

Abstract of the doctoral dissertation written by Ewa Wysocka, MA, entitled: “Legal status of an agricultural holding in the light of the principle of sustainable development of rural areas”.

The dissertation refers to the topic of the legal status of an agricultural holding in the light of the principle of sustainable development of rural areas. Intensification of agricultural production that occurred in the 20th century through the use of agricultural machinery, fertilizers and plant protection products increased crop yields, but is the cause of chemical pollution of the environment. Agricultural holdings running an industrial production are focused on maximum profit, specialization of plant crops and raising large numbers of animals. Agricultural holdings serve an important production function. Organic farms and integrated production have a good impact on the environment and the quality of agricultural products, human health, and animal health. EU and Polish law regulates the principles of organic farming, which is subject to certification and must meet a number of legal requirements. National regulations provide for integrated production, which is carried out according to certification requirements, and reduction of chemicals to the minimum necessary.

A separate system of industrial production of genetically modified organisms has formed in agriculture (since 1996), which is executed on a large scale in the Americas, Asia, and Australia. The GMO system leads to numerous genetic risks, the effects of which cannot be predicted, and is not identical to growing non-GMO crops.

EU agriculture is covered by the Common Agricultural Policy, which has evolved over the years. Intensification of agricultural production has decreased due to environmental protection and food overproduction, the manner of supporting agricultural holdings have been reformed. Legal instruments have been introduced in EU countries concerning pesticide reduction, integrated pest management, cross-compliance, good agricultural practices, changes in environmental law and water law. The aim of legal changes in the EU CAP is to implement the principle of sustainable development in agriculture, to preserve the specificity of the family agricultural holding and to shape its role in environmental protection. The RDP for 2014-2020 finances aid for: organic farming, integrated production, and sustainable agriculture under agri-environmental and climate commitments, and for development of family agricultural holdings and rural areas, measures beneficial for the climate, sustainable management of natural resources. EU law provides assistance for family agricultural holdings and the introduction of multifunctional agriculture. The objective of the Strategy for Sustainable Development of Rural Areas, Agriculture and Fishing for 2014-2020 is to define the direction of rural development.

Economic and social measures must take into account the protection of the environment, improvement of farmers' income, providing staff working for agriculture.

The use of genetically engineered technologies has a negative impact on environmental and food security. The release of GMOs into the environment is an important issue, regulated by EU and Polish law. The EU protects endangered plant, livestock, and bee species. The EU imports significant amounts of GMO soybeans and corn from countries on the American continent. Industrial animal breeding is carried out in the EU using feed components derived from GMO crops. Using feed from GMO crops does not protect the environment, EU regulations are not consistent. The amount of non-GM protein crops grown in the EU should be increased. Industrial agriculture and chemical industry corporations do not care about the environment, they want to maximize profit and make family farming dependent on them, leading to its elimination. Applying the principles of sustainability is the way forward for EU agriculture and for preserving a healthy environment for the future. An agricultural holding it has a significant impact on the preservation of human health, valuable wildlife, public goods, rural culture.