Definition

Community-based Social Farming (CSF) is a new way of managing rural areas. In Polish conditions, CSF as a model of social innovation is based on a cooperative way of farming. This novel system links many social, environmental, agricultural and economic functions into a farming household. From a sociological perspective, CSF concerns three analytical layers: the structural (cooperative), the interactive-functional (system of mutually dependent elements), and the axiological (hierarchy of values). For a model taking into account the mutually appearing, mutually dependent and complimentary elements of each of these layers, key concepts include “social ties” and “community”. The type of links that occur in CSF can be described as family-community ties. CSF is an open-type entity – it does not isolate itself from its surroundings. It plays an integrative role and has an enduring character owing to the strength of the ties between community actors engaged in farming. CSF is a new kind of community, taking advantage of the endogenic potential, rooted in the place where it arises, adding to the existing family circle new, unrelated members from nearby and from more distant locales – from the country, towns and their peripheries. CSF clients come from various social groups – children, youth, individuals in their productive years as well as older individuals. CSF is supported by various formal and informal entities and organizations, as well as by other individual farms and interested residents. CSF, linked with socially engaged farming, constitutes an element of a new economic order of a community character. It operates in the specific field of rural community, in harmony with the natural environment. It offers social services, including care and therapeutic services, undertakes educational activities, and fosters intergenerational integration. It operates in areas of health, the labour market, tourism and leisure, sport and recreation, culture and art, preservation of cultural heritage, traditional artisan crafts and handwork. It promotes farming supported by consumers, enables cooperative land use and management, employs farming without chemicals or ecological (certificated) methods of plant cultivation and animal husbandry. It is engaged in local production (homemade products), direct sales and agricultural retail trade, and provides gastronomic services for events.

Definicja

Wspólnota gospodarstwa społecznego (WGS) (ang. *Community-based Social Farming; CSF*) – jest nową formą gospodarowania na obszarach wiejskich. W polskich warunkach WGS, jako model innowacji społecznej, opiera się na wspólnotowym sposobie gospodarowania. To nowatorski system łączący wiele funkcji społecznych, środowiskowych, rolniczych i gospodarczych w ramach gospodarstwa rolnego i gospodarstwa domowego. W ujęciu socjologicznym idea WGS odnosi się do trzech warstw analitycznych: strukturalnej (wspólnota), interakcyjno-funkcjonalnej (układ wzajemnie zależnych elementów) i aksjologicznej (hierarchia wartości). Dla modelu uwzględniającego współwystępujące, współzależne i uzupełniające się elementy wszystkich tych warstw kluczowymi pojęciami są: więź społeczna oraz wspólnota. Rodzaj powiązań występujących w WGS można określić jako **więzi rodzinno-wspólnotowe**. WGS to jednostka typu otwartego – nie izoluje się od środowisk, które ją otaczają. Odgrywa rolę integrującą i ma trwały charakter dzięki sile powiązań (więzi) między podmiotami społecznymi zaangażowanymi w działalność gospodarstwa. WGS jest nowym rodzajem wspólnoty, wykorzystującym potencjał endogeniczny, zakorzenionym w miejscu swego powstania, włączającym do dotychczasowego rodzinnego grona nowych, niespokrewnionych członków z bliższego i dalszego sąsiedztwa – z obszaru wsi, miasta i jego peryferii. Beneficjentami WGS są różne grupy społeczne – dzieci, młodzież, osoby w wieku produkcyjnym oraz osoby starsze. WGS jest wspierana przez różne podmioty i organizacje nieformalne i formalne, jak również przez inne gospodarstwa indywidualne i zainteresowanych mieszkańców. WGS, związana ze społecznie zaangażowanym rolnictwem, stanowi element nowego ładu gospodarczego, mającego społeczny charakter. Funkcjonuje w określonej wiejskiej przestrzeni społecznej, harmonizującej ze środowiskiem przyrodniczym. Oferuje usługi społeczne, w tym opiekuńcze i terapeutyczne, podejmuje działania edukacyjne i pedagogiczne, sprzyja integracji międzypokoleniowej. Działa w obszarze zdrowia, rynku pracy, turystyki i wypoczynku, sportu i rekreacji, kultury i sztuki, ochrony dziedzictwa kulturowego, tradycyjnego rzemiosła i rękodzielnictwa. Promuje rolnictwo wspierane przez konsumentów, umożliwia w swych ramach wspólne gospodarowanie i wspólne użytkowanie ziemi. Stosuje uprawę roślin: ekologiczną (certyfikowaną) lub bez użycia środków chemicznych. Prowadzi hodowlę zwierząt, zajmuje się lokalnym przetwórstwem (produkty domowe), prowadzi sprzedaż bezpośrednią i rolniczy handel detaliczny oraz świadczy usługi gastronomiczne na potrzeby organizowanych imprez.

Zaakceptowano do druku – Accepted for print: 21.08.2017

Do cytowania – For citation:

Knapik, W. (2017). Community-based Social Farming (CSF) and its educational functions [Wspólnota Gospodarstwa Społecznego (WGS) i jej funkcje edukacyjne]. *Problemy Drobnych Gospodarstw Rolnych – Problems of Small Agricultural Holdings*, 2, 17–31. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15576/PDGR/2017.2.17>