

DVM Aleksandra Marzec

3th year of training at the Doctoral School

Discipline: animal science and fisheries

M. Sc. Radosław Smagieł

4th year of training at the Doctoral School

Discipline: animal science and fisheries

From September 26 to December 24, 2024 (Aleksandra Marzec) and from September 19 to October 20 and November 18 to December 18, 2024 (Radosław Smagieł), we completed a scientific internship at the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (LSMU, Lietuvos sveikatos mokslų universitetas) under the supervision of Professor Paulius Matusevičius. The internship was carried out as part of the STER NAWA – I-SDUPL project, which aims to internationalize doctoral schools.

The main research areas covered by the Department of Animal Nutrition (Gyvūnų mitybos katedra), where we conducted our internship, include optimizing safe and competitive feeding technologies and feed production for livestock, as well as research on the impact of new feed ingredients and additives on animal performance. We learned advanced techniques for formulating feed mixtures, as well as new methods for incorporating functional additives into them. In addition to the nutritional aspect, we had the opportunity to participate in research on the microbiological and biochemical aspects, particularly the bioavailability and biotransformation of micro and macroelements, as well as the effects of specific feed additives on blood morphology, biochemistry, and the histology of internal organs.

Beyond the scientific aspect, we had the pleasure of participating in the NAWA STER program promotion meeting from December 1 to 4, where we had the opportunity to meet the Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, the Rector of the Medical University, as well as doctoral students from Kaunas. It was an incredibly inspiring experience that allowed us to expand our horizons even further and establish more interesting contacts and collaborations.

During our stay, Professor Matusevičius also showed us around the university and shared its fascinating history. We visited the remarkable University History Museum, which contains numerous photos as well as unique exhibits such as veterinary tools from nearly a hundred years ago and educational materials used in the 1950s. We also visited the veterinary simulation center, where young veterinary students can practice on mannequins or artificial skin. Additionally, we had the chance to explore the university's magnificent library, which offers a wealth of scientific and industry-related books in English.

Apart from the scientific and historical aspects, we also had the chance to experience Kaunas from a cultural and culinary perspective. We dined at many places, enjoying traditional dishes such as potato dumplings (kartacze), fried dark malt bread, apple cheese, and sękacz, but we also had the opportunity to taste delicacies from around the world, as Kaunas has a highly developed gastronomic scene. We visited the only Museum of Devils in Europe, or perhaps the world, and also had the wonderful opportunity to see Kaunas preparing for Christmas, decorated and festive.

The internship provided us with valuable scientific experience and expanded our laboratory and analytical skills. We made many new contacts, established new relationships, and developed our ability to work in a diverse team. Furthermore, we had a unique opportunity to take advantage of everything that Kaunas has to offer, to experience its culture, history, and appreciate its extraordinary beauty. It was a very enriching and inspiring experience.