

# Presentation of rare breeds of poultry in Serbia

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## CHICKENS

### Domestic chickens

Many countries in the world and our neighborhood have their own domestic chicken, which is the product of local conditions. Our domestic chicken has almost disappeared. It can rarely be found in its native form, because it was mated with other breeds of chickens. It is possible that it still exists in some distant locations in mountain regions. Area of distribution is Shumadia, Vlajevo, Svrlijig.

There are several varieties of domestic chicken: Svrlijig chicken, Pogrmusha, Zajecar chicken. Domestic chicken is very similar to the wild one by the way it looks and by their production qualities. Average body mass of hens is about 1 kg, and of cocks 1.5 kg. In average it lays 60-80 eggs. Egg shell is always white. In colour, Domestic chicken can be black and partridge, but also other colours are not rare. The population size is not known, but it can be classified as endangered breed.

### Sombor Crested

This is the autochthonous breed, which is reared mostly in Voivodina in Sombor region. It can be white, black, blue or other colours. It is medium sized and lays about 150 eggs. Correct number of birds of this breed is unknown, but we use to have few flocks under control of Republic Selection Service in Voivodina. Last year we had only one flock with 30 chickens under control, so we can also consider this breed endangered and there is a need for *in situ* conservation programme.

### Domestic Naked Neck

This breed has been reared in Serbia and Montenegro for many years and there are many varieties in colour. It is a breed with combined production characteristics. It lays about 120-160 eggs. Average body mass of hens is 2 kg and of cocks is 2.5-3 kg. Meat quality is very good. Also, this is a breed with very good vitality. Exact number of birds is not known, and we have only about 100 birds under control.

## OTHER SPECIES OF POULTRY

**Domestic turkey** - We have several varieties of Domestic turkey: Yagodina, Palanka and Dobricka turkey. It is bigger than Wild turkey and can be bronze, white, yellow or gray. The area of distribution is Shumadia, Voivodina, Jagodina and Pozarevac.

**Domestic goose** - There are several strains of Domestic goose: White Sombor, Danube tufty and Novi Pazar goose. They are distributed mostly in Voivodina and around Novi Pazar.

**Domestic duck** - It is represented in several colours: white, wild duck colour, yellow, ashy-gray and spotted. In case of term "domestic duck" it should be pointed out that many countries have their domestic duck which is significantly different by their production characteristics.

**Domestic guinea fowl** - It is very similar to the wild one and lives in small flocks raised by individual farmers.

This entire species can be classified as endangered and there is no *in situ* conservation programme for them.

## CONCLUSIONS

Generally, number of birds of autochthonous breeds is declining. They are mostly raised by the individual farmers who are not registered and are not under control. For example, in recent years in Voivodina we use to have a few flocks of autochthonous breeds under control, but in year 2003. we have only one producer with about 30 birds of Sombor Crested and 100 birds of Serbian Naked Neck chicken under control. Their production traits are satisfactory and consistent with the average values specific for those breeds. Problem is in lack of organized program for selection, reproduction and introduction of new cocks into the flock.

It is very important to include poultry breeds in National strategy for conservation and preservation of AnGR. Today, conservation programme for poultry is in initial phase. Priorities are to register flocks and determine autochthonous breeds and than keep that flocks and birds under control. *In situ* conservation can be made mostly by individual breeders or producers who are willing to participate in this programme.

Short presentation of the author

I work on Faculty of Agriculture in Novi Sad, Department of Animal Science. I am an Assistant Professor for subjects Poultry Production and Animal Husbandry. Besides that, I am working in Laboratory for determining poultry meat and egg quality at the Faculty of Agriculture in Novi Sad. As a researcher I participate in Technological Research Project: Production of Poultry Meat and Eggs which is financed by Ministry of Science and Technology, Republic of Serbia. Also, I am committed in registration, selection and control of genetic potentials of poultry at the Republic Selection Service.