

EDITORIAL

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION SCENARIO: PARTNERING FOR THE FUTURE

Francesco VIZZARRI (Editor in Chief)

NPPC – Research Institute for Animal Production Nitra, Slovak Republic

Recently, Budapest (Hungary) has been the scenario of the of an important event organised by the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the EU, in close cooperation with the European Commission, the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR), and the BIOEAST Initiative (project in which NPPC-VUZV Luzianky is active member), titled "PARTNERING FOR THE FUTURE: BIOEAST and Beyond" high-level conference on Central and Eastern European Research and Innovation Priorities in the context of Sustainable Soil and Freshwater Resilience, Food Systems Security, and Bioeconomy-Related Policies (<https://bioeast.eu/events-cal/partnering-for-the-future-bioeast-and-beyond/>).

The high-level conference marked a series of events during the six-months of the Hungarian Presidency which aimed to familiarize, debate, and promote a new pan-European research and innovation initiative with a geographic focus on Central and Eastern Europe, including the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership countries. The discussions during the conference focused on two thematic nexuses as established in the Stakeholder Manifesto published in June 2024:

1. Carbon-water cycles: The linkage between healthy soils and freshwater resilience.
2. Nutrition-energy cycles: Food system security and locally valorized biomass and biowaste in the bioeconomy.

The conference gathered ministers and EU institutions' representatives, SCAR and research program committee representatives of the Member States, policymakers from ministries including EU candidate countries, academia, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and key private sector representatives with priorities in the macro-region. Additional details can be found here: <https://hungarian-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/en/news/bioeast-and-beyond-partnering-for-the-future-high-level-conference/>

In the fourth Editorial article of 2024, I am going to introduce the contents of the articles collected and published in the fourth issue of 2024 year.

Anza et al. explore the landscape of beekeeping practices, honey production trends and the associated challenges and opportunities within rural communities. They conclude that, while beekeepers face challenges such as a shortage of bee forage, absconding and honeybee enemies, there are ample opportunities such as numerous honeybee colonies, emphasis from the government and tourist attraction sites, all of which provide a lucrative market opportunity to sell honey at a premium price. To ensure the beekeeping industry thrives in the area and contributes to the growth and development of rural livelihoods, it is crucial to address the challenges faced by beekeepers.

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Correspondence: E-mail: francesco.vizzarri@nppc.sk
Francesco Vizzarri, NPPC – Research Institute for Animal Production Nitra,
Hlohovecká 2, 951 46 Lužianky, Slovak Republic



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Assefa *et al.* assessed and characterized the husbandry practice and morphology of the indigenous goat population. Sex, age and agroecology had a significant influence on the body weight and morphological characteristics of goats. Promoting alternative forage development strategies, improved forages and efficient feed utilization and conservation options are important to alleviate feed shortage and enhance drought resilience capacity. In addition, designing and implementing of community-based genetic improvement program through within-breed selection could improve the productivity of indigenous goats.

Iyanda *et al.* investigated the effect of processed bovine blood rumen digesta mixture (BBRDM) as partial replacement for soyabeans on performance of broiler chickens. In conclusion, partial substitution of soya beans meal with 60 % BBRDM in the diet is recommended for broiler chicken production for enhanced growth, better blood function, health status as well as carcass yield with probable reduction in the production cost.

Odetola *et al.* performed a multi-stage sampling technique in selecting Laying Hen Farmers (LHF) in relation with production challenges. Educational status, flock size, access to livestock insurance and access to credit significantly increased the total factor productivity (TFP), while farming experience, feed quantity, hired labour and extension access reduced TFP. The probit results show that age, household size, education, access to resources and insurance significantly affect production risks.

Editorial Team looks forward to evaluating your submitted contributions and providing all necessary support to Authors in order to best serve animal science and the scientific community, with commitment to research integrity and the highest publishing ethics.

Enjoy the reading!

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