

Visit of IBA Board in Poland

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On the left is Sofie Sharma, Anthony Snell, Dorota Jarret and Jens Pedersen

At the end of June, Polish blackcurrant producers visited the representatives of the International Blackcurrant Association (IBA). IBA is a global association of blackcurrant growers. The interest of the authorities of this organization in the Polish market is not astonishing, as it is in our country that averages more than half of the global production of black fruit. The schedule of the 3-day visit was tense and abounding in meetings with growers, processors and machine builders.

Farm Visits

During their stay in Poland Anthony Snell (IBA President), Jens Pedersen (IBA Vice President), Sofie Sharma (Director of IBA) and Dorota Jarret (Hutton Institute) showed great interest in visiting the plantations. They were not aware of the expected lower seasonal yield than the currants. So they decided to plant Polish plants first. Actually, there is not much fruit. But, in my opinion, it is not bad at all. We were told that yields would be at 2-4 t / ha. These plantations we visited will certainly produce better yields. It only shows that especially in a year like the present to be a professional and take care of your plantings, "says Jens Pedersen. During their stay in Poland guests visited, among others. the farm of Zbigniew and Krzysztof Kopiński. Only berry species are grown in 44 hectares. Currently, 35 hectares of black currant, 5 hectares of red currant and 4 hectares of gooseberry. Zbigniew Kopiński has been working on berry for 36 years. In 2006, together with his neighbours, he formed a producer group called Ribes-Pol. With EU subsidies, a bit of equipment was purchased, infrastructure was provided to make the plant more efficient and to improve logistics. At the time of founding, the Group consisted of 5 members, currently 6 of them. In total, it manages 120 ha. It is one of the very few examples of official cooperation of black currant growers, which in Poland there are so many.



The owner estimates that the yields will fluctuate around the 4 t ha ceiling



Self-propelled combine harvester already prepared for harvest



Representatives of IBA, KSPCP – growers



Despite low prices in recent seasons, Zbigniew Kupiński's plantation is maintained at a good level



Fruits of the variety Tisel 28 June



Jens Pedersen, Vice President of IBA, listened to the opinions of Polish black currant producers



Some Ribes-Pol members use a semi-trailer harvester to work in some quarters



Anthony Snell, President of IBA, had many questions for Polish growers



Zbigniew Kopiński told the guests about his plantation and the activities of the producer group, which he is the president

Another farm, or actually a farm visited by foreign guests were entities jointly run by Dr Piotr Barylo and Tomasz Woźniak. This increased cooperation between the two growers allows for cost optimization through common purchases of cuttings, fruit packaging, use of buildings or purchase of equipment. The area of cultivation is 25 ha of fruiting quarters and 1.5 ha of newly planted black currant. Another 3 hectares of land are in preparation for future planting. The growers decided to grow 5 varieties of blackcurrant, but at the same time it is the only species they cultivate. We shared our responsibilities. I am responsible for agrotechnics, contacts with processing plants and repair. My colleague for the logistics and organization of

the collection. This makes it possible for almost all the works to be done by ourselves," explains Dr. Piotr Baryła, Plant Manager, President of KSPCP and Vice President of IBA. There are also numerous experiments on the farm, which are summed up during the annual Currant Vertigo event. Visitors from abroad, with some results and conclusions, could find out about 2 days earlier than native growers, because this year's event was held on 30 June. Foreign guests appreciated the professionalism of the owners of these farms. In their opinion, the quality of the fruit, which is the direct consequence of the skillful running of the plantation, will play an increasingly important role in the future.



Well maintained bushes in decent season yielded decent yields



Planting the orchard helps the orchard grower



Concern about the condition of pollinators also translates into higher yield of currants



Bees are eager to visit flowering flower blooms almost throughout the season



Tomasz Woźniak (left) and dr Piotr Baryła



In spite of the concern for the health of the plantation, there are occasional pests



Farmer Dr Piotr Baryła and Tomasz Woźniak will be at a lower level than last season, but still good



Packages for currants prepared for harvest



Dr Mirosław Korzeniowski from Bayer spoke about the protection of shrubs



In the area of 25 hectares, two Karmash semi-trailers combine



Jens Pedersen believes that the harvest in Poland will be higher than estimated by Polish growers



The farm is certified by the Global GAP



Well-nourished fruits have reached impressive proportions and mass



Dariusz Szymczak, planter from Zwolenia, also participated in the meeting

A visit to a machine factory

An important part of the visit was a meeting with Weremczuk FMR's management and a visit to the production hall. This entity provides solutions for growing and harvesting on berry, orchard and vegetable crops. It was founded in 1981, and currently products from Niedzwica Duże can be found not only in Poland, but also in other countries, and even on other continents. The company offers the mower-shredders for intercrop care in currant houses, the machine for forming rows, the tunnel sprayer, the jigsaw bush. Joanna, Victor / Z and Victor and Victor Premium series are also popular. Visitors to the factory could look at how modern machines are built. The tour guide was Robert Weremczuk, so any information could be obtained directly from the company's president.



A visit to the Weremczuk plant



Robert Weremczuk tells the guests about how machines are made for black currant plantations



Joanna Premium harvester at the end of production



Weremczuk tunnel sprayer



Ready-to-buy Joanna series harvesters waiting for buyers

With the conclusions and opinions of visitors about the Polish currant industry and the information provided by them about the organization of the market of black currants in some other European countries, you will be able to read the next issue of Jagodnik.