

English summary – SFC specialist report

The potential and role of agricultural advising services for supporting Short Food Chain systems (SFCs) for the purposes of the ‘Eat Wisely, Know What You Eat!’ Campaign

RYSZARD KAMINSKI

ryszard.kaminski@kpodr.pl

Kujawy-Pomorze Agri-Advisory Centre in Miników

Healthy, locally-produced food and traditional tastes have been increasingly popular in recent years. As more and more mass-produced food is sold in large supermarkets, people are seeking out more and more locally-produced products, traditional dishes, old recipes and natural tastes. Consumers are increasingly recognising the value of traditional food and direct contact with producers. There are now many farms producing food and processing it for their own use and for direct sale to consumers.

Agricultural advisory centres have always been concerned with nutrition and food. Initially by supporting so-called home-based food-processing in rural areas, providing advice to individuals (mostly women), as well as providing training and advice to groups of rural women. Over the past 30 years, agri-advisory centres have been very much engaged in promoting agro-tourism across Poland and traditional food products through fairs, promotional events, and also by helping to register many local specialties as traditional products with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and organising the ‘Our Culinary Heritage’ competition at the local and regional level.

This report presents a review of activities of Agricultural Advisory Centres related to Short Food Chain supply (SFCs). If the Centres are to play a greater and more effective role in promoting SFC systems and supporting their development, it is important to specify their tasks and roles.

1. Centres could coordinate public support for promoting SFC systems at the regional and national levels. The National Network for Rural Areas (KSOW), Innovation Network for Rural Areas (SIR) and agricultural advisory centres are already working with all the potential stakeholders, and so are a good implementer for such activities.
2. The Centres could carry out a review of existing national and regional systems for recommending high quality foods in relation to their potential for being included in SFC systems both from the point of the farmer (including small farms) and the consumer point of view. This is important because the consumer demands a clear, simple and coherent message. Today, we have many different brands and marks, which has a negative impact on the whole quality food sector.
3. The potential of the Agricultural Advisory Centres should be used to increase the number of food products registered, but not just in relation to the list of products organised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. There is a need for a system of product and producer identification, which can be put forward for registration as Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), and Traditional Specialities Guaranteed (TSG), which are part of Polish and European Union quality control systems.
4. It is important to make use of the ‘strengths’ of the agri-advisory service, especially innovation brokers in creating as many Operational Groups for Innovation as possible, especially in relation to Short Food Chain systems, which are now a priority in the Programme for Development of Rural Areas (PROW), especially the EIP-Agri Programme

Operacja: Wiedź i Mądrze Jedz: Ogólnopolska kampania na rzecz Krótkich Łańcuchów dostaw Żywności.

Operation: Eat Well. Know what you Eat! Campaign on Short Food Chain supply systems

Realizacja/Implementation: Fundacja Rozwoju Podhala w ramach umowy/agreement no nr KSOW/2/2018/038.



‘Collaboration’. The development of SFC systems requires innovation and testing practical organisational solutions, as well as in food technology for processing, production at the scale of small farms.

5. Preserving the autonomy of specific regional Agricultural Advisory Centres, it is essential to increase the competencies and consolidate the knowledge of the specialists employed in them with a remit to support SFC systems. These matters should be a focus for training aimed at working out together minimum standards for agri-advisory centre operations in the field of food quality.
6. It is essential to develop – with the help of agri-advisory centres, the National Agricultural Advisory Centre (CDR) and KSOW – a data base of good practice, both in relation to creating sales and distribution channels (from farmer to consumer), possibilities for receiving financial support for such activities (a variety of funding sources) and also referring to organisations which can help in implementation (e.g. local governments at the gmina and powiat levels, NGOs, Local Action Groups, producers groups, associations, cooperatives and others).
7. The focus on SFC systems and their development requires special attention to ensure that small farms – above all – can benefit from them, especially those which are not now selling their products directly to consumers. This requires coordinated support on the part of public institutions (SFC systems are not just an agricultural problem, but a multi-disciplinary and multi-faceted problem). The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development should establish a working group to coordinate the actions of public institutions and non-public organisations aimed at supporting development of SFCs, and appoint a plenipotentiary, whose task is to ensure that the interests of farmers, especially small farmers are taken into account. The working group/plenipotentiary would have the task to establish a permanent group of advisors drawn from the agri-advisory centres, the National Agri-Advisory Centre, Departments of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, National Centre for Agriculture Support (KOWR), Polish Chamber for Regional and Local Products and other organisations. Modelled on the thematic groups functioning as part of the European Network for Innovation in Agriculture, the group would address key issues related to high quality food in SFC systems in a systematic way using local and regional experience and implementing policies of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development in relation to rural and agricultural development, especially in relation to support for small farms.

Operacja: *Wiedz i Mądrze Jedz: Ogólnopolska kampania na rzecz Krótkich Łańcuchów dostaw Żywności.*

Operation: *Eat Well. Know what you Eat! Campaign on Short Food Chain supply systems*

Realizacja/Implementation: Fundacja Rozwoju Podhala w ramach umowy/agreement no nr KSOW/2/2018/038.

