

## **Specific characteristics of agritourism farms in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship**

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**A**gritourism is a form of active spending of free time among animals and nature. This form of leisure is popular all over the world and is also an alternative source of revenues, particularly for small farms (Bernacka et al., 2013).

Animals kept at agritourism farms bring a number of benefits, among other things: they perform recreational, educational, therapeutic and aesthetic functions. In addition, they provide a number of various products, such as meat, milk, cheeses, eggs, pelts and wool. The biggest attraction among the animals kept at agritourism farms are undoubtedly horses, goats, sheep and poultry (Bernacka et al., 2016), and also rabbits. As a result of their inquisitive disposition and lively temperament, these animals are a perfect complement of a stay at a farm.

Pursuant to the Animals Protection Act (Journal of Laws, 1997, No. 111, item 724), welfare should be guaranteed to each animal kept at an agritourism farm. Animals should be domesticated, healthy, well-groomed, and should not be aggressive.

In Poland almost 40% of agritourism farms are concentrated in the following voivodeships: Małopolskie, Podkarpackie, and Warmińsko-Mazurskie (Kuźnicka et al., 2015), but such farms emerge also in other voivodeships. Between 2005 and 2013 in Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship 7.6 agritourism farms were established every year (Cichowska, 2014). It should be emphasized that Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship has 91 nature reserves, 8 landscape parks and

31 landscape protection areas (Szmyd, 2006).

The paper aims at characterizing selected agritourism farms in Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship in terms of types and numbers and at evaluating the agritourist offering.

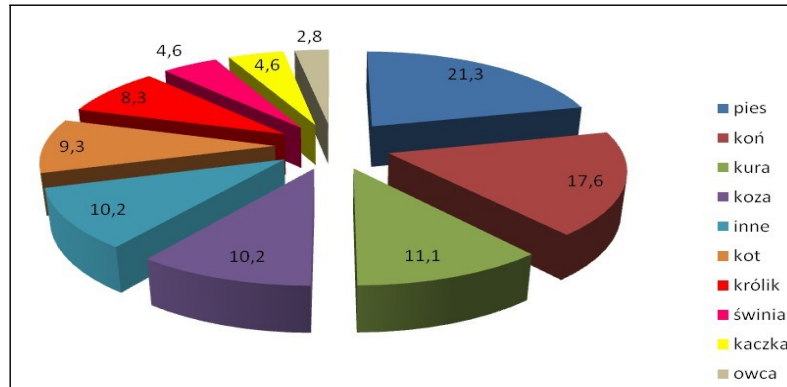
### **Material and methods**

The studies were performed on 50 selected agritourism farms in Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship. The research tool was a questionnaire for the farm owners with 17 questions. Particular attention in the questionnaire was given to animals. The guests visiting the farms were also analysed, as well as tourist attractions nearby, offered meals, accommodation, advertisement methods, and owners. The collected data were analysed in percentage terms. The charts were made in the EXCEL software.

### **Results and discussion**

The surveyed agritourism farms were relatively highly uniform in terms of animals kept which performed mainly recreational, education and aesthetic functions.

As seen in chart 1, dogs (21.3%) were the most numerous group of animals in surveyed farms, but it was horses (17.6%) that attracted guests to choose a farm. This confirms the studies by Cichowska (2011) who claimed that horseback riding increases the attractiveness of the agritourism offering. The least populous group of animals kept at agritourism farms were sheep (2.8%).

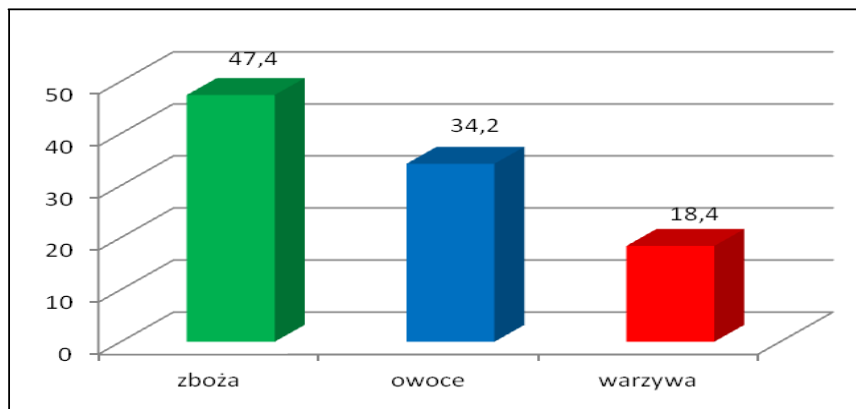


Pies – dog, koń – horse, kura – chicken, koza – goat, inne – other, kot – cat, królik – rabbit, świnka – pig, kaczką – duck, owca – sheep

Fig. 1. Percentage share of animals in agritourism farms surveyed in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship

Some agritourism farms kept pheasants, pigeons, ostriches and fish which were included in the “other” category. The surveyed farms not only kept animals, but also grew crops, both

a source of feed for animals and for sale to earn extra revenue. As seen in Fig. 2 the largest percentage was cereals, then fruit, and the smallest was vegetables.



Zboża – cereals, owoce – fruit, warzywa – vegetables

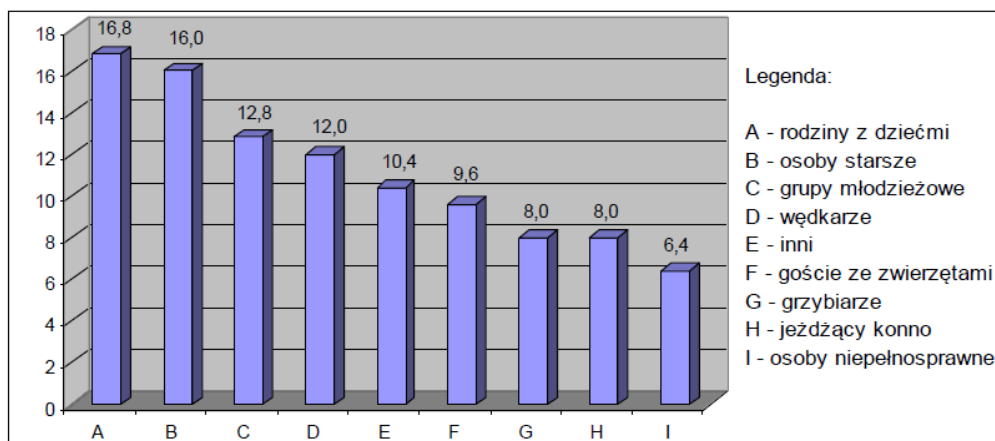
Fig. 2. Percentage share of plant production in the analysed agritourism farms

The surveyed agritourism farms targeted mainly families with children (16.8%, Fig. 3) because such guests are calm and their priority is to spend free time in the bosom of nature and acquaint their children with animals (Zawadka, 2010).

The second place was occupied by adults (16%) who due to their quiet behaviour are more welcome than younger people or youth who can disturb the peace at night. The smallest group of

guests were disabled people (6.4%) as very few farms can provide the adequate care and have vehicles suitable for wheelchairs. The vast majority of farm could accommodate 6 to 10 people (48%, Tab. 1). The least number of guests, that is 3–5 people, was recorded in 12% of the farms. The guests also came from abroad (Fig. 4), with Germans being the largest group (19.7%), and the least number of guests came

from Belgium, Canada, Sweden and Norway (1.6%). In rare cases the farm owners used an assistance of translators to communicate with tourists.



Legenda: – Legend: rodziny z dziećmi – families with children, osoby starsze – elderly people, grupy młodzieżowe – youth groups, wędkarze – anglers, inni – other, goście ze zwierzętami – guests with pets, grzybiarze – mushroom pickers, jeźdźcy konno – horse riders, osoby niepełnosprawne – disabled persons

Fig. 3. Main specializations of agritourism farms in reception of guests (%)

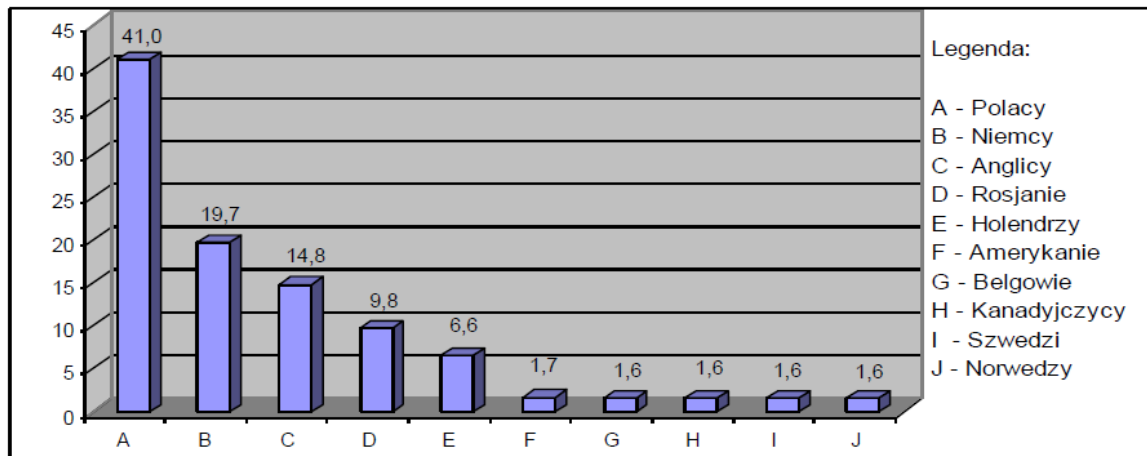
Table 1. Types of guest rooms offered by surveyed agritourism farms

No. of guests	Percentage of agritourism farms
3–5	12
6–10	48
11–15	16
16 and over	24

The majority of rooms in surveyed agritourism farms had 2–3 beds (82%), and rooms with 5 or more beds were only 3%. Consequently most farms had a large number of small rooms, but it was difficult for them to accommodate large groups (e.g. school students) (Tab. 2). As many as 52% of surveyed farms offered full board to their guests (Tab. 3) as the people on holiday wish also to rest from cooking and shopping for food. Potential clients readily planned their holiday at such farms.

The publications by Zawisza and Jankowska-Dymet (2006), and by Tyran (2007)

prove that the full board offer has a decisive influence on the choice of the farm. Most farms offered full board. In some farms, however, the guest had only access to rooms where they could cook a meal themselves from products offered by the farm or use a kitchen annexe. Some products (meat, bread, fish) were also bought at neighbouring farms or shops. The tourists could also try and buy original products made according to the owners' original recipes (cured meats, cakes, jams, cheeses, butter, bread) as well as honey, herbs and mushrooms.



Legenda: – Legend: Polacy – Poles, Niemcy – Germans, Anglicy – Englishmen, Rosjanie – Russians, Holendrzy – Dutchmen, Amerykanie – Americans, Belgowie – Belgians, Kanadyjczycy – Canadians, Szwedzi – Swedes, Norwedzy – Norwegians

Fig. 4. Nationality of guests at agritourism farms (%)

Table 2. Types of rooms reserved for guests at agritourism farms

Type of room	Percentage of agritourism farms
single	5
with 2–3 beds	82
with 4–5 beds	10
> 5	3

Summer vacation (72%) were the time most often chosen for rest, and at that time the farms had the largest number of guests. At other time it is much more difficult to fill the rooms; it is the so-called dead season, and the guests should be encouraged to come in some additional way. There were no guests in the surveyed farms during the holidays (0% – Tab. 4).

The choice of a given agritourism farm is influenced by additional attractions located

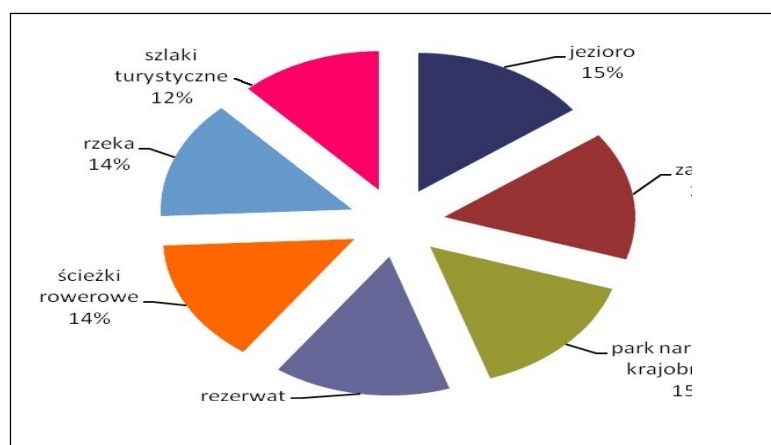
nearby (Fig. 5). The analysis revealed that the guest turned their attention to lakes, monuments, parks, and nature reserves (15% each). The hiking trails were of the least importance (12%). Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship lies in the area of the Bory Tucholskie National Park and Krajeński Landscape Park. There are many woods, lakes and rivers here, including Brda and Wda, as well as the Lower Vistula Valley Biosphere Reserve.

Table 3. Meals offered to guests at agritourism farms

Meals	Percentage of agritourism farms
Without meals	31
Full board	52
Breakfast	10
Lunch	5
Dinner	2
Supper	0

Table 4. Periods in which agritourism farms receive guests

Period	Percentage of agritourism farms
Holidays	0
In season	28
Summer holidays and all year round	72



Szlaki turystyczne – *hiking trails*, rzeka – *river*, ścieżki rowerowe – *bicycle lanes*, rezerwat przyrody – *nature reserves*, jezioro – *lake*, zabytki – *monuments*, park narodowy/krajobrazowy – *national/landscape parks*

Fig. 5. Attractions near agritourism farms (%)



Phot. 1. Rabbits



Phot. 2. Goats



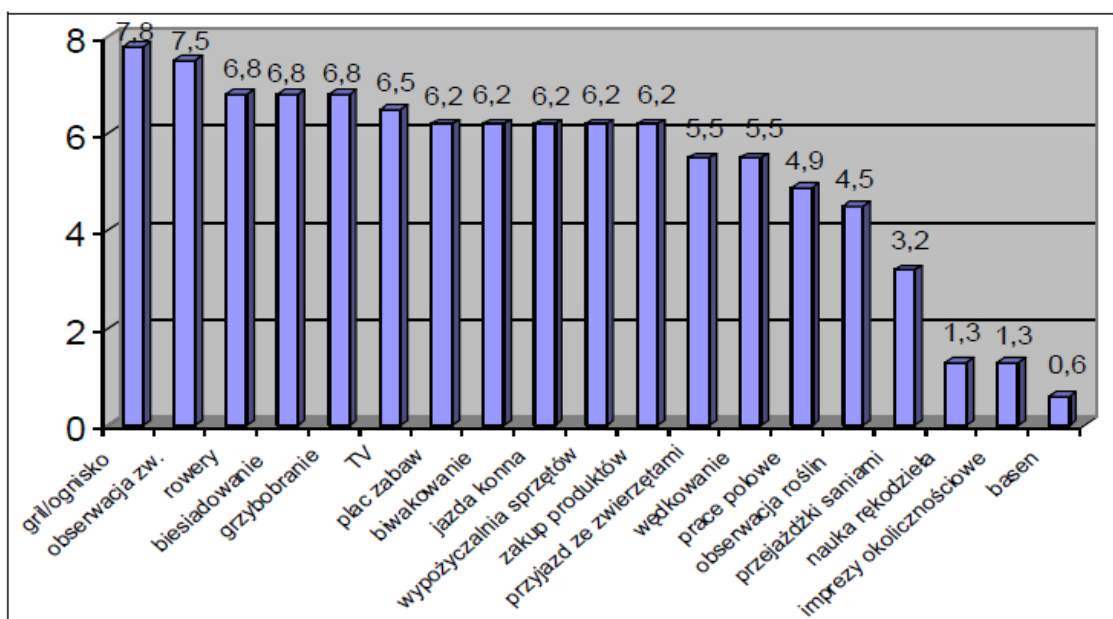
Phot. 3. An agritourist farm advertisement



Phot. 4. An agritourist farm signboard



Phot. 5–6. Barbecue areas



Grill/ognisko – *barbecue/bonfire*, obserwacja zw. – *animal watching*, rowery – *bicycles*, biesiadowanie – *feasting*, grzybobranie – *mushroom picking*, TV – *TV*, plac zabaw – *playground*, biwakowanie – *camping*, jazda konna – *horse riding*, wypożyczalnia sprzętów – *equipment rental*, zakup produktów – *purchase of products*, przyjazd ze zwierzętami – *pets allowed*, wędkowanie – *angling*, prace polowe – *work in the field*, obserwacja roślin – *plant watching*, przejażdżka saniami – *sleigh riding*, nauka rękodzieła – *handicraft lessons*, imprezy okolicznościowe – *special events*, basen – *swimming pool*

Fig. 6. Offer of agritourism farms (%)

According to Przezbórska (2007), the factors favouring the development of agritourism include knowledge, own skills, and personality traits of family members. Among equally important external factors one can mention landscape and nature, as well as anthropogenic attractions in the area.

Among the offered attractions, the most popular among tourists were barbecue and bonfire (7.8%), and animal watching (7.5%). Only 0.6% of surveyed farms had a swimming pool (Fig. 6).

The farms were open to vacationers, offering them participation in the works in the field (4.9%), observation of animals (7.5%), and other attractions such as bonfire (7.8%), sightseeing (6.8%), horse riding lessons (6.2%), spending the time pleasantly at feasting (6.8%) and mushroom picking (6.8%), as well as an opportunity to buy healthy, natural produce from the farm (6.2%) (i.a. cheeses, curd, eggs, jams, cured meats). In addition to animals, a playground for the kids to play is an advantage for a farm.

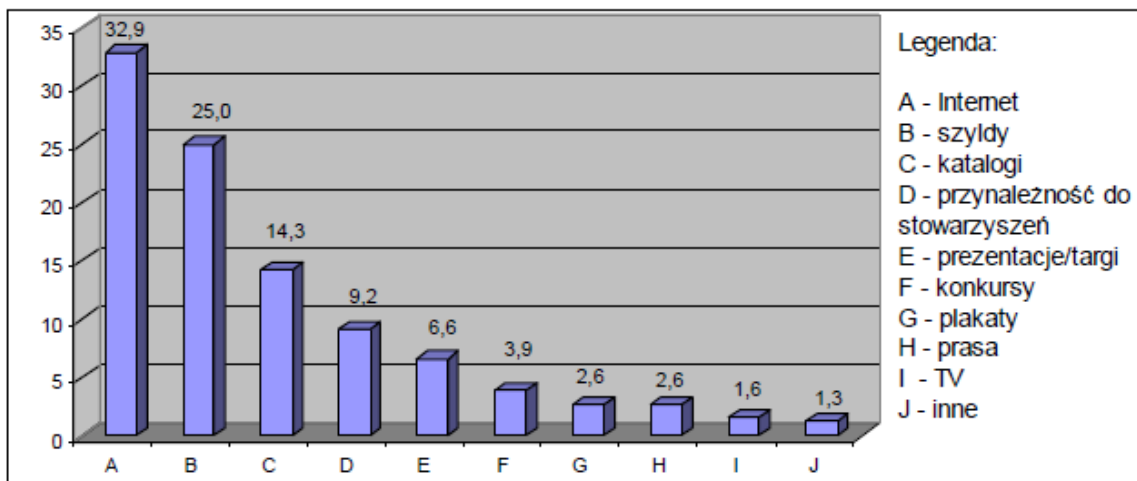
Sammel (2010) observed that the main attraction was and will be watching the animals. It is a very interesting tourist product whose naturalness attracts many watchers, mostly children.

Tyran (2007) proved that that the interest in spending free time in the country is growing, which is an opportunity for the development of rural areas and earning additional revenues. Kuźniar (2010) in her studies confirmed that offering traditional products from farms will grow increasingly in the future. The growth of traditional product makes the tourist offering more attractive.

The analysis of selected agritourism farms revealed that the largest share in the offered accommodation belongs to guest rooms (52%, Tab. 5), followed by detached houses and campsites (8%). The surveyed agritourism farms did not offer rooms for groups. Only one farm offered a boarding house for guests. Self-contained (separate entrance) rooms were more often chosen if the owner also lived in the house.

Table 5. Type of accommodation

Type	Percentage of agritourism farms
Guest rooms	52
Room for groups	0
Campsite	8
Detached house	16
Other type of lodging	24



Legenda: – Legend: Internet – Internet, szyldy – signboards, katalogi – catalogues, przynależność do stowarzyszeń – membership in associations, prezentacje/targi – exhibitions/fairs, konkursy – competitions, plakaty – posters, prasa – press, TV – TV, inne – other

Fig. 7. Advertising methods for the analysed agritourism farms (%)

The preferred method of advertising the farms was internet (32.9%, Fig. 7), generally available to everyone in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. High-ranking were also signposts (25%), catalogues (14.3%) and various brochures encouraging to spend free time in the country. Similar results of advertising by agritourism farms were reported by Strzembicki (2003). Few farm owners were involved exhibitions and fairs (6.6%) which could encourage tourists to choose their particular farms.

The results concerning the internet are conformed by studies by Sammel (2010) and Kosmaczewska (2010) which have also shown that the internet is the main source of information for tourists planning holiday travels. Due to

competition the increasing number of farms had their own websites. A website is treated by most farms as an inexpensive advertising tool.

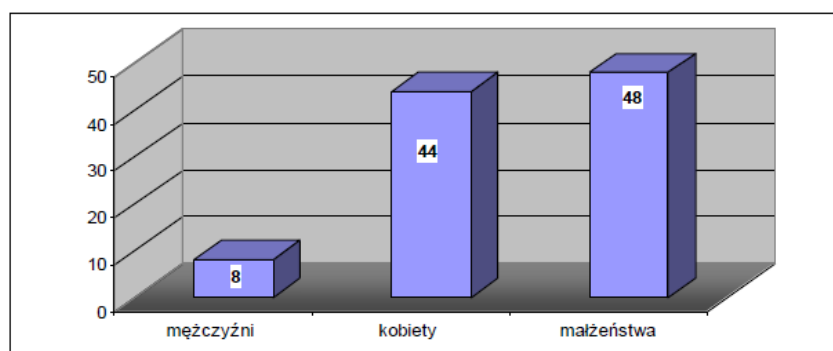
The survey proves that most farm owners have run their agritourism businesses for six to ten years (64%). The number of owners running their business for more than ten years was the smallest (8%, Tab. 6).

The reason for this is the fact that it is a new type of business, mainly for small farms which struggle to survive at such low revenues from sale of pigs, cattle and poultry. In order to supplement their revenues, small farms decide to run also the agritourism businesses which improves their economic situation.



Table 6. Period in which the agritourism farm is owner run

Period	Percentage of agritourism farms
Around a year	0
2–5 years	28
6–10 years	64
Over 10 years	8



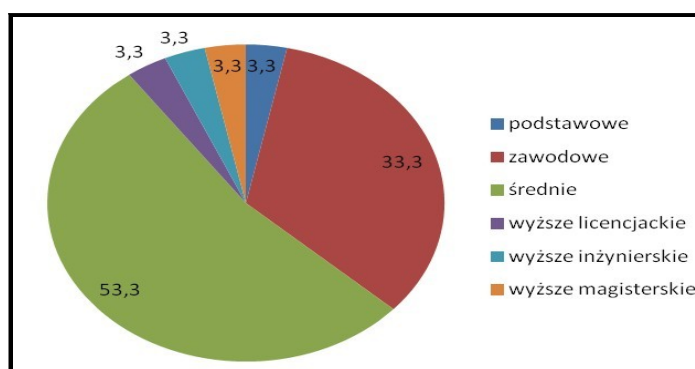
mężczyźni – male, kobiety – female, małżeństwa – married couples

Fig. 8. Gender of agritourism farm owners (%)

Figure 8 indicates that the majority of farm owners were married couples, and men had the least share of only 8%.

The couples shared equally both the costs and profits and benefited jointly. Perhaps the reason was that running the business

together is more easier and safer. The fact that in Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship more farms are run by women than by men was also indicated by Neja and Kurowska (2010), but in their studies this advantage was not that big as in this study.



Podstawowe – *primary*, zawodowe – *vocational*, średnie – *secondary*, wyższe licencjackie – *Bachelor's degree*, wyższe inżynierskie – *degree in engineering*, wyższe magisterskie – *Master's degree*

Fig. 9. Education of agritourism farm owners (%)

Table 7. Age of agritourism farm owners

Age ranges (years)	Percentage of agritourism farms
18–25	0
26–35	10
36–45	51
46–55	22
Over 55	17

People involved in agritourism had mostly secondary education (53.3%), followed by people with vocational education. Only few people had a college degree or primary education (3.3% each, Fig. 9).

Majority of agricultural farm owners were in the age group from 36 to 45 (51%, Tab. 7). People of that age have some skills in running a business acquired through learning and practice. The same age range among the agricultural farm owners was observed in Lower Silesia by Kurtyka (2011).

### Conclusions

- Presence of animals at agritourism farms significantly increases their attractiveness. The animals often kept at the surveyed farms were dogs (21.3%), and the least often kept animals were sheep (2.8%).
- It was determined that the majority of

guests were Poles (41%). Among the foreign tourist the most populous groups were Germans (19.7%), and the least populous Belgians, Canadians, Swedes, and Norwegians (1.6% each).

- It was shown that dominating attractions in the vicinity of an agritourism farm were lakes, monuments, national parks and natural reserves.
- The main attractions at farms included barbecues (7.8%), animal watching (7.5%), and also cycling, feasting, mushroom picking, (6.8% each) Handicraft lessons, special events, or swimming pool had marginal shares (1.3%, 1.3%, and 0.6%, respectively)
- It was observed that the modal group of guest was families with children (16.8%), and the rarest group comprised the disabled (6.4%) due to absence of adequate infrastructure for such people.
- The most frequent owners of agricultural farms were married couples.

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## **SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS OF AGRITOURISM FARMS IN KUJAWSKO-POMORSKIE VOIVODESHIP**

### **Summary**

The aim of the paper was analysis of animals in terms of species and number as well as evaluation of the tourist offer of chosen agritourism farms and their owners in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship. Subjects were animals held in 50 agritourism farms. The research tool was a survey of farm owners, consisting of 17 questions. In the survey special attention was paid to the animals, but visitors, local tourist attractions, food, accommodation, advertising and the owners themselves were also analysed. The data collected was analysed in percentage terms. The largest group of animals were dogs (21.3%), but it was primarily horses that attracted visitors to choose a farm, in particular the possibility of horseback riding. As far as farm owners' education is concerned, the majority had secondary education (53%). Among foreign guests of the farms in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship the majority were Germans (19.7%) and the smallest proportion was constituted by Americans, Belgians, Canadians, Swedes and Norwegians (1.6% each). The most effective form of advertising for an agritourism farm was through a website.

**Key words:** agritourism farm, animals, tourist offer

Phot. M. Marciniak