



Profitability and economic character of the zootechnical mountain farms in the alpine area

Project **NEPROVALTER**

Final Conference

Tarvisio, 1-2 December 2005

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Romantic Alpine farming view

- ◆ Alpine farming is an age-old occupation and has kept its own culture and working methods.
 - ◆ It's a hard life, sometimes made even harder by bad weather and other causes:
 - ◆ As long as men can remember shepherds and herdsman have moved up to the lush alpine pastures with their herds every summer.
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Agriculture in Alpine space

- ◆ The highest number of the farms can be found in Italian Alps, followed by the Austrian Alps. In this two countries we can find 2/3 of all farms in the Alps.
- ◆ On third and fourth place are Swiss and French Alps
- ◆ At the end we find German and Slovene Alps
- ◆ Farms are very different by their size, what make numerical comparison relative

Farming in Alpine space 1990 - (Bätzing,1996)

	D	F	I	A	CH	SLO	Alps total
Area (in 1000 km²)	10.	40	47	55	25	7	184
in %	5	21	27	29	14	4	100
Population (in Mio.)	1,3	2,1	2,9	3,1	0,8	0,4	10,6
in %	12	20	27	29	8	4	100
Farms (in 1000)	28	42	186	114	58	24	452
in %	6	9	46	25	13	5	100
Full-time farms (in 1000)	17	22	39	41	34	5	158
Share in %	11	14	25	26	21	3	100
Full-time farms share %	61	54	21	36	58	19	35
Cattle (in 1000)	847	355	547	1100	1028	101	4005
Cattle in %	21	9	14	27	26	3	100
Cattle pro Farm	30	8	3	10	18	4	9
Sheep (in 1000)	40	801	182	203	275	13	1514
Sheep in %	3	53	12	13	18	1	100

Farming structure

- ◆ Alpine farming followed till end of WW II self sufficiency strategy because of its remote position, bad infrastructure and low contact to other areas
- ◆ After WW II started a structural change characterized with following factors:
- ◆ Support through state and EU agricultural policy
- ◆ Transition from full-time to part-time farming
- ◆ Alpine farmers are in the role prepared to take care for the cultural landscape

Farm management characteristics

- ◆ Land use is strongly characterised by the possibility for use of agricultural machinery
- ◆ Strong one-sided redirection towards use of grassland
- ◆ The farm management dependant specialisation results in zoological mass product (milk, cheese, meat)
- ◆ In the future the strategic goal has to be production of healthy, high value products with traditional character

Farm management characteristics II

- ◆ Less favorite areas of grassland are abandoned and substituted with more intensive use in flat land because of personal rationalisation
 - ◆ This development is causing the change in nature balance of many Alpine regions.
 - ◆ This is a process which often is happening unnoticed by the general public
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Farm management characteristics III

- ◆ Alpine farming shows certain resistance
 - Although the different forms of support for alpine farming doesn't totally compensate their less favorite position against agricultural advantageous the alpine farmers are not abandoning farming, but adopting new strategies
- ◆ Secondary functions of farming and pluriactivity are becoming more and more important