

Dear farmers,



In Your arms – new publication that has an aim to help You in Your daily uneasy work.

You won't find answers to all actual questions in this book, because the best answers are dictated by agricultural experience, supported by scientific studies. You will have to

look for your own solution under conditions of your concrete farm, but the rules and recommendations on good farming presented here will help you to find the best of them.

We are witnesses and participants of big changes in countryside. Present farmers generation had an historic responsibility to accept changes in market economy: to restructure and modernise agricultural sector, to change agricultural regulation measures gradually and in very short time to learn to compete in world market with rich countries famous for their agricultural traditions.

More than half of the Lithuanian territory is agricultural lands; therefore, farming quality determines not only living conditions and income, but authenticity of landscape and biological diversity too.

In the Code of Good Agricultural Practices there are accumulated knowledge and recommendations for farmers how to preserve environment with help of modern technologies, to determine the amount and type of nutrients needed for agricultural production, what are the best technologies of soil tillage, plant protection and animal breeding, and use of fertilisation, liming and pesticides.

Farming is the lifestyle inherited from ancestors. Land is needed for people in countryside not only as an income source. Countryside community has distinctive lifestyle, preservation of its identity is an important condition for survival of the nation, necessary part of its culture. People in countryside spend almost their whole life on their land; therefore, landscape has to be attractive for them to live and for others to come



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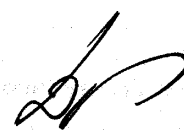
Many developed countries have already been convinced that intensification of production leads to a limit when additional investments do not give possible production' and economic effect but impoverishes

environment and injures human health. Therefore, economically and ecologically balanced development is the only human progress way; it is emphasised in many documents of the European Union.

Pollution sources in agriculture are dispersed over big territory and usually not noticed. Therefore, many think that agricultural activity does not influence environmental quality. But scientific investigations show that about 50-60% of nitrogen and 10-20% of phosphorus present in Lithuanian rivers originate in agriculture.

Lithuania as other members of the Helsinki Convention has promised to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus load to the Baltic Sea by 50%. In this area amendment of agricultural production should be the most important. In any other branches of economy such a big environmental improvement can not be achieved with small investments. Besides, properly managed agriculture adorns landscape, increases biological diversity and makes countryside more attractive for tourists and holidaymakers.

In the European Union the Nitrate Directive is emphasising the significance of the Code of Good Agricultural Practices for improvement of water quality. The improvement of water quality is also of highest priority in the Lithuanian environmental protection strategy. Therefore, appliance of the rules and recommendations given in this book will be important Lithuanian step in the way of sustainable development.



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Acknowledgement

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We would like to express our great thank to experts from The Danish Agricultural Advisory Centre for methodical guiding during preparation of the project.

The Code of Good Agricultural Practices will be useful for everybody who wants to manage a farm profitably, to produce high quality products, and also to preserve a healthy environment for future generations. In addition, this publication is one more contribution to Lithuanian preparation to enter the European Union.