

MISSION STATEMENT OF SAVE ⁽¹⁾

SAVE is a pan-European umbrella NGO established to preserve and promote genetic, cultural and historical diversity in farm animals ⁽²⁾ and cultivated plants in Europe in cooperation with its local country members. SAVE especially aims at breeds of farm animals and cultivated plants that are threatened by extinction.

means

The above objectives are pursued via:

1. an adequate organizational structure comprising a Board of Directors, a Project Commission and a Council of Cooperation Partners;
2. information, including
 - _ collection and dissemination of information such as:
 - international and national legislation and treaties with regard to rare breeds of farm animals and cultivated plants
 - international and national funding programs and logistical assistance
 - _ collection and transfer of know-how
3. the monitoring of the state of the endangered breeds and cultivated plants
 - _ seeking, locating, evaluating and regular stock inspections of remnant populations of rare breeds and varieties of cultivated plants (by the Monitoring Institute)
 - _ installing an early warning system to signal need for action when and where necessary
4. single projects, rescue operations. SAVE will
 - _ take action when needed in cooperation with the country partners and/or initiate conservation measures (normally on-farm) where local organizations are lacking or can't cope with the task. In the long term SAVE will hand over these projects.
 - _ lend logistical and other types of support to organizations in general and to specific conservation projects in particular for national and regional activities.
5. promotion of existing endangered breeds and cultivated plants. this includes
 - _ public relations and raising awareness for the need to preserve the genetic resources through the www.save-foundation.net website, publication of the SAVE eNews, press / media-releases, etc.;
 - _ promoting and elaborating studies with regard to rare breeds and cultivated plants;
 - _ lobbying towards international organizations and governments (FAO, EU, ...), and through its members, towards national governments and organizations;
 - _ participating at / organizing conferences, seminars, ...
 - _ support for in situ / on-farm projects in different European countries.
6. networking and encouraging cooperation of European partners such as NGO's, universities, government bodies, nature reserves, active in the field of agro biodiversity
7. raising finances to realize these projects.

¹ Largely based on the Constitution document of the SAVE Foundation of December 1997, which was revised by the Board during the Annual Meeting of 1998 in Möschberg.

² rare breeds as defined by FAO

values

At SAVE we are convinced that rare breeds of farm animals and cultivated plants need to be preserved, bred and cultivated.

As far as rare breeds of farm animals are concerned:

1. These breeds have proven their usefulness in the past and can – even today - put their unique characteristics to work, probably in different fields as compared to the past.
 - _ Besides specific traits per breed, these animals are known for their hardiness, longevity, climatic tolerance, easiness of reproduction, for their disease resistance, ...
 - _ Further they have the savour of their flesh, the flavour of their dairy-products, ...
 - _ New “applications” can be thought of and developed. Think of the use of draught horses in the forest industry, of sheep and cattle in grazing and nature reserve management.
 - _ In the development of new breeds of farm animals adapted to specific needs...
 - _ Be a source for low-input agriculture

2. These breeds constitute a pool of valuable genetic resources that were useful at a certain period of time in the past and that might become valuable in the future in the light of:
 - _ feeding the growing world population, more especially in developing countries;
 - _ changing climatical and meteorological circumstances (excessive drought, rainfall, greenhouse effect,)
 - _ spring up of new diseases.

As far as varieties of traditional plants are concerned:¹

1. Traditional plants and cultivated plants grow and thrive in symbiosis with surrounding species. They evolved over thousands of years in a dynamic interaction between nature and farmers’ careful selection and breeding. Local varieties of wheat, corn, fruit, vegetables, ... have ensured millions of people an adequate diet. Traditional plants have provided feed for domestic animals, fibre, clothing, shelter, energy and a multiple of other products and services and will continue to combine in an optimal way local resources with local needs.

2. Old traditional cultivated plants may be adapted to a particular type of soil, climate and growing season. Its genes may endow it with traits needed by farmers: disease resistance, cold or heat tolerance, special taste or nutritional qualities. These qualities provide farmers and plant breeders with raw materials to improve their cultivated plants and adapt them to changing environmental conditions and should therefore be preserved.

In general traditional breeds and cultivated plants reflect historical and cultural values

- _ these breeds and cultivated plants are the result of century long caring, nurturing and selecting by our forbears and deserve our respect;
- _ these breeds and cultivated plants have largely contributed to our present standard of living (wool industry, meat industry, wheat, corn, fruit, vegetables, ...) and earn our gratitude;
- _ they are an integrated part of some local landscapes, local environment, ... and merit our admiration.

¹ adapted from <http://www.startwithaseed.org/pages/crop.htm> and different other websites.