

## “The future of the Olkuska sheep is safe now”

Mr Korczyński initially established a flock of Polish Longwool sheep, on his grandparents' farm in Imbramowice. As sheep production became less profitable in the late 1980s, he sold most of his flock and got involved in an ambitious breeding programme set up by Cracow Agricultural University to restore the Olkuska sheep population.

“In 1994, I acquired a ewe named Gwiazda – the Star – which in 1998 gave birth to a litter of seven lambs, all of them born alive!” Years of intense selection and elaborate mating plans allowed Mr Korczyński to regain specific Olkuska traits, as found in literature descriptions. He continues: “1998 was a breakthrough year for Olkuska sheep which proved to be a highly prolific breed with good milking performance and excellent maternal abilities.”

Breeding these sheep has been a great experience for Mr Korczyński: “Thanks to Olkuska sheep breeding I now have a lot of contacts with sheep breeders from Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.” His daughter was also inspired by her love for these animals: she became a veterinarian.

The Olkuska sheep are an important source of revenue for his family. “Sheep breeding provides about fifty percent of our income. The remaining earnings come from vegetable and strawberry production and from off-farm work, done by both my wife and me.”

Looking back at the past years, Mr Korczyński concludes: “Contributing to the re-establishment of this valuable native breed which was on the brink of extinction in the 1980s gave me a lot of professional and personal satisfaction.”



Mr Korczyński and his Olkuska sheep.  
*Credits: Elzbieta Martyniuk*

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**We would like to thank Mr Korczyński and Dr Martyniuk for this interview.**