



Polish Innovation Network



Special edition
for Women's Day
2022

WOMEN CHANGING POLISH AGRICULTURE

Female Innovation Leaders

Women in agriculture

WHO ARE THEY?



*No matter what the weather...
Whatever work needs to be
done ...
Women in agriculture ... is
strength, passion, care for
food, its safety
and the highest quality.*

There is probably no better occasion than International Women's Day to say that women active in agriculture and food production are not exceptions. More and more women are becoming professionally and personally involved in various activities for the benefit of Polish agriculture and rural areas.

Female representatives are a beacon of tradition on the one hand, and a symbol of innovation and modernity on the other. They act with passion and commitment. They are active and enterprising, but at the same time empathetic - not only in business. They are also sensitive to the environment and their immediate surroundings. All these qualities and attributes make more and more women successful at various levels and in various entities involved in raising the competitiveness of the Polish agri-food sector. These range from serving as deputy ministers of agriculture and rural development, directors and employees of institutions supporting Polish agriculture, to female farmers involved in crop cultivation, animal husbandry and food production, to rural residents working for the benefit of the Polish countryside.

The Polish Innovation Network is no different. We will not be mistaken if we say that the majority of the Team are women. They are the ones who every day with great dedication, perseverance, and often sacrificing their private time - bring more and more to ensure that the Network develops and achieves its objectives of supporting the implementation of innovation in agriculture and rural areas.

At the same time, it is worth pointing out that the latest Agricultural Census shows that over 30% of Polish farms are run by female farmers, and in over 70% of farms it is women who make key financial and development decisions. And if we add to this the active women working in research units, we have a successful picture of the activities of Polish EIP operational groups. Conducting research, development or implementation projects in agricultural and food production requires perseverance, efficiency, but also flexibility and correction of original plans. In this women perform perfectly!

This brochure represents only a small sample of the activities of women working within the Polish Innovation Network, in implementing projects with multi-stakeholder partnerships. It is safe to say that by taking on such challenges, women are setting new trends and significantly improving the quality of what they do.

The information presented to you is a kind of tribute to women's activities, which you are warmly invited to read!

**We wish all WOMEN
challenges, success and inspiring activities!**

THE FEMALE FACE OF THE POLISH INNOVATION NETWORK'S TEAM



PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY WOMEN

1 Agroforestry in the Zielawa Valley

The project entitled 'Innovative model for the production, processing and distribution of herbs in the Zielawa Valley' is being implemented under the 'Cooperation' measure of the RDP 2014-2020 on the farm of Dr Barbara Baj Wójtowicz in Sosnówka, Lubelskie Voivodeship. The aim of the project is to develop and implement a comprehensive new model of cultivation, harvesting, farm management and processing through a new system, and a model that will result in two final new products marketed through an improved marketing method. The project was developed by Dr Barbara Baj Wójtowicz working for Oxford University, founder of the world's only agroforestry plantation with cloudberries on a farm in Sosnówka; and Professor Ewa Osińska researcher at the Warsaw University of Life Sciences and promoter of Poland's first doctorate in agroforestry and specialist in herbaceous crops. Agroforestry has been hailed by the UN as the most important innovation for agriculture in the coming years. [Read more](#)



2 Ojcowski trout

"Pstrąg Ojcowski" is a family project carried out by mother and daughter Magdalena Węgiel and Agnieszka Sendor, who decided to restore the splendour of the ponds located in the heart of Ojców National Park in Małopolskie Voivodeship. Their aim is to restore brook trout farming, promote conscious and ethical breeding, educate the community about the history of the region and culinary traditions. The women have won the title of Innovative Women Farmers of the European Union, and their Ojcowski Trout was included on the ministerial list of traditional products from Małopolska. It also belongs to the Małopolska Culinary Heritage Network. Less than a month after starting up the farm, it was awarded a prize at the "Regionalia" fair in Warsaw. The natural, traditional way of smoking using beech smoke with a slight touch of fruit wood gives the dish a unique character. The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Marshal of the Malopolska Region and the Polish Chamber of Regional and Local Product honoured it with an award in the category: Treasures of Nature. [Read more](#) and [watch the film](#)



3 Angelic Gardens

"Anielskie Ogrody" is a project to create a small family organic farm from scratch with a beautiful home garden, run by Kamila and Bogdan Kasperski in the Lubuskie region. The farm produces organic vegetables, fruit, herbs and flowers for the family and the local community. The added value of the project is practical, multimedia ecological education on a national scale, both in the form of workshops and using the Internet. The community gardens for pre-school and school children and the elderly provide inspiration and motivation for local communities. The Polish project not only made it to the finals of the Rural Inspiration Awards 2021 organised by the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD), it also won the Popular Vote. [Read more](#)





Emilia Sznajder's kingdom of pickles

Vegetable farm, Dolnośląskie Voivodship

The Sznajder silage farm is a place where people with real passion and tradition operate. Pickling has been going on without interruption for 60 years, that is 3 generations. Mrs Emilia loves pickling and has it in her genes. She uses crop rotation so that cabbage in a given field is not grown more than once every four years. The reason? In her experience, the pests that love cabbage can survive in the soil for up to three years while waiting for new vegetables. What is the secret to good pickling? And what is cucumber airplane? [Watch the video](#)



Agnieszka Wierzbicka-Baxter from the plum valley

Fruit farm in Szydłów, Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship

Raised in an orchard since childhood, she spent several years abroad where she fulfilled herself professionally. When she returned to Poland, she saw her hometown of Szydłów with different eyes - the incredible wealth of Szydłów, set among hilly hectares with its natural wealth of plums. She couldn't believe that nobody was doing anything about it here. She started producing a unique local product on the farm - the Szydłów plum. The Szydłów valley has a unique microclimate, clean soil, air and water. Every year, buyers emphasise that the Szydłów plum has a firm light-coloured flesh and is prettier and tastier than in other regions. The fame and taste of the Szydłowska plum has also reached many European countries. Śliwka Szydłowska has been awarded the Protected Geographical Indication certificate and the Product Po mark. [More](#)



Janina Rzepka - Woman at a shepherd's hut

First woman in Poland to become a certified shepherd, Małopolskie Voivodeship

The first female shepherd to boast a certificate authorising her to practise this unique profession. In season, she works with her family, from dawn until late in the evening. And she starts this season when the snow melts. Her shepherd's hut stands by the road from Bukowina Tatrzańska to Łysa Polana. She also runs a guesthouse, which is looked after by her daughters. They also take orders for certified oscypek, redykołka and bryndza Podhale cheeses. Ms Janina also organises demonstrations and workshops in the production of traditional regional products. [More](#)



Elisabeth Cipora and a vineyard on a plot of land

A vineyard on a plot of land and the "Spod hebelka" Museum, Lubuskie Voivodeship

In Trzebiechów, there is a small home winery run by Elżbieta and her husband. She began her adventure with viticulture twelve years ago. It took a long time to "compose" the vineyard, learn the difficult and demanding craft and produce the noble beverage. Today, she and her husband primarily cultivate dessert varieties that fit in with the terrain and climatic conditions. Their vineyard brings the family together and attracts friends. For the past six years, they have been organising the "Art on the Vineyard" event in June, which attracts many artists. Five years ago, the "Spod hebelka" workshop was established on the vineyard grounds. It is a real manufactory of unique, one-of-a-kind serving boards, bowls, spoons, hearts and small toys. [Watch the film](#)

WOMEN OF INNOVATION

WATCH THE VIDEO

They achieve success in running farms, develop original businesses related to agriculture and the countryside, passionately create themed villages and unique traditional and local products. They fulfil their aspirations, professional and educational goals, while at the same time encouraging and integrating rural residents.

Have a look at the film featuring women working to increase the competitiveness of Polish agriculture and the quality of life in rural areas. It has been prepared by Maria Sikorska – Polish Innovation Network partner and founder of the [Association of Women Leaders of Innovation](#)



editor *Maria Sikorska*, founder of the *Association of Women Leaders of Innovation*, author and host of the programme *"With Climate and Passion"*



Click here and watch the video



The footage features:

[Grażyna Wiatr](#) ; [Grażyna Zaremba-Szuba](#) ; [Kamila Kaceperska](#) ; [Emilia Sznajder](#) ; [Agnieszka Baxter](#) ; [Agnieszka Węgiel and her mother](#) ; [Iwona Gogacz](#) ; [Anna Sitek](#) ; [Teresa Łukasik](#) ; [Monika Liberacka](#) ; [Mirosława Wilk](#) ; [Janina Rzepka](#) ; [Sylvia Prośniewska](#)

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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6jrpiejdVsmttd8Zrx2AiRg>

Source:

- Association - Women Leaders of Innovation
- With climate and passion
- Agronomist.pl
- The film "Wine integrates people" was developed as part of the Polish Innovation Network by the Lower Silesia Agricultural Advisory Service in Wrocław.
- The film "FROM NATURE innovative... - Alternative sources of farm income" developed as part of the Polish Innovation Network by the Lubuskie Agricultural Advisory Service in Kalsko
- The film "Our Land episode 1 - Breeding and direct sales of Ojców trout" developed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Photos: www.pixabay.com, "With climate and passion", Film "FROM NATURE innovative.... - Alternative sources of farm income", Film "Wine integrates people" developed by the Polish Innovation Network

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"European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas".