Future trends in grazing with Hungarian extensive beef farming in Hungary
Trends & Numbers

- 758,000 cattle — 335,000 cows (233,000 LSU) — 102,000 beef cows (30.5% of total cow No; 81,600 AU) 1 LSU (livestock unit-1.00 = dairy cow)

- 100% of beef cattle is on grass for about 240 days, calves weaned at 8-9 months

- 1,164,000 sheep — 810,000 ewes (81,000 LSU)

- 80% of sheeps (65,000 LSU) on grass. Only dairy sheep kept in stables.

- 62,000 horses — 33,000 mares (26,400 LSU)
  - 100% on grass all year around however 90% of horses receive extra forage from tillage farming (alfalfa, oat)

- 88,000 goats — 42,000 does (4200 LSU), 9000 for dairy (900 LSU, 21.5%)
  - 100% on pasture and hay only 21.5% is for dairy (kept in stables)

- Total grass connected female livestock in LSU: 344,600 LSU — Irish 1 million<; Hungary 93,000 km² — Ireland 84,000 km²; Average rainfall 750 mm — 1000<

- About 70% (240,000 LSU) of these animals are on grass all year around. Data from National Statistical Office
Grasslands in Hungary

- 1 million hectares
- 750,000 in farming (meadows & pastures); 6ha/cattle (dry conditions)
- 250,000 is fallow (abandoned fields)
- About 400,000 in nature reservation (NATURA 2000, National Parks)
- 240 days grazing season
- Sorghum (Sorghum sudanense L.) grazing in july-august, stubble-fields (after corn), cabbage-leaves (Brassica oleracea)
- Subsidies maintain the beef cattle numbers (€283)
  - €158 (cow)
  - €70 (bulls)
  - €55 (extensification)
- 30-40 cattle profitable at family farms
Today

- 90% export (Turkey (60%), Italy, Slovenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan?, Russia?)
- Beef consumption (6kg/head; Slovakia 14 kg)
- Optimal calf weight 200-250 kg (6-7 months old)
  - bad weather conditions cause 40-50 kg deficit
  - cows’ condition deteriorate during winter, in calf chance lower by 20%
- Forestalling price trends: €2.7/kg up to €4 (turkish effect); 800-1300 HUF, price is about 1€ higher than in EU market
- Reproduction (how many calves)-Production (weight gain)-Meat quality (10:2:1)
- Best terminal beef breeds are **Angus & Hereford cows x Charolais bulls**; 15,000 pc of angus & 10,000 pc of charolais
  - Angus cow costs about €400/annum contra charolais costs €800/annum
  - Angus x Charolais results homogeneous meat quality
Tomorrow

- Good prognosis
- Economical environment suit for small and mid sized farms
- Sensitive market new CAP
- Beef farming is strong but depends from subsidies—European problem, see more in Brazil or US
- Grazing will be more important in Bio-meat production—GI products (Hortobagyi hungarian grey beef)
- Organic farming
Hortobagyi Eco Region
Thank You!

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