

Organic goose-rearing

Our partner: Adam Nowak, Polen



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Adam Nowak organic farming



Farmer Adam Nowak

The Adam Nowak organic farm lies on the Warta creek in the province of Lubuskie in western Poland, around 70 km west of Frankfurt (Oder) and is under the control of AGROBIOTEST, the largest inspection body for organic farming in Poland. In 2017, the then 27-year-old Adam Nowak took over the farm from his uncle, Tadeusz Mlynarczyk, who had been managing it with his wife Anna since 1994, using organic farming standards. With around 150 hectares of land, around a third of the farmland is used to grow feed. Between 12,000 and 15,000 geese are kept each year on the pastures.



Own parent flock

Since the end of 2018, a parent flock of around 2,000 birds has been part of the geese-rearing farm. Unique in Poland, the chicks are hatched at the organic farm where they are then reared. Directly after hatching at the end of April/early May, each flock of around 2,000 chicks is kept in a heated barn for the first three weeks of their lives. Each barn has a covered bad-weather area, which the chicks have access to once they reach 3 days old. They can bask in the sun and get used to the outdoor climate there.



Living in the great outdoors

Once their first feathers appear and the weather permits, the chicks are allowed to go out into the pasture. This typically happens when they are 3 to 4 weeks old. To begin with, each flock has a covered shelter for the night, each measuring 800 to 1,000 m². Once the plumage has fully grown, the geese spend their days and nights outdoors. Each flock has at least 5 hectares of grassland in the vast plains of the Warta. The high groundwater means the geese can bathe and immerse themselves to their hearts' content during the predominant grazing period.



Organic feed



During the first six weeks of their lives, the chicks are fed a special, protein-rich starter and rearing feed which Adam Nowak gets from a German organic feed mill in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

From the 7th to 22nd week, the geese spend their days on the pastures. They receive supplementary feed of oats, triticale and lentils in the evening only. This feed is exclusively home-grown.

Overfeeding the geese to create foie gras and live plucking to produce down is naturally prohibited in organic farming and is strictly forbidden by Adam Nowak.

Slaughter

Slaughtering of the geese takes place in an abattoir around 50 km away. The abattoir is also under the control of AGROBIOTEST. On the day of slaughter, only the organic geese of Adam Nowak are slaughtered so that there is no mix-up with traditionally reared geese.

Photo credits: All images were taken by Martin Bauer during a site visit in Poland.



Adam Nowak and Martin Bauer