

Prospects and directions of development of mulberry silkworm (*Bombyx mori* L.) breeding

Summary

Poland has a rich silk tradition. Silkworm farming, once widespread, provided additional income for both farmers and city dwellers. The insect's short development cycle and the relatively simple breeding methods were factors increasing the number of breeders. Nowadays, the Polish silk industry requires thorough revitalization. New methods facilitating the breeding process, effective means of preventing the spread of disease among caterpillars, and new applications of silk raw materials provide the opportunity for renewed development of silk production in Poland. This is a multi-stage process, initially requiring efforts aimed at widespread plantings of mulberry, whose leaves are the sole source of food for mulberry silkworms. The multifaceted potential uses of both the raw materials obtained during breeding and its waste products make silk production an important branch of organic farming as well as other sectors of the economy – bioengineering, pharmacy, textiles, and the food and cosmetic industries.

KEY WORDS: sericulture, organic farming, revitalization of Polish sericulture, mulberry silkworm, white mulberry