An example of ex situ and in situ integration – Sztumski and Sokólski type of cold-blooded horses

Beata Smulska

Sassari, 19-20 May 2026

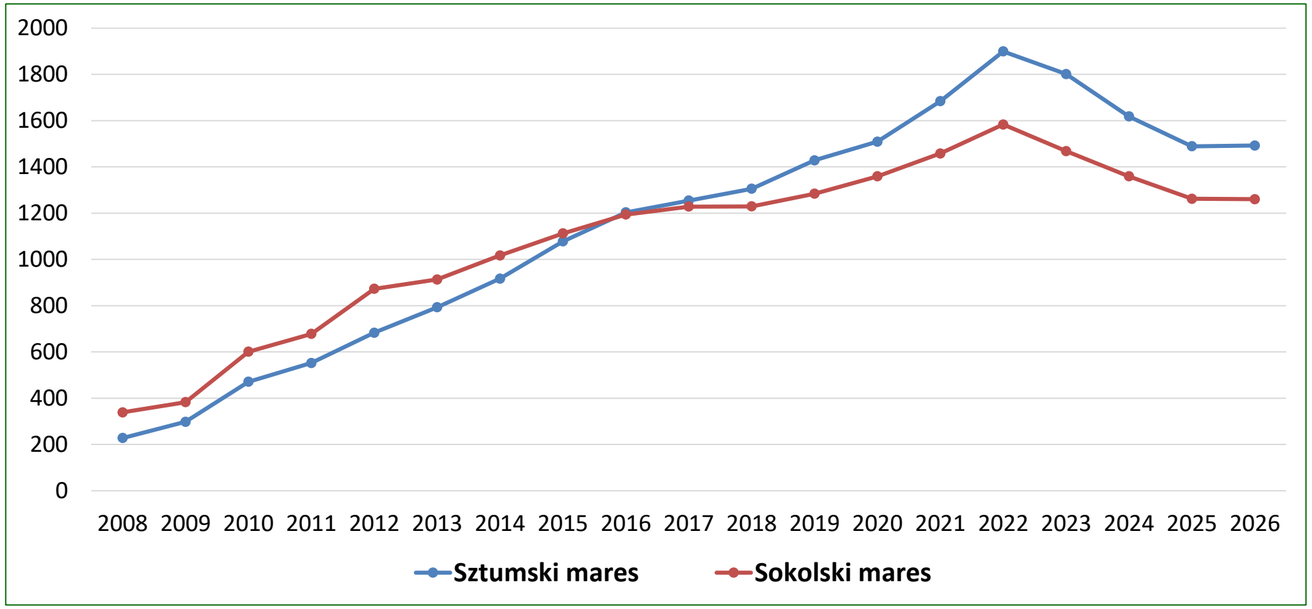
Conservation programs for the **Sokólski** and **Sztumski** horses were launched in **2008.**

2008: 339 Sokólski mares (134 herds) and 228 Sztumski mares (83 herds)

Sztumski mare

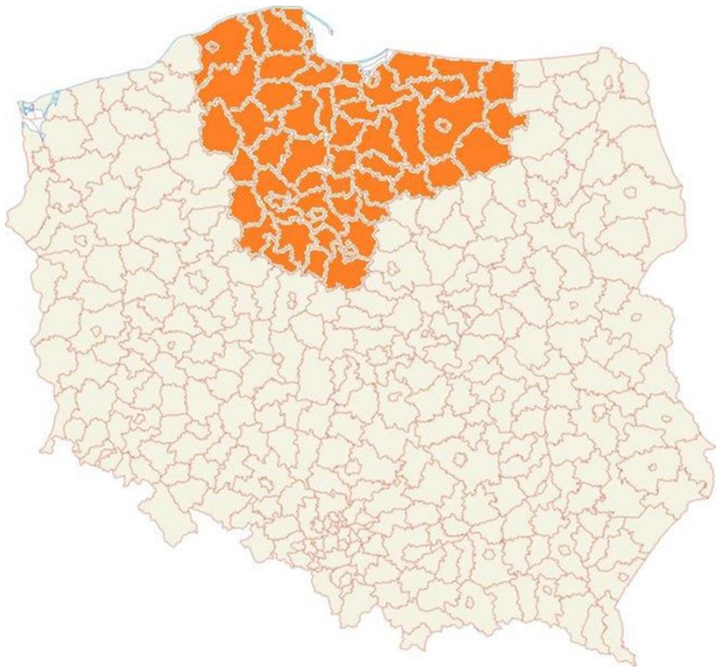
Sokólski mare

Number of Sokolski and Sztumski mares participating in Animal Genetic Resources Conservation Programs from 2008 to 2026

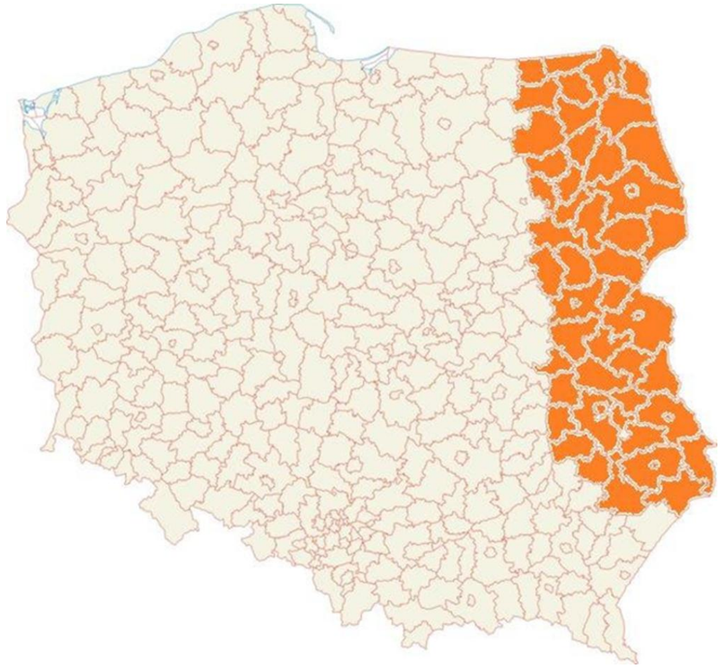


- 2008–2022: continuous growth in programme population
- From 2025: no new herds outside historical regions
- Outside Herds: required proof of horse utilization

Regions of historical origin of two types of cold-blooded horses: the Sztumski and Sokólski types



Sztumski type



Sokólski type

- Herds located within the area of historical origin are considered as in situ conservation, whereas all herds kept outside this region may be assumed as ex situ in vivo conservation.

A condition for participation in the program as a cooperating herd is the documentation of the use of horses in:

- agricultural work, logging
- in tourism and recreation
- folklore events
- to maintain the environment
- as an accompanying animal
- in food production (milk, meat)
- transport of people and goods
- in hippotherapy

Working in Agriculture and forests

Celebrating holidays as a part of local tradition

The milk production

animals

MDPI

Article

The Influence of Selected Factors on the Nutritional Value of the Milk of Cold-Blooded Mares: The Example of the Sokólski Breed

Joanna Barłowska [1,*], Grażyna Polak [2], Iwona Janczarek [3] and Ewelina Tkaczyk [3,*]

1 Department Quality Assessment and Processing of Animal Products, University of Life Sciences in Lublin, Akademicka 13, 20-950 Lublin, Poland
2 Office of the Director for Scientific Affairs, National Research Institute of Animal Production, Krakowska 1, 32-083 Balice, Poland
3 Department of Horse Breeding and Use, University of Life Sciences in Lublin, Akademicka 13, 20-950 Lublin, Poland
* Correspondence: joanna.barlowska@up.lublin.pl (J.B.); ewelina.tkaczyk@up.lublin.pl (E.T.)

Simple Summary: Mare milk, as well as fermented products produced from it, are recognized as having medicinal effects. Mare milk has been consumed for hundreds of years in Central Asia and Eastern Europe. In Europe it became popular in the 1990s. However, in many European countries, including Poland, the milking of mares remains marginal. Nevertheless, the group of consumers interested in purchasing mare milk is gradually growing. The horse population in Poland is about 300,000, of which half are cold-blooded horses. Native breeds of cold-blooded horses, including the Sokólski horse, are included in a genetic resources conservation programme. These horses are used in diverse ways, including for meat. For ethical and cultural reasons, however, the slaughter of horses is negatively perceived in Poland. An alternative to this type of use could be the acquisition of milk from mares. Therefore, the aim of the study was to determine the effect of selected factors (access to pasture, lactation number, and sex of the foal) on the proximate composition, whey protein profile, and fatty acid profile of milk from mares of the Sokólski breed. The results may be useful for those managing herds of Sokólski mares and other mares of cold-blooded breeds that are in good condition.

check for updates

Citation: Barłowska J · Polak G ·

Soap with Mare’s Milk

Summary

- Herds located within their historical areas of origin are **classified as in situ conservation**, while herds maintained outside these regions are considered **ex situ in vivo conservation.**

- **The best protection for endangered breeds is their utilisation**, as it ensures not only the maintenance of adequate population size but also provides economic motivation for breeders and preserves valuable adaptive and functional traits.

- Promotion of native breeds and their utilization helps **raise public awareness** about the importance of conserving these resources for future generations.

Thank you for you attention

iz.edu.pl