

Press Release
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New Resource for Lithuanian Farmers

Some 130 participants from four countries were on hand for the July 16, 2006 dedication of the Jurgis Gudaitis Auksuciai Farm and Forestry Center Building in the Kursenai Rural District, Lithuania. The farm center building named for forester Jurgis Gudaitis, was constructed using funds donated by Chicago resident Grazina Gudaityte-Liautaud in honor of her father.

The principal speakers included guest of honor Grazina Gudaityte –Liautaud; Lithuania's Ambassador to the USA, Dr. Vygaudas Usackas; Dr. Jonas Valaitis; Dr. Edvardas Makelis, former Minister of Agriculture and Sigitas Miskinis representing the current Minister of Agriculture.

The Jurgis Gudaitis Research and Education Center Building will be used as a field laboratory for agronomists and foresters, as well as Siauliai University Botanical Department and Lithuanian Agriculture University scientists. The Center will also hold computer training courses for farmers, a market information center for farmers, marketing workshops and possibly for meetings of local farmers and organizations.

The Auksuciai Farm and Forestry Center is located on a 157-hectare (389-acre) farm near the town of Kursenai in the Siauliai Region in northeast Lithuania. At this site a year-long program of research on new crops, improvement of existing crops and improved farming practices is conducted by staff. The Auksuciai Farm and Forestry Center is supported financially by the Auksuciai Foundation, a US based non-profit organization. This Foundation, headquartered in Burlingame, California, is the only American-based, privately funded, nongovernmental organization working in Lithuania for the benefit of farmers and rural communities. For additional information about its programs and activities check www.aukfoundation.org.