In April 2018, FAS Bucharest organized a workshop focused on the latest developments in the U.S. dairy sector, from genetics to nutrition to herd management. This report provides a description of the program carried out in Romania, April 23-24, 2018.
General Information:

Event name: Animal Genetics and Nutrition Roadshow

Beginning/Ending Dates: April 23-24, 2018

City/Country: Bucharest/Romania

Purpose and Description of Activity:

Romania ranks among the EU’s lowest in terms of average milk yields, as backyard dairying continues to dominate. Most cows are raised by smallholders, with about half of the national herd held by farmers with only 1-2 dairy cows (per 2016 Agricultural Survey). Nevertheless, the informal segment is shrinking and the commercial segment is rapidly developing, meaning high-quality inputs, including genetics and nutrition, and improved farm management techniques are increasingly important.

As farmers look to improve efficiency and yield, they are increasingly using high-quality genetics. In 2017 total dairy-genetic imports (frozen bovine semen) increased by 57 percent in volume terms and 21 percent in value terms over 2016. The United States was the second-largest supplier of bovine genetics to Romania in 2017. U.S. exports of frozen bovine semen increased by 37 percent in value and 34 percent in volume over 2016. Generous 2016 domestic supports, as well as EU-level programs, help to drive demand for high-quality genetics from the United States. However, competition from third-country exporters also increased. Post saw an opportunity to reinforce to Romanian farmers that high-quality U.S. genetics are available, are affordable, and are well represented on the Romanian market by U.S. suppliers.

The activity provided a platform for discussion among major players about the most recent changes in the sector, its challenges and opportunities as well as to seek valuable input for crafting future strategies. Moreover, the activity was designed to facilitate the linkages between the U.S. genetics importers and local dairy farmers (potential customers) ultimately leading to higher exports to Romania.

On April 23, 2018, FAS Bucharest organized a half-day seminar in partnership with the Romanian Holstein Association. The activity was supported by the National Association of Animal Breeders (NAAB), U.S. Livestock Genetics Export, Inc. (USLGE) and the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC). Speakers from the three organizations addressed the 70 participants about the latest developments in the U.S. dairy sector, from genetics to nutrition to herd management. NAAB President Jay Weiker spoke about dairy breeding, emphasizing that new technologies and genomic selection have significantly changed the breeding landscape. Professor Scott Jensen, representing USLGE, and Dr. Iani Chihaia, USSEC’s regional representative, discussed about the importance of high-quality feed ingredients, stressing that proper nutrition is key for animals reach their genetic production potential. Attendees included medium and large-sized farmers, breeders associations, genetics suppliers, representatives of bovine research institutes, feed ingredient suppliers, and government officials. Topics were well received by the participants and a vibrant Q&A session followed the presentations.
Regional Agricultural Attaché Jonn Slette opening the Dairy – Breeding, Nutrition and Farm Management Workshop in Bucharest, April 23, 2018

Dr. Jay Weiker/NAAB

Jonn Slette, Agricultural Attaché

Scott Jensen/University of Idaho

Dr. Iani Chihaia/USSEC
The second day featured a site visit for nearly 35 participants to a large dairy farm near Bucharest. The 2,600-head operation uses significant quantities of U.S. genetics. At the farm, U.S. guests shared their advice with the group on breeding, reproduction, and feeding.

**Expected Results and Desired Outcomes**

In terms of sales, the United States ranks second in Romanian imports of bovine genetics. U.S. genetics maintain market share of 21 percent in value terms, but only six percent in number of doses. As an outcome of the activity and new linkages, Post expects that genetics sales will expand by $30,000 in the next 12 months. As the size of dairy farms increase and smaller farms consolidate, the demand for
frozen semen will surge. Post expects that U.S. genetic exports are likely to grow by 50 percent over a period of 2-3 years.

In the same time, as farmers became more knowledgeable about the genomic technology benefits, the number of farmers embracing genomics is expected to rise. According to the Holstein RO Association, the number of genomic tests amounted to 700 tests by June 2018 from just three in 2013.

Regarding dairy nutrition, FAS Bucharest expects that Romanian farmers will improve feeding practices correlating cow needs during different production phases with the type of feeding and the farm goals. As farmers get more sophisticated, we expect that new feed ingredients, such as soybean hulls or distiller's dried drains with solubles (DDGS), will be more incorporated.

Media, both on-line and printed, was very well represented at this event. Article captures and links to the media articles published about the event are included in Appendix 1.

Considering the fear competition among genetics suppliers on the Romanian market, Post believes that such outreach activities increase farmers’ interest in high-quality U.S. genetics and make them aware of the role investments in genetic resources play in improving a herd. The activity conducted in Bucharest attracted mostly the dairy farms located in the south and southeastern regions. Although these areas have the highest concentration of Holstein dairy farms in terms of both number of farms and farm-size, future outreach programs should include small to medium-average farms located in other parts of the country.

Appendix 1 - List of selected web links and print magazines featuring the activity
http://agrointel.ro/96537/cum-arata-vaca-perfecta-la-american-de-la-holstein-se-va-intra-in-era-jersey/


https://www.agroinfo.ro/economic/lectia-americana-despre-cresterea-vacilor
CREȘTEREA ANIMALELOR

Tendințe și detalii în nutriția vacii de lapte din SUA

Mărcia lingvină de portiune în dezvoltarea sistemului de producție și gestiunea pe durata vieții vacii de lapte din SUA, confirmând că imperativul este încetarea creșterii volumului de producții și îmbunătățirea calității celei de-a jumătate a acestuia, la fel ca în cazul vacelui de bovino. În aceste condiții, producția de la nivel național nu ar trebui să fie mai mare decât 20% din totalul producției mundului. Aceasta ar trebui să fie realizată prin îmbunătățirea calității și duratei vieții animalelor, precum și prin reducerea mortalității și abandonurilor. În acest context, nutriția vacii de lapte este un factor important în determinarea performanței și sănătății animalelor. Este necesar să se analizeze aspectele nutriționale specifice ale acestor animale și să se îndeplinească sugestiiile privind regimul alimentar. 

CREȘTEREA ANIMALELOR

Viitorul fermei de lapte se cietește în genomica

Conceptul de genomica este o mare provocare pentru agricultura de prima generație. Cea mai recentă revoluție la această nivel a fost unul în ceea ce privește animalele, precum și fermele de lapte. Acestea sunt curând în a treia generație de producători de genetici și engineri ale genomului, care își pot ajusta producția pentru mai mulți ani. Acești producători de genetici se concentrează pe prelucrarea și analiza datelor genetice. 

În orașele moderne, geneticii se concentrează pe problemă a caracteristicilor biologice ale animalelor. Acești geneticii își folosesc tehnologii moderne, precum și tehnologia genomice, pentru a face un pas în direcția viitorului fermei de lapte. Ca un exemplu, orice animă reprezentantă mai multe caracteristici ale unei ferme de lapte, poate fi analizată genetic pentru a se îmbunătăți performanțele sale. Acești geneticii își folosesc tehnologia genomice pentru a îmbunătăți performanțele animalelor. 

În concluzie, genomica este o tehnologie care va avea un impact semnificativ asupra fermei de lapte în viitor. Aceasta va permite producătorilor de genetici să îmbunătățească performanțele animalelor, iar fermele de lapte să se concentreze pe producerea unei alimentații mai sustenabile și mai eficiente.