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The President's Editorial

Dear friends,

In the present newsletter you will find a lot of important information, as stud directors, stud employees, friends or supporters of our state studs. Despite the fact that all of us are more and more receiving plenty of useful (or not) information through the internet, I would like you to take some time on following points:

- For the first time ever since our start in 2009, the number of ESSA members allows us to have our economic situation well balanced so that we can work for the future of our association. That's why I hope that some German studs (especially the famous Hanoverian stud led by my friend Axel Brockmann) that are not yet members will understand how natural and evident it should be to join our network.
- You remember that in 2010 we have applied for some EU financial support through the European Education and Culture direction. We had the help and advice of the consultant of the French Haras Nationaux (thanks to them) but it was not enough to succeed. Now, through our Slovenian friends of Lipica, we will explore other ways for the same objective!
- Our position is much stronger than it was two years ago. We are also members of two European networks, one within the horse industry, one with the culture world; these new connections will help us to improve our European lobbying.

The board is more and more involved to get ESSA improving its efficiency, and I would like to say one word about Dominik Burger. His national stud at Avenches was in a difficult position at the time the Swiss Federal Parliament wanted to reduce the cost of the stud, without taking into account their work in research, teaching and all their other tasks. With the support of breeders and horse people, the stud is back on track and I would like to give a special thank you to Dominik, because during this period he was always, although his high expertise gives him a very busy calendar, available to help and give advice for our association.

Bernard Maurel



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Stallions from four countries represented ESSA at Cheval Passion

The presentation of the Euroquadrille of 16 stallions from Avenches, Lipica, Marbach and the Haras Nationaux at the horse fair “Cheval Passion” at Avignon was highly valuable for our association. Having horses of 12 different breeds involved was a good example of biodiversity. The performance showed how the state studs act in favour of endangered breeds and are able to support the selection of sport horses. It also promoted the riding abilities of the participating stud staff, all excellent riders. The performance was a good example of horsemanship. The riders managed to enable 16 breeding stallions that didn't know each other before within only a few days to work on short exercises in correct order.

The image of our European network after Avignon is so well enhanced that ESSA should be ready to do this type of presentation again, for every organiser who can provide excellent service, good infrastructure and adequate payment.

You can see pictures and a video of the performance on www.europeanstatestuds.org.

Welcome to our six new partner studs

The ESSA network keeps growing. Following the successful presentations of ESSA at the Cheval Passion fair, six French studs joined the network. A warm welcome to the National Studs of Rosières-aux-Salines, Saint Lô, Tarbes, Rodez, Uzès and Pau-Gelos!

Today, ESSA counts 29 partner studs in 13 countries. With nine partner studs France is the mostly represented country, followed by Germany and Hungary with four studs each.

Please find more information about the new ESSA members on www.haras-nationaux.fr

ESSA General Assembly 2011 at Le Pin

The ESSA General Assembly 2011 is scheduled for 3rd and 4th of May at the French National Stud of Le Pin. Arrival day with transfer from Paris to Le Pin and a welcome dinner will be on Monday, 2nd of May. On Tuesday, 3rd of May the General Assembly will take place followed



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by an evening programme with guests. On Wednesday, 4th of May a stud tour will give an impression of the “Versailles for horses”. After lunch, transfer will be offered back to Paris. The invitations for the event have been sent. The ESSA board hopes to meet as many members as possible!

Days of European Stud Culture at Lipica

From 12th to 14th of October the “Days of European Stud Culture” will be held at Lipica National Stud, Slovenia. A symposium will deal with the wide range of cultural aspects connected with the European state studs. The historic stud premises and cultural landscapes and the living heritage “horse” will be in the focus of attention as well as traditions and knowledge preserved and continued in the national studs over centuries. The symposium that takes place on Thursday 13th of October will be added on 14th of October by presentations of Lipica stud and a social programme.

The detailed programme will be accomplished by a committee; experts from the fields of tangible, intangible and living heritage are expected to contribute. The call for papers can be expected soon. All ESSA members and friends are asked to save the date!

Application for European subsidies

Thanks to the initiative of Lipica stud ESSA got in touch with two Slovenian agencies specialised in the preparation of applications for European subsidies. On 18th of February, Astrid von Velsen-Zerweck, Tomi Rumpf, Janez Rus and Alexandra Lotz were able to take part in a kick-off meeting with the agencies Di@alog and MK Project at Lipica. First proposals for application strategies are expected to be presented at the ESSA General Assembly on 3rd of May at Le Pin.

Database for structures and operating areas of European State Studs

Following the analysis of structures and operating areas of European State Studs, undertaken by Ann-Cathrin Doelzer as Bachelor thesis at Van Hall Larenstein University in



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2010, a database with the results of the survey is under construction. The collection of data is necessary to support ESSA's arguments for the preservation of the state studs. The information serves as basis for European lobbying and applications for funding.

All ESSA partner studs which did not participate in the survey so far are strongly encouraged to support this specific ESSA activity by providing the relevant data and sending back the filled in questionnaire as soon as possible.

ESSA membership in the European Horse Network

On 1st of February the board of European Horse Network (EHN) accepted our membership application appreciating that ESSA joins the network. In their following meeting on 28th of February at Brussels, Dominik Burger presented our association.

The EHN is primarily focused on sports; cultural aspects of horses are new to the networks' members – a gap that can be filled by ESSA. EHN is also interested in establishing further contacts to partners of the new European member states, where ESSA is already well established.

In opposite direction ESSA can benefit from the cooperation by synergies at Brussels and joint activities in the future. The EHN has a very good network which ESSA can use it for European lobbying.

RBI 8th Global Conference on the Conservation of Animal Genetic Resources at Tekirdag, Turkey from 4th to 8th October 2011

Namık Kemal University and the General Directorate of Agricultural Research (GDAR) of the Ministry of Agriculture are pleased to invite you to the 8th (RBI) Global Conference on the Conservation of Domestic Animal Genetic Diversity to be held in Tekirdağ (Tukrey) in October 2011.

Past RBI global conferences have brought scientists and conservationists together with one common goal - the conservation of global farm animal genetic resources - and the



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proceedings of these meetings have become valuable references on the characterization and management of Animal Genetic resources.

This conference will be held in a region which is rich in animal genetic resources and is a well-known center for domestication. It gives forth to a final report and a global action plan for conservation of the World's Animal genetic resources. The meetings will also have participants and institutions from the host country. Specialists in a wide range of disciplines related to the management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources will have benefited from the conference in the process.

FAO, through the SOW process, has facilitated several comprehensive audit of FAnGr in many countries and has also highlighted the need for regional cooperation on issues such as value adding through product and market development, protection of breeders' and keeper' rights and the critical importance of veterinary protocols to facilitate regional and global trade.

The theme for this conference has been chosen as "Sustainable conservation of the livestock breed diversity for the future: Impact of globalization of Animal breeding and the loss of farm Animal genetic diversity – a conflict?" With these and other critical issues in mind, the organisers will endeavor to accommodate all contributions – either as short papers – or as posters. Therefore, the organisers look forward to meeting all stakeholders and making idea and experience exchange possible, including new ones in the global FAnGR family as well as about the future of conservation through sustainable use.

The conference is part of a series of conferences, started in 1989 in United Kingdom and held in every third year typically in a region that is rich in Animal Genetic Resources (AnGR). Following the traditions of earlier RBI Global Conferences (1991 Hungary, 1994 Canada, 1997 Nepal, 2000 Brazil, 2005 South Africa, 2008 Vietnam,). The aims are to enforce the Conservation of Domestic Animal Genetic Resources, to reintroduce the AnGR in the agrarian environment, to reinforce the conservation and development of traditional farming.

It is a great pleasure for the organizers to invite you to participate in this meeting and to ask you to submit a paper or poster on subjects related to the sessions and main topics. They look forward to meeting old friends and making new ones in the global AnGR community and to strengthen the conservation movement through sustainable use of AnGR.



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THEME:

Sustainable conservation of the livestock breeds diversity for the future: Impact of globalization of Animal breeding and the loss of farm Animal genetic diversity - a conflict?"

AUDIENCE:

Global audience, ranging from conservationists of farm animal genetic resources from all over the world; including government representatives, university faculties and students, veterinary scientists, members of zoological/agricultural and production associations, biodiversity conservation experts, farm Animal conservationists, private and public Animal owners and breeders, geneticists, ecologists, commercial agriculturalists and providers of products and services are welcome

TOPICS:

The 8th Global Conference on the Conservation of Farm Animal Genetic Resources will provide a forum for the interaction and exchange of information and ideas on all aspects regarding Sustainable conservation of the livestock breeds diversity for the future: Impact of globalization of Animal breeding and the loss of farm Animal genetic diversity - a conflict?" as a tool for sustainable development.

The following topics will be covered in AnGR conservation:

- In situ and ex situ conservation
- Research and application: sustainable farming for future
- Indigenous knowledge systems intellectual property right, Access and benefit sharing of farm Animal genetic resources
- Farming for the future
- Marketing rare breeds and products
- Agricultural innovation involving indigenous Animals and traditional farming practices
- Impact of global changes on local breeds
- Breeders, keeper rights
- Production characteristics of local breeds

LANGUAGE:

The official languages of the conference will be English and Turkish. Simultaneous translation in headphones will be provided.



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IMPORTANT DATES:

Deadline for title submission	30. March 2011
Deadline for abstract submission and early registration	30. April 2011
Deadline for full text submission	30. June, 2011
Late registration	after 30. April 2011, but not later than 30. July 2011

If you are interested to participate in the conference, for further information please contact:
Assist.Prof. Dr. Emel ÖZKAN: ozemel@hotmail.com, ozemel@yahoo.com

Country in focus: Hungary

Hungary a country with old equine tradition*

Since 800-900 AD horses play a key role in Hungarian history. Originally Hungarians have been nomadic people who depended on their horses as means of transport. Those nomads are also known as Magyars which caused a lot of raids. With their small, fast and very persistent horses they used to have the edge over their opponents.

During the battles against the Ottoman Empire Hungary lost a huge amount of horses. In the 16th century Hungary was occupied by the Ottomans and horses were crossbred with oriental blood. Later the Hungarians maintained this breeding direction and established first Turkish and then Arabian stallions. Around 200 years later, Austria forced back the Ottomans and Hungary became part of the Habsburg Empire whereby the Lipizzaner horses came to Hungary. Due to many long battles there was a great shortage of horses. To meet this problem the first state studs in Mezöhegyes and Bábolna were established. Around 1850 a revolt against the Habsburg rulers took place and as result the monarchy of Austria-Hungary was set up. After the revolt more state studs were founded to support the declining horse breeding activities. *Joseph II* influenced the Hungarian horse breeding considerably. He established the stallion and mare awarding, stallion and young horse depots, national breeding stations and imported high quality genetic material.



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Through motorisation the Hungarian horses lost their importance and the number of horses decreased tremendously. A radical reform at the Hungarian state studs in 1963/64 resulted in a great loss of traditional horse breeds –a tendency still going on. During Socialism the traditional breeds *Gidrán*, *Nonius*, *Kisbéri* and *Furioso-North-Star* were kept as genetic reserves. At Mezöhegyes a mixed herd of mares was crossbred with first Hannoverian and then Holsteiner stallions to produce Warmblood sport horses. After the fall of the Iron Curtain lots of studs were privatised. Today, private breeders and breeding associations take care of several traditional breeds and the establishment of a modern sport horse. Some of the traditional state studs survived the political and social changes and managed to preserve their culture and their historic breeds. The national studs of Bábolna, Hortobágyi, Mezöhegyesi and Szilvásvárads are part of the ESSA network.

Most important Hungarian breeds

Nonius

The Nonius has its origins at the national stud farm Mezöhegyes and is the oldest breed of Hungary. The breed is called after the progenitor Nonius I who was captured during the war against Napoleon in Germany. There he was crossbred with Spanish-Napoli mares, to produce a heavy Warmblood. Its locomotion and confirmation is influenced by Lipizzaners and Kladrub horses. After the use of English Thoroughbred the Nonius gained in refinement and its exterior resembled the Anglican type, while losing his massiveness and becoming more demanding. Characteristics of the Nonius are its height with 1,45-1,65 m, a bay or black coat, it has a kind character and good temperament, willingness to work in harness as well as under saddle with good endurance in medium speeds. The main peculiarity of the Nonius is its slightly rough half ram's head. The two traditional studs Mezöhegyes (40 mares) and Hortobágy (60 mares) still breed the Nonius. Today, the total stock of the breed consists of 450 mares and 80 stallions in the main register.

Gidrán

The Gidrán horse is also a very traditional Hungarian breed. The progenitor was an Arabian horse from Egypt and over time the Gidrán got the confirmation of an English half-blood. It is an elegant, noble hunting and cavalier horse which has excellent basic movements and jumping talent with lively, enduring, reliable and intelligent temperament. Today it is bred in the National Stud Szilvásvárads and the private stud Marocpuszta.

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Lipizzaner (Hungary)

The breeding of Lipizzaner horses in Hungary began in the early 1800s, when Lipica stud was transferred to Mezőhegyes in order to save the animals from the Napoleonic troops. After the dangers of war had passed not all horses returned to Lipica, and the population of Lipizzaners at Mezőhegyes grew up to a number of 3000 horses.

The climate and environment at Mezőhegyes was different resulting in a change of type. The horses started to gain weight, became heavy-boned, and lost some of their physical sturdiness which is typical for mountain horses. To solve this problem, the Lipizzaners were transferred from Mezőhegyes to Fogaras, in the mountains of Transylvania. They spent nearly 40 years at Fogaras what caused a strengthening of the breed. In 1912, the Lipizzaner stud was transferred from Fogaras to the Hungarian Royal Stud of Bábolna and finally to the Bükk mountains at Szilvássvár.

Shagya Arab

The Shagya Arabian has been developed by pure breeding on an international basis using an Arabian type of horses from Bábolna, Mezőhegyes and Radautz. The breeding goal was to get an Arabian horse with a big frame and withers at least 150 cm high. The horse should be noble; and suitable as a mount or a carriage horse for everyone. The Shagya-Arab is used for endurance as well as carriage horse. The breed is enduring, hard and able-bodied with very quick regeneration time. In Hungary it is mainly breed at Bábolna National Stud.

Hungarian Sport Horse

The structural changes of the Hungarian agriculture during the late 1950's led to a significant decrease in the demand of farm horses. A new type of horse was in demand for sport and leisure. This aim was reached through crossing traditional Hungarian horse breeds with Western European sport breeds first Holsteiners and then with almost all sport breeds. The desired type of the Hungarian Sport Horse is characterized by its size. The head is well-proportioned to the body, the neck is long and medium or high arched, the withers are long and medium high, the back is well muscled and medium long, the groin is short and strong, the rump is large. The breast is wide and deep, the joints are large, the leg conformation is sound. Its wither height is 165-170 centimeters. The Hungarian Sport Horse Breeders Association records 1700 mares of which 20 mares belong to the Hortobágy Stud's five mother lines.



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Furioso North Star

The Furioso-North Star is a horse breed developed in Hungary at Mezöhegyes National Stud. Today, it is considered a Warmblood breed with a sound, durable confirmation capable of light farm work. Nowadays with a refined appearance that reflects its Thoroughbred influence.

Kisbéri

At the royal stud farm Kisbér English Thoroughbred horses were crossed with a lot of different other breeds. This work resulted in a saddle horse breed of high Thoroughbred blood. These horses were heavier and quieter than Thoroughbreds, with a good conformation and ready to work. Today's Kisbéri horse is a valuable pleasure and family horse, while some individuals can compete successfully in international competitions, too. Kisbéri horses are famous for their elegant, noble look, good conformation, reliability and stamina.

Hungarian ESSA partner studs

Mezöhegyes

In 1784 Mezöhegyes, the first state stud, was founded by Joseph II. The first task of Mezöhegyes was to breed cavalry horses to support the Austrian-Hungarian armed forces. In the 1800's three different breeds were established: Nonius, Furioso-North-Star and the Gidrán. The breeding of sport horses was carried out in 1961. In 2004 the stud was transferred into a Ltd. after main parts of the stud such as the plant cultivation and milk production got privatised. Today's mission of Mezöhegyes is to save the stud as unique historic and agricultural treasure and to breed horses, especially the Nóniusz as the first and most important Hungarian horse species.

The stud consists of three parts, the central stud where horses are trained, the mare farm and the foal farm. There are 30 employees who are responsible for nutrition, care and training of the 200 horses. Today, Nonius and Mezöhegyes Sport Horses are bred at the stud. Next to the horse business the stud manages 1200 acres of land. In addition to horse breeding and sales Mezöhegyes offers a livery yard, takes breeding mares for foaling and raises weanlings. Breeders benefit from the insemination station and national semen shipping. For visitors the stud provides a hotel, a coach museum and special riding programmes the whole year round.



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Bábolna

The history of Bábolna is closely connected to Mezöhegyes. In 1789 the director of Mezöhegyes recommended Joseph II to establish a second stud at Bábolna. Napoleon's troops destroyed the stud in 1809 but it was reconstructed between 1810 and 1820. Bábolna is famous for its stallion Shagya who was imported to Bábolna from Syria in 1836. The connection to Syria enabled Bábolna to establish its Purebred Arabian breeding. The stud was transferred into an Ltd in 2001 which is held permanently by the state. Bábolna is divided into the Arabian Stud and the Thoroughbred Stud Dióspusztai which was founded in 1912 and is located at Bábolna since 1962.

Nowadays Bábolna is counting a total number of 268 horses with 19 sires and 51 broodmares as well as draught horses, geldings, sport horses, foals and weanlings. The studs at Bábolna and Dióspusztai offer the possibility to stable horses for external people and provide services like foaling, trimming, shoeing and veterinary service. It is also possible to purchase horses at both studs. Bábolna provides several offers for visitors like a hotel, holiday packages, guided tours, equestrian shows, botanic gardens and zoo. There is also the possibility to rent the accommodations for events.

Szilvásvárad

The National Stud Szilvásvárad is located at the Bükk Mountains. In 1952 Lipizzaner foals were brought from Bábolna. The actual stud was founded in 1953. The stud's mission is to maintain the Hungarian Lippizanners. Apart from them Gidrán horses are located in Szilvásvárad. The stud is home to around 200 horses including 65-70 brood mares. It is divided into three parts: the mare farm, the stallions of the year farm, the filly and colt farm. The distances between the different parts of the stud are quite large.

For breeders an insemination station is offered. Visitors can book riding and driving lessons as well as riding tours. They can stay overnight in nice apartments, take guided stud tours, visit the Lipizzaner museum, the carriage exhibition and the Lipizzaner show. The stud facilities can also be rented. There are several equestrian competitions taking place at Szilvásvárad in the disciplines driving, three-day-eventing, dressage and vaulting.

Hortobágy

Hortobágy is probably the oldest stud in Hungary and has an independent history compared to the monarchical studs. The horses at Hortobágy were always owned by the surrounding



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population, the stud of the Free Royal Town of Debrecen. The first written document about the stud is dated in 1671. After several owners the stud is now owned by the Hortobágy National Park which was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999. The grazing horses of Hortobágy Stud (also called Máta Stud) are essential to maintain the landscape of the park.

The Máta Stud has around 250 horses and its main goal is to preserve the Nonius breed and to raise a Hungarian Sport horse that is suitable for sport and leisure. But the stud is also very important as visitor center in the middle of the park and provides carriage tours through the Puszta to introduce the culture, tradition and richness in species of the Puszta. Additionally, visitors can see the cartwright- and smith museum, the cart exhibition, the black pottery workshop of Nádudvar and the stables of the stud. Next to that Máta provides a platform for professional programmes and events such as Indoor Pair and Four-in-Hand Championship, Show Jumping Winter Cup, Indoor Championship of Amateur Carriage Drivers, Horse Breeding Competitions of the Hungarian Sport Horse Breeders' Association and of the Nonius Breeders' Association.

* This article was established by Ann-Cathrin Doelzer, who supported the ESSA-office in February and March. For her research she used a PhD thesis about Hungarian horse breeding and the book "Jasper Nissen: Encyclopedie der Pferderassen. Kosmos Verlag 1999, Stuttgart". We are aware that the article might contain some errors in dates or facts; that's why we ask our Hungarian partners to send us their corrections. If necessary, we will speak again about Hungary in our next bulletin; but at this stage we prefer to keep this focus on one of our most important partner countries!

ESSA dates 2011

May 3rd-4th ESSA General Assembly at LE PIN, France

October 12th to 14th Days of European Stud Culture at LIPICA, Slovenia