



## **Internet and knowledge flows in family farming**

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The role of Internet in rural areas and agriculture is, and what is more important, may become great in the nearest future. The Internet as an exact technical notion is a form of access to the deposits of abundant stores of data all over the world. By stressing the importance of knowledge and creativity in the development processes, we could indicate that the Internet can additionally reduce the feeling of isolation, not only the geographic but also psychological (e.g. alienation). Additionally, Internet makes it possible for people to use local resources and knowledge. Thus it plays a crucial role in the knowledge transfer and could be crucial in agricultural extension. Taking into account the above mentioned issues, the paper aims at presenting the role of Internet with regard to the knowledge transfer in agriculture. We will mainly focus on usage of Internet among owners of family farms. Our investigation is based on the results of a survey conducted among several thousand owners of family farms in Poland. The sample was diversified by region, production profiles, size and socio-economic character of owners. According to the data we could state that nowadays Internet utilization in obtaining information is common and the fastest means, one should notice polarization in agriculture in the use of new technologies. On one hand, well-educated family farm owners use the Internet most frequently to obtain various information (also in matters connected with agricultural extensions), whereas poorly-educated farmers use this source of information less intensively. It is worth emphasizing that the advantages resulting from the access and use of Internet are not available for everyone. In this context, the main conclusion is that education, understanding of the needs (and possibilities) connected with the use of Internet in the context of knowledge transfer are essential in agriculture and rural areas. Presentation prepared within research project 2011/01/D/HS4/03295, Models of knowledge transfer in agriculture and its influence on agricultural productivity - spatial analysis, financed by the National Centre of Science (Poland).

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