

Compilation of Best Practices Projects

of the 2014-2020
Rural Development
Programmes



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Rural Development
Programmes**



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MADRID 2019



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*Introduction to
best practices*

Rural Development Programmes (RDP) are tools for implementing different actions and measures aimed at fostering rural development. There are 18 RDPs in Spain, one for each autonomous community plus a national one, aiming to do the following: keep population in rural areas; achieve an adequate level of well-being and harmony with the environment; consolidate farming and forestry in rural areas; protect and recover natural heritage; and obtain appropriate services and equipment for rural areas, among others. In order to meet these goals, the RDP managing bodies announce the availability of economic aid for persons and entities linked to rural areas.

The examples described in this publication were funded under different RDP measures. Actions fall under measure 1, concerning knowledge transfer and information; measure 3, concerning basic services for the economy and rural populations; measure 4, focusing on investments in physical assets; measure 6, devoted to farm and business development and especially support for young farmers; measure 7, related to basic services and village renewal in rural areas; measure 16, focused on cooperation among agricultural sector actors; and measure 19, concerning LEADER local development (CLLD – community-led local development).

The National Rural Network (NRN) has drafted this publication in accordance with its goal of documenting, sharing and promoting successful rural development projects. The network includes the principal actors in rural development and offers a platform from which to disseminate information about the RDPs, including the opportunities they offer their intended beneficiaries. The NRN is also responsible for generating awareness across Spain of the importance of rural areas for all people.

The NRN Management Unit appreciates the effort made to gather these examples of best practices in order to disseminate them and make them known to society.

This publication is a compilation of projects funded by RDP and considered examples of best practices by both the sponsors and the various managing authorities involved. Using their own criteria, each autonomous community suggested several projects that could serve as examples and be replicated in different locations, areas of knowledge or communities.

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*Food chain and risk
management in the
farm sector*

Balearic Islands

Location: Binissalem (Mallorca)

RDP measure: M 11. Organic farming

Funds received: €199 200

Coordinating entity: Associació de Pagesos Ecològics de Mallorca (APAEMA)

Contact email: apaema@gmail.com

Contact phone: +34 660 41 01 86

Organic vegetable preserves and ready-to-eat organic products

Project summary

The purpose of this project is to create new options for processing products using local varieties of locally-grown, fresh, certified-organic foods. It is based on the development of new options to process local, fresh foods, as well as training and dissemination of information on innovative products to both producers and consumers.

Making preserves and ready-to-eat products from organic fruits and vegetables adds value to the organic sector, allows for the use of agriculture surpluses to make a quality product, and improves

the economy of this sector. The project has generated interest and has inspired new projects with the same features that have succeeded in providing market outlets to innovative products made from agricultural surpluses, adding value to local varieties, fostering the establishment of cooperatives, and creating bonds between consumers and producers.



Main outcomes

- The project has generated great interest in its first phase, both among producers and consumers, and has inspired other projects with similar characteristics and objectives including: creating or finding market outlets for innovative products made from agricultural surpluses; adding value to local varieties; establishing cooperatives; and generating bonds between consumers and producers.
- The project is a benchmark for how producers can experiment with new products and generate a bond with consumers based on their needs and priorities. It also plays an important role in training and dissemination of information on local and seasonal products and the healthiest options.
- Where possible, support and advice is provided to rural entrepreneurs who use this project as an example to stimulate and diversify their local economy or to start new businesses individually or through an association.
- Larger producers especially are encouraged to take on this business opportunity since they are better able to launch new products into the market

Key lessons

- Creating bonds between consumers and producers is essential so that consumers can be better informed about products and processes and producers can adjust to demands from potential buyers. In addition, producers need to be able to adapt to new processing techniques and new initiatives in the organic farming sector, such as manufacturing preserves and ready-to-eat products.

Context

Background

The organic sector in Mallorca has become successfully established in terms of production and consumption. However, there is a gap in the sphere of local production of organic processed products (preserves, frozen and ultra-frozen foods, and ready-to-eat products). The high cost of starting a business makes many producers wary of introducing new processed products without first knowing if those products will be accepted in the market.

Action proposal

The entity in charge of the project (APAEMA), with support from 11 producers and 2 agricultural cooperatives, an ecologist organisation and different organic stores, proposed an experimentation space to test processed vegetal products and share results across the Mallorca organics sector.

The APAEMA does not sell the products; they are used for sample tasting and satisfaction surveys; training on processes; and researching consumer trends, nutritional values, and diverse products adjusted to the agricultural surpluses of each season.

The results are published for all those enrolled in the Consell Balear de la Producció Agrària Ecològica, CBPAE (Balearic Council of Organic Farming). Once the project is over, the results of all tests as well as training and dissemination can be used to foster production and consumption of these new products.

Objectives of the project:

- To enable producers to successfully overcome the high cost of introducing new products, create opportunities for using agricultural surpluses, and diversify their businesses by producing local organic preserves and ready-to-eat organic products which are increasingly sought by consumers.
- To cover a first “experimentation” stage for producers and to establish more and stronger bonds between producers and consumers, so that each party can better understand the other party’s reality.
- To stabilize and perpetuate the rural reality of the island, highlighting organic production for its environmental, the health and economic benefits.

- To add value to preserves and ready-to-eat products for the organic sector and to provide a quality product that improves the local organic sector.

Participants and partners

- Això és vida, S. Coop.
Cooperativa de productors eco de fruita i verdura - Vilafranca
- Jaume Jaume Llabrés
Organic grower of field crops - Artà
- Productors Balears d’Ametlles i Garroves A.I.E.
Agricultural cooperative - Binissalem
- Eusebio Ginel Palomino
Organic vegetable grower - Inca
- Sa Cantonada Saludable (Britt Müller)
Store, retail trade of organic products - Manacor
- Georg Brautigam
Organic vegetable and fruit grower - Capdepera
- Loveat (Laura Buadas)
Store, retail trade of organic products - Selva
- Antoni Calafell Freriks
Organic fruit grower - Binissalem
- GOB Mallorca Ecologist organization owner of La Trapa farm - Palma
- Josep Ollers Adrover
Organic grower of field crops - Campos
- Jaume Sureda Ferriol
Grower of organic pulses - Maria de la Salut
- Margarita Clar Tomàs
Grower of organic field crops - Lluçmajor
- Margalida Maria Carbonell Bergas
Organic grower of field crops - Maria de la Salut
- Monnaber vell. Karsten Imm
Organic farmer Agritourism - Campanet
- Maria Adrover Sansó
Organic vegetable grower - Manacor
- Pere Valls Torra
Producer in the process of obtaining organic certification - Deià



Activities

Definition of the types of products to be developed based on demand from producers and consumers:

- Preserved, cooked pulses (local varieties)
 - Fruit and vegetable smoothies and juices
 - Dehydrated fruits and vegetables
 - Vegetable sauces and pickles
 - Low-sugar jams
 - Fermented products
 - Ready-to-eat lettuce
-
- Conducting consumer preference surveys.
 - Training courses for producers on making preserves.
 - Surveying producers about their surpluses and products they might be interested in producing. Different products were also suggested to gauge producer interest.
 - Presentation of different processed products at trade fairs and tastings.
 - Tastings at stores, school canteens, social diners, and with consumer groups or cooperatives.
 - Creation of a year-round processing schedule for small producers, so that production is not concentrated in a single season.

Results

- One indirect job (head of the project).
- Creation of indirect jobs:
 - New producers (some of them part-time producers considering adding processing).
 - First-time producers of processed products.
- Use of existing facilities in the agriculture cooperative "Productors d'ametlles i garroves", contributing to its revitalization.
- Use of resources from the Mallorca Association of Organic Farming (Associació de la Producció Agrària Ecològica de Mallorca or APAEMA) to share information about the project. APAEMA is a recognized authority in the organic sector on the island with the ability to reach producers, consumer organizations and government.

Donation of surplus production by local producers..

- Recognition of the value of local varieties of pulses and vegetables through processed products, promoting their future consumption.
- Transfer of the results obtained to local organic producers.
- Continuity of the project: in a second phase the project will have to be improved and adapted to the reality of the involved parties, knowing their real needs and trying to find agreements to transform it into a useful tool for the local rural environment.

Lessons learned

- Producers learnt new techniques for processing surpluses.
- How to adapt new initiatives to the diverse reality of the organic farming sector (for instance, manufacturing preserves and ready-to-eat products).
- The different realities of local producers, in terms of size and diversity.
- It is necessary to create and maintain bonds

between consumers and producers so that consumers know and understand the rural reality and producers can understand and adjust to the needs and wishes of potential buyers (which customers are willing to try new products, which ones are searching for healthy options, which ones appreciate local artisanal products).



Castilla - La Mancha

Priority: 3A - Improving competitiveness of primary producers by better integrating them into the agri-food chain through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and organisations and inter-branch organisations.

RDP Measure: 4.2. Investments in agri-food industries and cooperatives.

Funds received:

€224 959.53 (€168 719.65 EAFRD+ €56 239.88 JCCM and MAPA)

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Web: <http://pistachosmana.es>

Processing plant and commercialisation of organic pistachios

Project summary

A new industry is being developed in Castilla - La Mancha to process and commercialise organic pistachios. Pistachios are harvested on-site and collected from other farmers, then hulled. Once hulled, a portion goes back to the farmers (clean) and the remainder goes into the processing line, where open and closed pistachios are separated. Open pistachios are graded and packaged in bags or sacks, while closed pistachios go into the cracking machine, then the shelling machine and finally into packaging. This project is executed in a rented warehouse where offices have been set up for technical and administrative management.



Main outcomes

- Creation of jobs and improvement of sales.
- Leverage of the high quality potential of pistachios produced in Castilla-La Mancha and their adaptability to the local environment.
- Increased awareness of a new industry for processing organic pistachios.

Key lessons

- Improvement of commercialisation channels.
- Crop diversification.
- Participation in the added value chain.

Context

Background:

Some needs have been identified that require specific actions to improve pistachio exploitation. Mainly these are in the areas of technological improvements to processing, promotion of the added value of organic products, promotion of commercialisation of the sector internationally and through the Internet, as well as increasing the participation of women in business decisions.

Action proposal:

Actions that provide added value to pistachio crops in the hands of farmers.

Objective of the project

Improving sales and taking advantage of external demand of organic pistachios, while diversifying the crop and the use of the fruit (dry and industrially processed).



Activities

- Study on evolution of pistachio demand in Spain and Europe.
- Assessment of the ways of commercialising the crop.
- Evaluation of the efficiency of work processes - processing and sales.
- Investment in new equipment and in new formats.

Results

Workers earnings have improved and a new job has been created as a result of the increase in sales. The agri-food quality of pistachios in Castilla-La Mancha makes them a high-potential crop for adaptation to the local environment and for international commercialisation.



Castilla – La Mancha

Location: Villanueva de Alcardete (Toledo)

Priority: Food risk management

RDP measure: M04: Investment in physical assets.

Funds received:

€1 892 702 (EAFRD: €529 957 National/Regional: €227 124 Private: €1 135 622)

Coordinating entity: SAN ISIDRO SCCLM Cooperative

Contact email: info@latue.com

Website: www.latue.com

Modernisation of Bodegas Latúe bottling plant

Project summary

Bodegas Latúe was established in 2007 and specialises in exporting high-quality organic wine from the Villanueva de Alcardete local cooperative in the province of Toledo. The winery aims to improve commercialisation of its wines abroad, where more genuine products such as limited editions, smaller bottles or sparkling wines are more and more in demand. Adapting to new consumer preferences and offering a wider range of products requires upgrading the bottling plant and obtaining a competitive advantage in international markets in the future..

This upgrade was made possible through EAFRD funding.



Main results

- Establishment of the winery as a benchmark for the industry with wide experience in the production of organic wines and in the use of innovative technologies.
- Diversification of the range of products, maintaining their quality and increasing the sale price by 27 percent.
- Creation of jobs in the wine industry and prevention of local population loss.

Key lessons

- Analysis of market trends and selection of new goals to meet, more unique products and use of technology.
- Working proactively with public administrations, assessment of funding options and selection criteria.
- Paying attention to the “circular economy” and innovation opportunities.

Context

Background:

Located in Toledo, this region has produced wine for centuries. In 1954, 131 vine growers created the San Isidro Cooperative, which today has over 600 members. Of the 6 200 hectares of vineyard, 35 percent are managed organically (this is the largest cooperative of organic wines and grape juices in Spain).

Proposal for action:

Offering unique quality products, finding new business opportunities, and giving more value to the Castilla La Mancha designation of origin remain the primary challenges of the cooperative. In the last four years, Bodegas Latúe has decided to invest EUR 6 million in upgrading its production and processing facilities and diversifying its product varieties, in part using EAFRD

and regional funds.

Subject of the project:

Intelligent upgrade of bottling plant to obtain better production and greater versatility.

Participants and partners:

Members of the cooperative:

- SAN ISIDRO SCCLM.
- Bodegas Latúe.



Activities

- Bodegas Latúe and the SAN ISIDRO SCCLM Cooperative reviewed the winery's financial status, set up business goals and agreed on how to bring the winery up to date.
- As part of the project, it was decided to build a new plant and new equipment for injecting CO₂ into different grape juices and into a wider variety of bottles, including high-quality limited edition wines (with specially chosen and numbered bottles). The new facilities are built adjacent to the old ones.
- The new production line integrates technical advances (including an intelligent software to manage the electromechanical production line, with a capacity of 6 000 bottles per hour).
- The new plant has specially designed tanks as well as equipment to apply pressure to carbonated wines. They can now use the Charmat method to produce sparkling wines, wines with natural aromas or limited/unique/smaller editions.

Results

The addition of new winery products represents a 27 percent increase in the global sales price. An increase in bottle production close to 100 percent has been achieved, resulting in the creation of four permanent jobs.

Keeping wine production activity in the area generates social and economic benefits for the county population and the area surrounding the winery.

Lessons learned

Market differentiation of wine producers must involve the study of market trends and investment in research, development and the most recent technologies. This approach provides added value "to each grape", in addition to capitalising on the investment.

The regional government of Castilla-La Mancha offers options to study the business plans presented. This

support is key so that the goals and expected results can be adapted during the project's implementation phase, based on the industry and the realities of the market.

It is important to work proactively with public administrations, and to assess funding options and selection criteria- as well as the underlying rationale.



Aragon

Location: Aínsa-Sobrarbe (Huesca)

Priority: P3 Food chain organisation and risk management.

RDP measure: M16-Cooperation.

Funds received: €60 000 (RDP: €48 000 + Private: €12 000)

Coordinating entity: Aragonese Association of Cattle Ranchers of the Pyrenean breed (ASAPI); Foundation for the Conservation of the Bearded Vulture (FCQ)

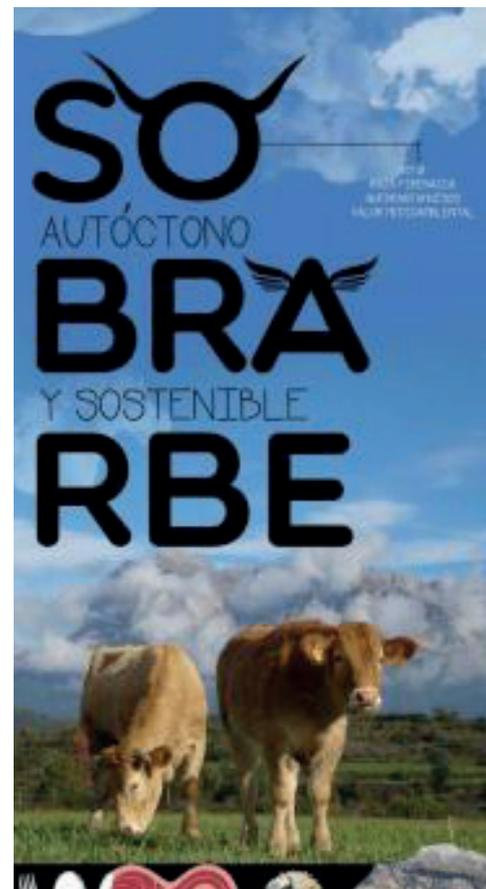
Contact email: jagil@quebrantahueosos.org

Sobrarbe, autochthonous and sustainable

Project summary

Extensive livestock farming in the Aragonese Pyrenees is one of the greatest environmental and economic assets of the territory. It contributes to the maintenance of biodiversity and landscapes of great value, while providing quality food products. Sobrarbe Autóctono y Sostenible (Sobrarbe, autochthonous and sustainable) is an association created to carry a series of promotional and awareness-raising activities, along with acquiring a certification of Product of Geographical Indication (PGI) for veal from the Sobrarbe valley. It aims to promote sustainable raising, production and consumption of local beef. It also helped develop new meat processing techniques and cooking recipes, as well as establishing a process through which carcasses from the municipality's slaughterhouse will be transported to a midden to feed the endangered species of vultures in the area. Construction of a new birdwatching viewpoint, near this feeder, allows the interpretation centre visitors

to watch them closer.



Main results

- Strengthened links among the beef production sector, marketing agencies and restaurants, which positively affects all of them as well as the final consumer. Moreover, increased consumption of beef from the Pyrenean breed and improved viability of the local farms.
- Raised awareness among the local population and tourists on the consumption of a product of the territory that is healthy, responsibly produced and sustainable and promotion of innovative meat cuts and beef recipes.
- Synergy with necrophagous raptors, which produce an important energy saving by avoiding the transport and incineration of hundreds of cattle carcasses. For instance, a single vulture ingests 182 kg per year leading to annual savings of 55.7 l of diesel and the emission of 177.3 kg of CO₂ into the atmosphere.

Key lessons

- In order to promote this project, it is required to work with social or public canteens (schools, homes for the elderly, etc.), as well as to develop and advertise menus and healthy food education programmes linked to local products.
- This project may be transferred to other territories where the Pyrenean breed is produced, with different autochthonous cattle, such as "churra tensina".

Context

Background:

Extensive livestock farming in the Aragonese Pyrenees is one of the greatest environmental and economic assets of the territory. It contributes to the maintenance of biodiversity and landscapes of great value, while providing quality food products, which bring economic revenues to the territory.

There is a permanent population of necrophagous birds in the area, some of them at risk of extinction. An interpretation centre, the Eco Museum – Visitor Center of Ainsa Castle, which was created by the Foundation for the Conservation of the Bearded Vulture (FCQ) and receives over 20 000 visitors per year is in charge of disseminating the potential value of the Aragonese Pyrenees wildlife.

The association is based on a “zero-km meat” approach, referring to management of animals born, raised and slaughtered in the same Sobrarbe county (Huesca). As part of the process, local meat production contributes to the effort of those feeding the vultures in the area, lead by the FCQ in Ainsa.

Proposal for action:

Developing a new production process and a more sustainable consumption of meat.

Enhancing conservation of Pyrenean breed cattle and local necrophagous birds in the area, as well as their habitat.

Objective of the project:

Promoting the consumption of meat produced in the territory in a sustainable and compatible way with the environment

Participants and partners:

- Aragonese Association of Cattle Ranchers of the Pyrenean breed (ASAPI)
- Foundation for the Conservation of the Bearded Vulture (FCQ), sponsor of the idea.
- Town Council of Aínsa-Sobrarbe.
- Owner of the municipality’s slaughterhouse.
- University of Zaragoza (Faculty of Veterinary Medicine).
- Sobrarbe Business Association.



Activities

- Programming and holding meetings among the project’s partners.
- Presentation of the project at the 3rd Forum for the Sustainability of the Pyrenees, which was held at Sallent de Gállego (October 2016) and at Ferieta de Aínsa (February 2017).
- Management and maintenance of the vultures of Aínsa-Sobrarbe in 2016 and 2017, and guided visits to their habitats.
- Promotion and advertising activities including brochures about the Aínsa-Sobrarbe vulture and the “Sobrarbe, Autóctono y Sostenible” project; creation of posters to present the project; organising courses on innovative ways of beef cutting; posters on cooking and tasting; a photography contest on Pyrenean beef; dissemination activities on the radio and television, and in written media and online.
- Promotion of locally produced veal meat in the schools of Aínsa (March 2017).
- A food auction with meat recipes of the Pyrenean beef at the Aofu-Sobrarbe Expoferia (September 2017).
- Show cooking and tasting: innovation, ideas and proposals to chefs about veal recipes (Aínsa, October 2017).
- PGI certification for Sobrarbe beef, thanks to the support of the University of Zaragoza.
- A study to assess the sustainability of the Pyrenean breed farms in cooperation with the University of Zaragoza.
- Organisation of the process and requirements for the slaughterhouse to provide carcasses for feeding the vultures with the support of the town council of Aínsa-Sobrarbe.
- A contest for affiliated business to include Pyrenean beef dishes on their menus (December 2017).
- Construction of a new birdwatching viewpoint in the Eco Museum – Visitor Center of Ainsa Castle for watching vultures closely.

Results

- Increased links between the beef production sector, marketing and restaurants, which positively affects the final consumer.
- Increased consumption of beef from the Pyrenean breed and improved viability of the local farms.
- Increased use of beef carcasses by farmers.
- Added value through the consumption of local products through short marketing channels (zero km meat).
- Raised awareness among the local population and tourists on the consumption of a product of the territory which is healthy, responsibly produced and sustainable.
- Raised awareness in the catering sector on innovative meat cuts and Pyrenean beef recipes.
- Increase of environmental benefits by saving energy in transportation as the meat consumed in the area is locally produced.
- Using carcasses to feed the vultures, thus reducing the costs of transportation to the slaughterhouse.
- Consolidation of a job in the interpretation centre and creation of a new job for guided tours to the viewpoint.

Lessons learned

Dissemination of local food consumption is important. In order to do this, it is required to work with social or public canteens (schools, homes for the elderly, etc.), as well as to develop and advertise menus and healthy food education programmes linked to these products.

The project may be transferred to other areas since Pyrenean breed is also raised in other regions (i.e. El Maestrazgo) and even at product level, with different autochthonous livestock such as “churra tensina” of which only 10 000 sheep are left.



Catalonia

Localidad: Balaguer (Lleida)

Categoría proyecto: Proyecto estratégico

Financiación recibida:
11.957,72 €

Entidad coordinadora:
Grup d'Acció Local Noguera Segrià Nord

Email:
leader@noguerasegrianord.cat

Teléfono: 973 448 933

Territori de Valor. Noguerament Bo

Project summary

Noguerament Bo is the emblem for agri-food products from the county of Noguera, and was created as part of the strategic project Territori de Valor. Posar en valor els productes agroalimentaris davant dels productors agroalimentaris coordinated by the Grup d'Acció Local Noguera-Segrià Nord. The project aims to promote local products, strengthen short supply channels, improve the competitiveness of the agri-food companies, and foster cooperation and collaboration among producers.

The Noguerament Bo emblem is intended to reinforce the unique added value of agri-food resources from the county of Noguera. At the same time, it is meant to emphasize the value of the producers and create synergies among them with the goal of collaborating to make their products better known.

This project is designed to create bonds among agri-food producers in the area, and they are the main partners.



Main results

- Creation of the emblem and manufacturing of logo bags so that participating stores can advertise the brand in their products.
- Participation of nine agri-food producers. Castell del Remei, Casa Patau, Cal Retjo, Cal Blasiet, Alimentación Farràs, Conejo Como Cal, FructumCat, Cal Esmet, Plan Ovino.
- Creation of a website with information about the project, its internal rules and the participating companies. Dissemination in social networks, as well as local press and media.
- Promotion of local products and, by extension, the work done by producers in the area.
- Fostering partnerships among different producers, even within the same sector.

Key lessons

- The emblem adds personality and a mark of quality to local products.
- The visibility of the area products is increased and customers can learn about other previously unknown services.
- The project can be transferred to other areas wishing to create bonds among producers of high-quality, agri-food.
- Communication and dissemination of project information should be improved so that local population can identify agri-food producers as a source of economic stimulation and wealth for the area.

Context

Background:

The area of the GAL Noguera-Segrià Norte is an area with high potential in terms of endogenous natural and agri-food resources where agri-food production and transformation activities are crucial.

The agri-food network is rich and diverse, and includes the following: oil, bread and coca de sanfaina (a local salty pastry), cheese, ice cream, aromatic herbs, potato chips, wine, beer, eggs, dried fruits, juice, meat and cold cuts, black truffle, honey, jams and preserves, chocolate and turrón (nougat) and fruits and vegetables.

Proposal for action:

Promoting local products through short production channels, improved competitiveness of the agri-food sector and better cooperation and collaboration among local producers.

Objectives of the project:

Highlight the value of the agri-food industry and its direct benefit to people in the Noguera area, ensuring that agri-food producers themselves see the value in their products and in their local area.

To raise awareness of resources in the area such as agri-food products, add value to them and stimulate the local economy.

To diversify the local economy, mainly through the tourism sector in which agri-food producers could play a complementary role with special significance.

Participants and partners:

The project is coordinated by the Grup d'Acció Local Noguera-Segrià Nord in collaboration with the Consell Comarcal de la Noguera (county council).



Activities

- Creation of an emblem that encompasses various agri-food products from producers interested in taking part in this project. Meetings have been held with agri-food producers to reach agreement on decisions taken on behalf of the group.
- Creation of a website including complete information about the project and information brochures (under construction).
- Creation of a community of agri-food producers to facilitate taking actions to promote the sector.

Results

Results are preliminary since the project is not over yet, but in addition to the 9 producers already using the emblem, 5 more have shown interest. Participating companies are mainly meat and cold cuts producers but there is also a jam business and a winery.

Creation of a website including complete information about the project, as well as its internal rules and a list of participating companies. More actions have been

carried out including promotion of the emblem and local products in social networks and press releases, thus promoting the work done by area producers.

In general, the project fosters the creation of partnerships among different producers, even when they are also competitors.

Lessons learned

The emblem adds personality and trust to local products, which customers can link to a mark of quality and visibility.

The project can be transferred to other rural areas with high-quality agri-food products. Creating bonds among producers is key for improving project dissemination in the rural area.

Improved communication and dissemination of project information can result in residents identifying agri-food producers as a source of economic stimulation and wealth in the area.



*Competitiveness
farm holdings*

Canary Islands

Location: Telde (Gran Canaria)

RDP measure: 6- Farm and business development.

Funds received: €74 000 (2016) / €9 000 (2017) / €200.209.48 (2019)

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Organic production of pitaya (*Hylocereus spp.*), and other exotic fruits

Project summary

The cultivation of organic pitaya (*Hylocereus spp.*), together with other exotic fruits including passion fruit (*Passiflora spp.*), longan (*Dimocarpus longan*) and star fruit (*Averrhoa carambola*), results from the need to increase economic diversification of farms in the Canary Islands, which is hindered by their great dependency on the tourist industry and their high unemployment rates.

In this respect, production of pitaya comes as an opportunity, as it is a plant with low water requirements and excellent for places with water scarcity. This fruit is non-climacteric fruit (ripening after harvest) and highly perishable (lasting about 20 days from harvest to expiration). While it can be exported by plane to Europe, that increases its cost. Canarian companies exporting this fruit use maritime transport at a lower, more competitive cost.

This project involves organic

production of naturalised crops of subtropical fruit trees of the following cultivars:

- Pitaya (*Hylocereus spp.*)
- Passion fruit (*Passiflora spp.*)
- Longan (*Dimocarpus longan*)

- Star fruit (*Averrhoa carambola*)



Main results

- Impact on the area: clean up (eight tonnes of hoses and four tonnes of metal have been removed).
- Repopulation with native flora, which benefits the crops and ultimately recovers the fauna.
- Synergies with other measures: 4.1. Support for investments in agricultural holdings.
- Direct employment of one worker, and indirect jobs for contractors who installed both the irrigation system and the training mesh.
- Production of an organic crop, international market exports, lower carbon footprint of exports to Europe.
- Use of renewable energy and water reclaimed by the Water Island Council.

Key lessons

- Business management of a micro-SME.
- Handling of machinery that is environmentally sustainable.
- Perpetuation of local knowledge and local plants, as well as native wildlife, which is extremely important when managing an organic farm.
- Production of pitaya, longan and star fruit, which is an innovation in the islands, will serve as experience to future farmers.
- It is still too early to recommend improvements to implement.
- The project is considered best practice due to its innovative nature in the type of crop grown, as well as its respect for the environment.

Context

Background

In 2015, the idea for this project arose after a visit to the Cabildo de Gran Canaria (regional government of Gran Canaria), where the high potential of pitaya in the Canary Islands can be observed in experimental plots. The project was further strengthened by two prizes received in 2016: Enorte 2016 (sponsored by the Mancomunidad del Norte de Gran Canaria - association of villages of northern Gran Canaria, el Cabildo de Gran Canaria - regional government of Gran Canaria, and La Caixa bank) and PMI 2016 (sponsored by the Diario La Provincia newspaper, MBA y Phillip Morris International).

Proposal for action:

Growing organic pitaya based on its geostrategic potential for the Canary Islands.

Objective of the project:

To reduce the export costs of pitaya, which is a non-climacteric (it ripens after harvest) and highly

perishable fruit that the main exporting countries ship by plane to Europe. From the Canary Islands exports are via maritime transport with a much lower and more competitive cost than the rest of the world.

Creating a competitive production niche based on the characteristics of the plant. The pitaya needs a subtropical climate with stable temperatures, which prevents countries such as Morocco from growing it in a cost-effective way and opens the door for the Canary Islands to produce ground-breaking crops.

Successful sustainable production, with a minimal carbon footprint in terms of exports to Europe, compared to exports by plane from South America and Vietnam.

Participants and partners

- Antonio Hernández González.
- Simón José Rodríguez Moreno.
- Tinerfe Hernández González.



Activities

- Field clean up.
- Installation of training mesh and irrigation system.
- Planting of cultivars.

Results

Training mesh in all trees for their correct development.
Irrigation system installation in order to maximise water resources.
Solar photovoltaic installation, ensuring power supply from a renewable source.

Installation of showers, toilets and changing rooms according to current regulations and separated by sex, in order to integrate women into the rural world.

Lessons learned

It is possible to have organic production managed by a micro-SME with machinery that is environmentally sustainable, while respecting endemic wildlife. Production of pitaya, longan and star fruit will serve as an experience for farmers because of its novelty and potential in the islands.



Extremadura

Location: Mérida (Badajoz)

Priority: 2A - Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation.

RDP measure: 4 - Investments in physical assets (4.2-Support for investments in processing/marketing and/or development of agricultural products).

Funds received: EAFRD funds.

Coordinating entity: Servicio de Producción Agraria (Agricultural Production Service). Dirección General de Agricultura y Ganadería (General Directorate of Farming and Livestock).

Investments for joint commercialisation of beef in the autonomous community of Extremadura

Project summary

The “Investments for joint commercialisation of beef in the Autonomous Community of Extremadura” project includes the construction of two new marketing facilities for beef cattle. It aims to increase the activity of beef cattle commercialisation entities through structural investments.

New facilities improve market competitiveness, which benefits all primary producers and enables them to sell their product in a more transparent and competitive market, directly increasing added value of animals jointly marketed.



Main results

- Construction of two marketing facilities has been completed.
- Completion of four new marketing facilities has been planned.

Key lessons

- Increased added value of jointly marketed animals in a more transparent and competitive market.

Context

Background:

Livestock production in Extremadura is highly important in the primary sector. In addition, in this autonomous community the primary sector has a greater presence than in the rest of Spain. The goal of the beef cattle sector in Extremadura is to achieve a business structure with appropriate qualifications and a high level of specialisation.

Proposal for action:

Investments that improve business structures of entities involved in commercialisation of beef cattle.

Objective of the project:

Improving marketing structures so that higher volumes of product can be placed in the market with higher levels of quality and processing. Also, taking into account the sector requirement of enough demand concentration to provide primary producers a good viability, in a market with growing competitiveness.

Participants and partners:

Companies with an agricultural association that specialize in joint commercialization of beef cattle.



Activities

- Construction of new facilities and acquisition of new equipment.

Results

Generation of synergies with other sub-measures under Measure 4 and Measure 10: Agri-environment-climate. Involvement of EAFRD funds for new investments in commercialisation of beef cattle.

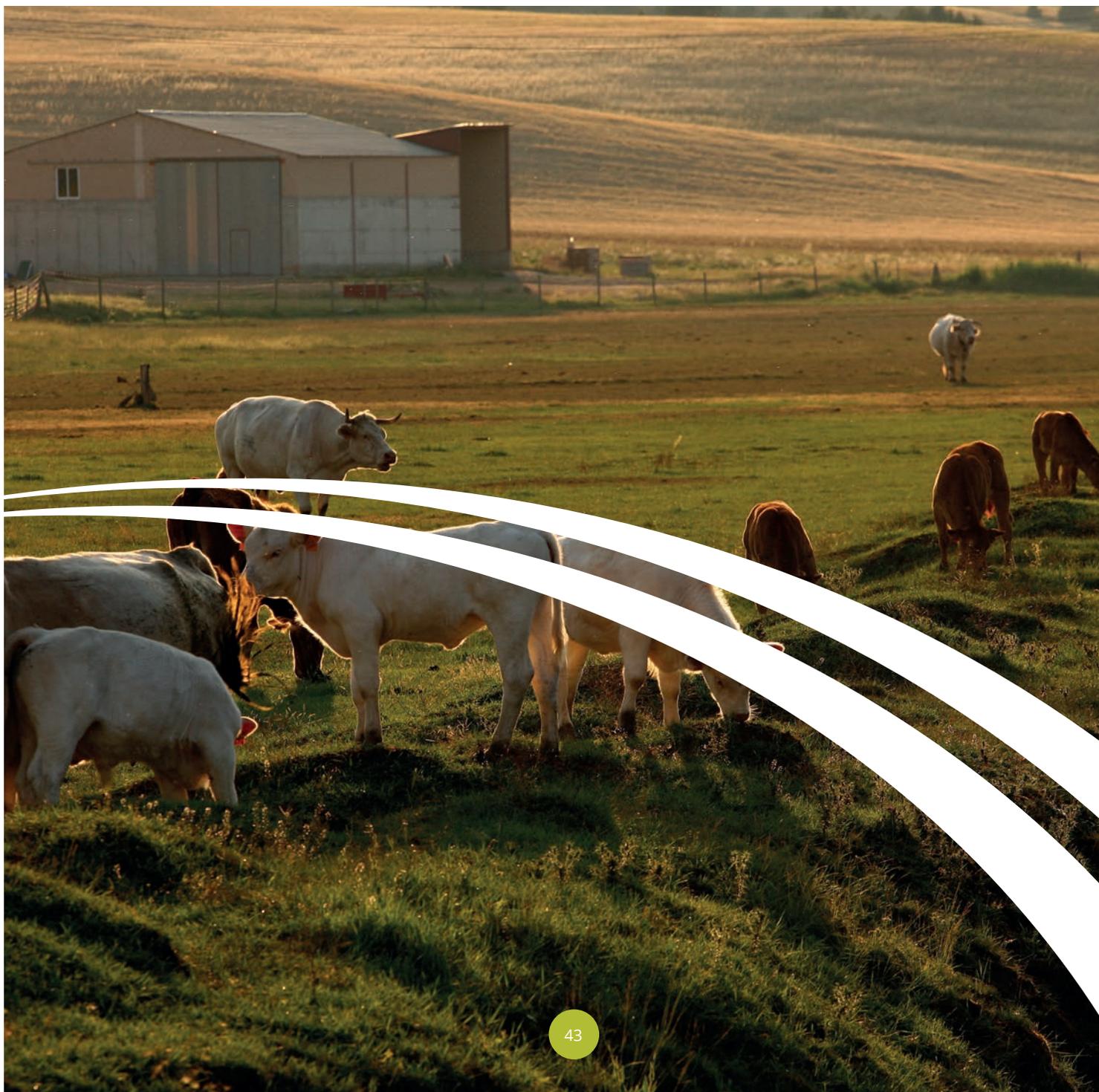
Promotion of joint commercialisation of beef cattle, establishing new companies within the sector, and keeping population, and therefore reducing abandonment of livestock farms.

Higher level of competitiveness in the market and benefits for the whole sector, although data on job creation and preservation have not been specified yet.

Lessons learned

Livestock farmers will be able to increase added value of jointly marketed animals by selling their products in a more transparent and competitive market.

Reducing abandonment of livestock farms results in keeping population in the rural world.



Extremadura

Location: Mérida (Badajoz)
Priority: 2A - Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation.

Project category: Grants.

RDP measure: 4 Investments in physical assets (4.1 Support for investments in agricultural holdings)

Funds received: EAFRD funds

Coordinating entity: Servicio de Producción Agraria (Agricultural Production Service). Dirección General de Agricultura y Ganadería (General Directorate of Farming and Livestock). Consejería de Medio Ambiente y Rural, Políticas Agrarias y Territorio (Department of Environment and Rural, Agriculture Policy and Territory) Junta de Extremadura (Regional government of Extremadura).

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Modernisation of olive groves

Project summary

The “Modernisation of olive groves” project aims to make investments to olive groves to obtain higher quality and more homogeneous and stable production over time. Doing so, will improve overall yields and increase the sustainability of farms, while enhancing the competitiveness of olive groves in Extremadura.

The largest areas of olive groves in Extremadura are located in rural areas with depopulation trends. The recruitment of workers related to the olive crop is one solution to the serious problem of depopulation.



Main results

- Implementation of 61 projects for modernisation of olive groves in the autonomous community of Extremadura.
- Improvement of the condition of olive groves to increase future economic output and the sustainability of their exploitation.
- Grafting of an established variety with the goal of changing to a variety with better production or commercial qualities.

Key Lessons

- EAFRD funds made it possible to invest the required sum in farms to increase production and improve competitiveness and environmental sustainability. Good projects with sufficient initial economic support must contribute to keeping population in rural areas, thus preventing abandonment of farms.

Context

Background:

Olive groves are the crop that occupies the largest area in Extremadura. A large part of Extremadura olive groves are located in areas with depopulation trends. Because of the labour-intensive nature of the olive crop, it constitutes a mechanism to keep population in rural areas. However, olives are grown in association with other crops and therefore have a low plant density. Due to the long life of olive trees, they have persisted over other kinds of crops, but the low density of planting limits their production capacity. Some farmers increased planting densities by interspersing new olive trees among old ones. However, this practice was not as successful as expected because the old olive trees had established root systems beneath the entire grove.

Proposal action:

Carrying out actions that aim to improve olive groves conditions to increase economic output and sustainability of farms. Grafting of already established varieties in order to change to a variety with better

production or commercial qualities.

Objectives of the projects:

Existing olive groves in the autonomous community of Extremadura were established many years ago.

There is a need to keep population in rural areas of Extremadura.

Participants and partners:

Servicio de Producción Agraria (Agricultural Production Service) of the Dirección General de Agricultura y Ganadería (General Directorate of Farming and Livestock) of the Consejería de Medio Ambiente y Rural, Políticas Agrarias y Territorio (Department of Environment and Rural, Agriculture Policy and Territory) of the Junta de Extremadura (Regional government of Extremadura).



Activities

- Removal of all existing olive trees from the grove, preparation of the soil for new plants, planting of olive trees; and installation of tree props and anti-rabbit protectors.

Results

Generation of synergies with other sub-measures under Measure 4 and Measure 10: Agri-environment-climate.

Specific data on job creation and preservation are not available yet as not all actions have been completed.

Lessons learned

EAFRD funding has made possible investments in olive groves to increase their production value and competitiveness.

These actions are intended to keep population in rural areas through employment in manual labour, preventing abandonment of farms and improving their productivity and environmental sustainability.



Community of Madrid

Location: Villaconejos
Priority: 2 - Farm viability and competitiveness
RDP measure: M4.2 - Investments in physical assets
Funds received: €961 843.86
Coordinating entity: Oleum Laguna, S.L.
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Oleum Laguna, S.L. Organic oil mill

Project summary

Oleum Laguna S.L. is based in the construction and operation of an organic mill for processing and bottling first- and second-extraction olive oil and to extract olive pits.

Olives from the Oleum Laguna S.L. grove and from other groves in the county of Villaconejos are used in the mill. Almost the whole extension of olive crops in Villaconejos is regulated by the Community of Madrid organic farming committee, and thus the virgin olive oil obtained from milling these olives is organic.



Main results

- Creation of two jobs.
- Reduction of energy and water consumption and their potential polluting effects. 1 000 tonnes of olives are used to produce 200 000 litres of organic extra virgin olive oil.
- Environmental benefits of the installation.
- Development and application of new technologies leads to better quality and improved appearance of the product, which opens up new market niches.

Key Lessons

- Through the application of new technologies, the product gains market outlets.

Context

Background:

This project is born from the idea of offering high-quality natural products that are also artisanal and local to consumers.

It receives funding based on Order 3586/2016 of 30 December by the Consejería de Medio Ambiente, Administración Local y Ordenación del Territorio (Department of Environment, Local Administration and Land Planning). The order announced the 2017 aid scheme for micro, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), as well as midrange companies, for promoting investments in processing, commercialisation or development of agricultural products co-funded by the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development, provided under Order 766/2016 of 10 May.

Proposal for action:

Creation of an industry for processing high-quality organic extra virgin olive oil.

Objectives of the project:

Processing and bottling first- and second-extraction olive oil and extracting olive pits.

Participants and partners:

Oleum Laguna, S.L., a micro-SME, was established as a company on 29 November 2013.



Activities

The main activity is producing high-quality organic extra virgin olive oil and involves stirring the paste at temperatures below 26-27 degrees and using a two-stage decanter to separate the oil from the solid residue. This reduces energy and water consumption as well as potential polluting effects, and therefore the environmental advantages of the installation are remarkable.

This process yields a high-quality product with clear and growing demand in the market of organic oil targeted to a type of consumer who values the product, without giving up any sales options in the national specialised market. Connections with agents exporting to North American and Italian markets are also fostered, as well as with some of the leading national chains of distribution that have quality lines in their stores. Implementation of e-commerce and other innovative formulas to reach consumers is also planned.

Results

- Investments in technologies and processes aimed at developing new products, or higher quality products, and the opening up of new markets, especially in the context of short distribution channels.
- Creation and/or modernisation of local networks to harvest, receive, store, classify and package products.
- Environmental protection and/or reduction of environmental impact.
- Improvement of health and safety conditions.
- Development and application of new technologies.
- Improved quality and presentation of products.
- Opening up new market opportunities.
- Valuation and disposal of by-products and residues.
- Agricultural production oriented to market trends.
- Increased competitiveness of the company.
- Higher added value.



Canary Islands

Location: Güímar (Santa Cruz de Tenerife)

RDP measure: 6 - Farm and business development

Funds received: €113 000

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Hydroponic production of green fodder

Project summary

This project involves two young farmers and includes the construction of a production system for high-quality hydroponic green fodder (HGF). The purpose is to produce plant biomass to be used as quality fodder through germination and subsequent growth of cereal seeds (barley, in this case), under optimal, controlled environmental conditions, without using any substrate (no soil).

Carried out in its own plot, this modern cultivation system yields organic products that are natural, fresh, and tastier and more nutritious for local livestock herds, in addition to producing fresh fodder year-round.

The process maximizes the use of space and resources, using the minimum amount of water compared with traditional agricultural methods

(sustainable crop).



Main results

- Employment for the two co-owners of the operation.
- Positive impact resulting from the introduction of a new product in the market and its quick and easy distribution and sale.
- Making available the supply of quality green fodder for livestock farmers, cooperatives, zoos and animal food retail stores.
- Synergies with sub-measure 4.1 of the 2014-2020 RDP.
- The production cycle is very short (i.e. eight days) and provides a fresh, zero-km product with high digestibility and great nutritious value.
- Installation of wind turbines to reduce electrical consumption through use of a natural resource.

Key lessons

- This project is transferable because it includes an alternative production system for extremely fresh green fodder, with high yield and quality, that can respond to the demand for animal food products that is heavily dependent on external sources.
- The project sponsors are perfectly complementary to each other, since their education and experience allows them to cover and perform the key activities of the business.
- The project would have benefited from the installation of a silo to store a larger amount of seeds.
- Hydroponic green fodder is a supplement that can improve the quality of livestock production.
- The success of the system lies in improved hygiene and control of environmental and water conditions, so real time data are needed on conditions in the production environment.
- Local livestock farmers are not familiar with the product (HGF) and do not have much trust in it.
- It's too early to join the association movement because this initiative is new in the local area.

Context

Background:

Limited experiences in the Canary Islands.

A visit to a farm owned by a livestock farmer that supplemented his livestock food with hydroponic green fodder, achieving higher production and quality of milk as well as improved animal welfare.

Action proposal:

The project is based on the production, commercialisation and distribution of organic green fodder in the Canary Islands. The product can be grown in closed spaces of any type, independent of soil and climate, and in an overlapping layout, taking advantage of cubic metres of space.

The main activity is related to purchasing seeds and obtaining and producing organic green fodder using hydroponic methods, selling it under contract to livestock farms, zoos and retailers in the Canary Islands.

The main advantages are the higher nutritional quality, resulting from the fact that the farmer receives the product from the grower more quickly (preserving nutrients and freshness); water savings (resulting from the use of hydroponic methods); higher productivity per surface unit; use of clean energy; and contributions to climate change mitigation.

The project qualifies as best practice because it involves a high-quality product, water savings (through hydroponic methods and water reuse), increased productivity per surface unit, use of clean energy (wind turbines), and contributions to climate change mitigation.

Objective of the project:

Reducing the strong dependence on the external market (as a consequence of insularity): around 80 percent of fresh food required to feed the local livestock population must be imported.

Improving the low quality of imported foodstuffs, which produces some deficiencies in local livestock production.

Strengthening the link between production (agriculture) and consumption (livestock) in order to make this kind of innovative operation more competitive.

Participants and partners:

Two young farmers who are co-owners of the agricultural operation.

- Jorge Martín de los Santos Rodríguez de Vera.
- Evelyn María Cuenca Carballo.



Activities

Construction of a modular system to produce hydroponic green fodder (HGF) with materials suitable for creating the required climatologic conditions for the plant to grow.

It has an integrated control system that can be used to control the whole production process. Inside the module there is a support structure made of galvanized steel where production trays are placed, each of them yielding 9 to 10 kilos of HGF in every harvest.

In addition to an irrigation system and cool LED lighting, it also has a system for water disposal and water treatment using ozone. Renewable energy is supplied by wind turbines.

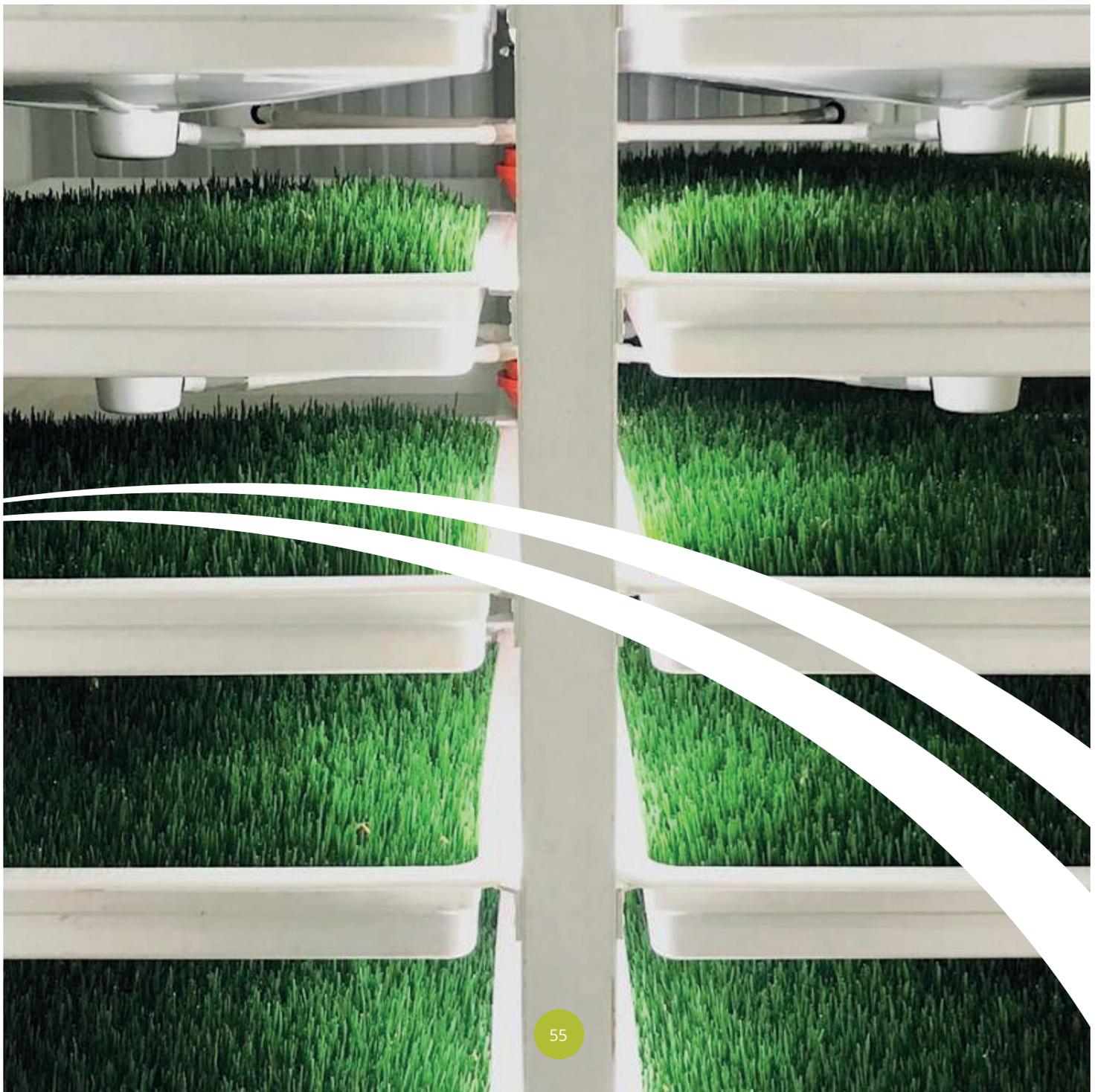
Results

Construction of the greenhouse and hydroponic system for production of green fodder in an area of 80 m².

The productive capacity of barley HGF is around 1 000 kg/day (an amount that can feed a herd of 300 goats steadily).

The fodder obtained shows optimal nutritional and organoleptic qualities, which make it excellent for continuous consumption by livestock. It is a supplement with well-known nutritional values that can be introduced into the diet using an incremental approach, with adjustments to the nutritional balance of the ration.

The installation allows production in a safe and controlled way, in addition to saving 90 percent of the amount of water required in a conventional operation.



Canary Islands

Location: San Bartolomé de Tirajana (Gran Canaria)

RDP measure: 6 - Farm and business development

Funds received: €38 000 (2017) / €25 000 (2018)

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Production and distribution of new products, some traditional and in disuse, unique, healthy and gourmet quality

Project summary

This is an organic farm located in Gran Canaria with approximately 1,5 hectares used for growing new crops. This operation grows differentiated products including flowers, fruits and vegetables that are little known or come from other countries; aromatic plants that confer health benefits; and plants with different properties and with gourmet qualities such as microvegetables and microsprouts. Some of them are traditional products no longer in common use.

This farm is a good example of diversification of production and services because it also has animals, including chickens, rabbits and a small goat herd, and is open to the public for guided visits.



Main results

- One job (there is a prospect that at least three jobs can be created).
- Introduction of abandoned farmland into operational use.
- Recovery of traditional varieties and cultivation systems.
- Guided visits to the farm.

Key lessons

- The project qualifies as best practice because it is based on organic farming, is environmentally sustainable and recovers plant varieties that contribute to diversification of production in the Canary Islands. Production is mainly targeted to the local market.

Context

Background:

This initiative is in line with the efforts of the Consejería de Agricultura, Ganadería, Pesca y Agua (Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Water) to promote organic farming and short local commercialisation channels.

This new business orientation to the hotel and restaurant sector started with a client in the San Fernando street market in Maspalomas, who is a chef at a hotel restaurant in the village. After selling him small orders, the business ended up growing exactly what he required for his menus and even for the dishes' final decoration, combining the textures and colours of the produce. The recent significant increase in vegetarian, vegan and raw vegan consumers has contributed to the growth of this market niche.

Proposal for action:

The business project is in line with the strategy defined by the Canarian government to promote consumption of products grown and processed in the islands and allows for maximum efficiency in selling the products grown in the farm. High-quality, organic products tailored to consumers and with attractive packaging are offered and supplied with optimal professionalism

and reliability.

Objectives of the projects:

- Adapting products to new requirements demanded by consumers, retailers and the hotel and restaurant industry.
- Increasing the demand of products from organic farming (due to the positive features they provide).
- Launching the gourmet food market in Gran Canaria, through organic production of fruits and vegetables.
- Differentiation: offering consumers a wide range of different, high-quality seasonal products (microvegetables, microsprouts, a great variety of exotic fruits, etc.)

Participants and partners:

One businesswoman with no partners.



Activities

- Introduction of new plants including vegetables, exotic fruits, and commodities.
- Improved irrigation system and more efficient use of fertilizers.
- Structural improvements and upgrade of the operation, enabling greater competitiveness.
- Reduction in the number of work hours per surface unit and of labour involved, resulting in lower labour costs.
- Creation of a guided visit for tourists showing key steps in the production process.

Results

Manufacturing of competitively priced, exotic organic products that promote a healthy lifestyle. The operation produces:

- Vegetables: Green and red mizuna, tatsoi, green and red pak choi, different lettuce varieties, rutabaga, kale, Orone tomato, parsnip, Japanese aubergine, rainbow chard, mini conical pepper, etc.
- Microvegetables: Paris carrots, mini chards, mini onions, leeks, etc.
- Microsprouts: alfalfa, arugula, basil, red chard, white and black mustard, sunflower, onion, pink Chinese radish, Daikon radish, among others.
- Edible flowers: Nasturtium, pansy, daisy, zucchini flower, calendula, etc.
- Subtropical fruits: Pineapple, avocado, kumquat, red banana, apple banana, caviar lime, mamme, longan, canistel, Buddha's hand, etc.
- Aromatic plants: Perilla, dill, oregano, basil and

mint.

Creation of one direct job, with a prospect that up to three jobs can be created linked to growing and distributing the products.

Introduction of abandoned farmland into operational use and recovery of traditional plant varieties and cultivation systems. Selection of land on the La Data mountain in San Bartolomé de Tirajana which has the right climatologic conditions for crops. In addition, it is located in a tourist area with a great number of hotels and restaurants where the farm products are sold. The product is targeted to a type of consumer with an upper-middle income level.

This initiative could be implemented involving one of the new organic products cooperatives that are emerging on the island.

Lessons learned

The project is useful for introducing new techniques and crops to an area of the island especially impacted by unemployment and farmland abandonment, and therefore is transferable to future entrepreneurs.

Creativity and reinterpretation of existing models are the company's foundation, combining tradition and innovation with the aim of giving agriculture a twist.

Production consulting as well as dissemination among local consumers could be improved. In any case, both cultivation technique and product commercialisation are being improved.

Clients who ask for local quality products have healthy lifestyles, are concerned about sustainability and the environment, and want cooking to be an exciting sensory experience.

Gran Canaria is the right place for the intended crops both because of its climate and because of its need to be self-sufficient, since it is an island.



Murcia

Location: Águilas

Priority: 2 – Competitiveness

RDP measure: M6.1 – Support for business start-up aid for young farmers y M4.1 – Support for investments in agricultural holdings

Funds received:

(M 6.1) €22 500.00 (EAFRD €14 175.00 + national / regional €5 827.50 + supplementary national contribution €2 497.50)

(M4.1) €50 275.25 € (EAFRD €31 673.41 € + national / regional €13 021.29 + supplementary national contribution €5 580.55)

Implementation of a young female farmer's seedling cultivation project

Project summary

Patricia Álvarez is a young farmer in Águilas, a town in Murcia, who has established a small company specialised in horticultural supply. Through financial support from two measures of the Rural Development Programme, Patricia now has a walk-in refrigerator and a new sowing machine. She has also financed new technological systems for saving water and heating that improve the environmental performance of the farm.

This project has promoted job creation. In addition, an expansion is planned that will further contribute to keeping population in the rural area.



Main results

- Creation of five permanent jobs with the possibility of further hiring in the summer for the saplings area.
- Improvement of the local economy, new business in the chain of suppliers and buyers.
- Improvement in water efficiency by reducing water consumption with the new irrigation systems that have been installed.

Key lessons

- Defining flexible selection criteria to allow a wide range of applicants and prioritize youth and women.
- The funding provided has been key to initiate the business and the business plan.
- Young farmers, as beneficiaries, must receive greater support so they can adapt better and get the training required to access new jobs and skills.

Context

Background:

The region of Murcia is located in south-eastern Spain and 57 percent of the land is arable. The primary sector and the agri-food industry (focused in exports) have great growth potential. However, some challenges must be faced to ensure sustainable development. Two of these challenges are generational renewal and efficient resource management (linked to high levels of erosion and limited available water supply).

In order to improve agricultural competitiveness and environmental performance, Murcia's RDP aims to help 500 farmers restructure and upgrade their facilities. In addition, at least 550 young farmers are receiving funds to start their businesses.

Patricia Álvarez, the main beneficiary of this project, is a young woman living in a rural area. She has worked looking after elderly people and, after losing her job, decided to start a business with her partner.

Action proposal:

Murcia's RDP aims to reduce the unemployment rate among the rural population (around 29 percent at the beginning of the programme and at almost 50 percent for youth). In addition to helping young entrepreneurs by investing in their agriculture projects, it contributes to generational renewal of the sector.

Objective of the project:

In line with this general strategy, the goal of the project was to design a business plan that would attract new investments in seedling cultivation and create stable employment opportunities for future applicant families.



Activities

- These have been carried out in parallel since they receive aid from two measures of the RDP (i.e. 4 and 6).
- Drafting of a business plan with support from specialised farming sector consultants. For this goal, administrative and agriculture training was provided during different sessions in 2016.
- Drafting of a proposal for the Measure 4.1 application period. The business plan covered two phases: improvements to the facilities so they can be rented and the business can be started, and development of a marketing plan for the company.
- The managing authority is responsible for monitoring the investments made and providing advice on technology for efficient use of resources. A walk-in refrigerator has been installed and new equipment (including a sowing machine and a spreader) has been acquired. The water system was replaced with one that recycles water and thus reduces losses.
- This project must be active for five years after receipt of the last payment (2017). The second year of production was 2018.

Results

Drafting and implementation of business plan.

Creation of five jobs with the possibility of further hiring in the summer (season with peak activity in the sector).

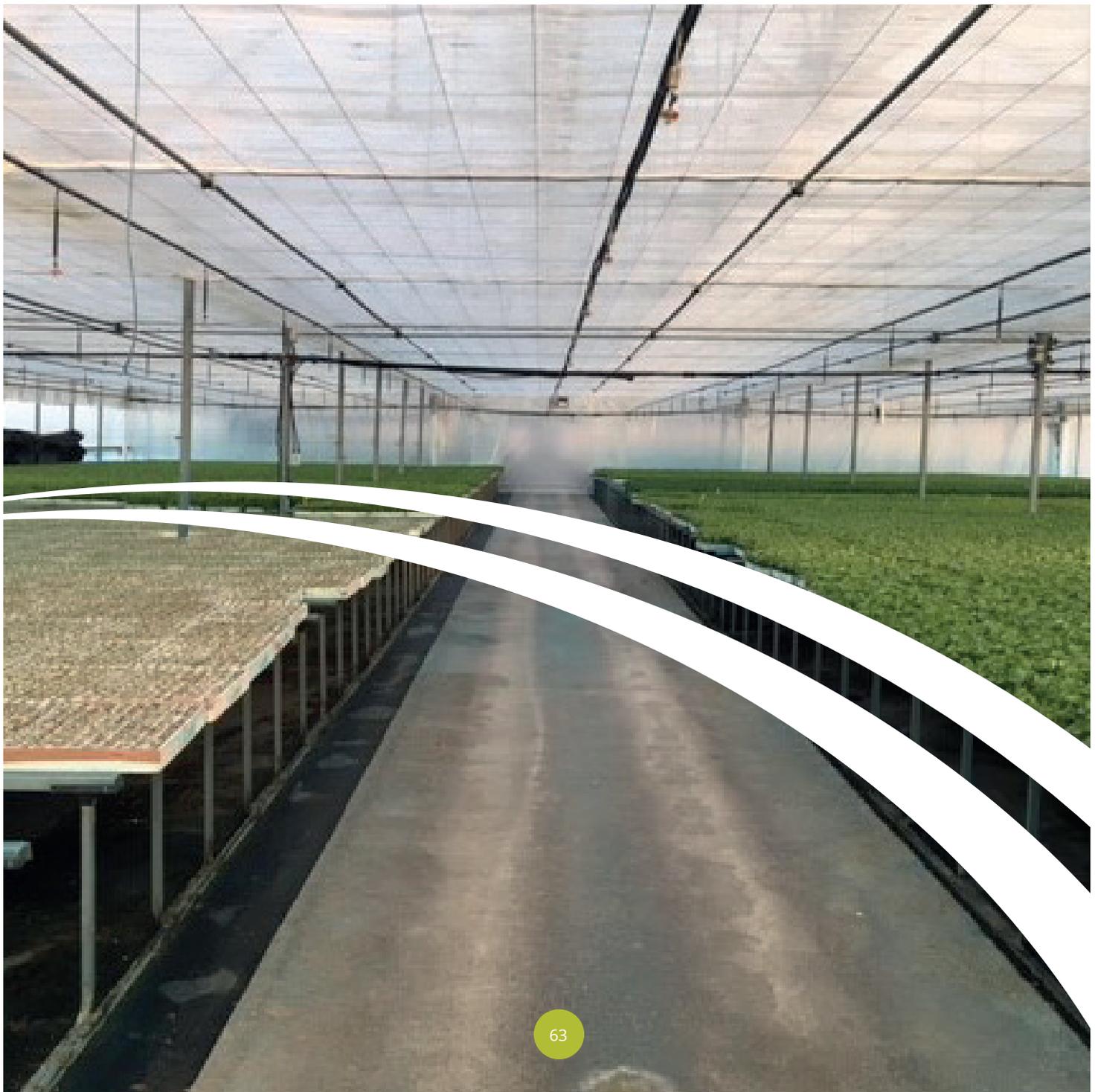
Contribution by the company to the local economy in the form of a new business.

Benefits to the farming sector from savings in irrigation water consumption.

Lessons learned

Horticulture and seedlings projects are led by big companies that need to diversify their production or distribution. However, the way in which selection criteria are established allowed a young female farmer to obtain a higher score. The funding provided has been key to initiate the business and the business plan.

Young farmers are more adaptable, they keep learning and improving their abilities, and show more interest in providing added value to their products. Sustainability and added value are key to competing in a global market.



Community of Madrid

Location: El Boalo

Priority: 2 - Farm viability and competitiveness

RDP measure: M4.2 -

Investments in physical assets

Funds received: €62 876.58

Coordinating entity/sponsor:

María Jesús Carrasco Navarro

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qmaliciosa@gmail.com

Maliciosa Cheese Factory

Project summary

The Maliciosa Cheese Factory is an artisan cheese factory operating in converted maritime transport containers, linked to Guadarrameña goats managed by the local municipality. Milk from the "Rebaño Municipal de Cabras Guadarrameñas de El Boalo, Cerceda y Mataelpino" (municipal herd of Guadarrameña goats from El Boalo, Cerceda and Mataelpino) is used as raw material to make cheeses. The herd has the maximum health and safety rating for prevention and treatment of tuberculosis (M4) and brucellosis (T3). Cheeses are also made from the milk of local Friesian cows in El Boalo, which have the same maximum health and safety rating as the goat herd. Both livestock operations are under an extensive production system and their food supply mainly comes from grazing natural resources in the area.



Main results

- The opening of the new cheese factory has created one job.
- A product of the highest quality, with differentiated and innovative cheeses.
- Increased competitiveness of the company.

Key lessons

- Manufacturing an innovative, unique and high-quality product increases its market outlets.

Context

Background:

This project is borne from the idea of offering high-quality natural products that are also artisanal and local to consumers.

It receives funding based on Order 3586/2016 of 30 December by the Consejería de Medio Ambiente, Administración Local y Ordenación del Territorio (Department of Environment, Local Administration and Land Planning) of the Community of Madrid announcing the 2017 aid scheme for micro, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as well as midrange companies for promoting investments in processing, commercialization or development of agricultural products co-funded by the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development, provided under Order 766/2016, of 10 May.

Proposal for action:

The industrial activity takes place in a building formed by four containers originally meant for maritime transport of commodities. Joined along their long side, the containers are totally refurbished for their

new use, meet industrial and health and safety criteria and regulations, and are oriented for maximum energy efficiency. They have a finished area of 63,55 m² divided into rooms for receiving raw materials, processing, refrigeration and ripening of cheeses; exhibition and sales; and storage, toilets, changing room and electrical cabinet.

Objective of the project:

To put in the local market innovative unique cheeses, offering a product with the highest quality and taking advantage of increased demand by consumers of high-quality products that are also natural, artisanal and local.

Participants and partners:

Maliciosa Cheese Factory was constituted as a new industry on 1 February 2017. It is a micro company with María Jesús Carrasco Navarro as the sole owner and worker whose activity is artisan cheese making.



Activities

- Making lactic cheeses, fresh cheeses and cheeses spiced with paprika, herbs or pepper, following all of the necessary steps required to develop the particular qualities (taste, texture, aroma, appearance) of each cheese.
- Commercial distribution. The goal is to offer cheeses of the highest-quality that are different and new to the consumer.
- Contribution to environmental protection by placing the cheese factory next to the livestock farm of the municipal herd of Guadarrameña goats, thus completing the production cycle and accessing raw material without the need of transport.

Results

- Protection of innovative investments that provide added value and use resources efficiently.
- Creation and/or upgrading of local networks of harvesting, reception, and processing of production.
- Development of a processing industry that minimizes the environmental impact of the activity.
- Agri-food production oriented to market trends.
- Business entrepreneurship. New industry (owned by a woman).
- Increased competitiveness of the company.



*Entrepreneurship
and social
innovation*

Catalonia

Location: Móra d'Ebre
(Tarragona)

Priority: P6 - Social Inclusion
and local development

RDP measure: M19 - LEADER/
CLLD

Funds received: €67 110
(EAFRD: €31 542 + national/
regional: €35 568)

Coordinating entity: Consorci
Intercomarcal d'Iniciatives
Socioeconòmiques.

Contact email:
info@cowocatrural.cat

COWOCAT RURAL.

Promoting shared work in rural Catalonia

Project summary

COWOCAT RURAL promotes shared work in Catalonia. It results from the idea that by providing shared work spaces in rural areas, economic activity will be stimulated thus preventing population from abandoning rural areas. This would solve a real problem we are now facing. It aims to offer opportunities to professionals wishing to work in a collaborative space without leaving rural areas. After implementing the pilot project (COWOCAT), 10 Catalan Local Action Groups launched an inter-territorial cooperation project to expand the network of available offices and to promote this new way of working in rural areas.



Main results

- 14 shared work spaces have been created between 2014 and 2016. They are used by over 130 professionals.

Key lessons

- The presence of shared work spaces in rural areas may contribute to more people living and working in those rural areas.
- It is essential to attract committed professionals.
- High-speed, broad-band Internet service is required as well as other basic utilities that should already be available in the area.
- Sharing experiences with other European rural areas in order to find solutions to common challenges and share business opportunities.

Context

Background:

Shared work spaces are an approach to work that allows professionals, freelancers and small companies from different industries to share the same physical and virtual space, as well as costs and services. In Barcelona, shared work spaces are gaining popularity and the COWOCAT network has been created in order to connect them.

Proposal for action:

Project sponsors thought that creating shared work spaces in rural areas would activate the local economy and halt depopulation in risk areas. This new way of working may be an opportunity for professionals wishing to enjoy the benefits of a collaborative space without moving to urban areas.

Objective of the project:

Creation of employment, bringing new opportunities to professionals and entrepreneurs, and creation of a network of work spaces in rural Catalonia.
To develop and expand the coworking network as a new method to implement ICT in rural areas.
To attract talented professionals and maintain (or increase) population levels in rural areas.

Participants and partners:

Participants are 10 local action groups that launched the cooperation project in 2014.



Activities

The local action groups involved in Cowocat Rural have supported the creation of new work sharing projects. In order to include them in the network, they need to have a "local facilitator" who provides support and helps select the professionals that are going to be associated with the work space.

This facilitator also suggests collaboration projects, creates synergies and tries to attract investments or clients to the area. They are usually users of the shared work space that have decided to settle in rural areas and devote their time and energy to making the project sustainable in the long-term.

Some of the specific activities carried out as part of this inter-territorial cooperation project from 2016 to 2017 are:

- Personal interviews with potential co-workers (or space users) to create a database of professionals.
- Creation of a database of public and private shared work spaces in the areas of the local action groups involved in the project.
- Design of the digital platform Cowocat Rural, a tool to enable exchange of contacts between rural shared work spaces and their users.
- Holding meetings with users of shared work spaces from both cities and rural areas to foster joint projects.
- Organisation of an event to share positive experiences (Coworking Day of Móra d'Ebre, 30 September 2016).
- Training for local facilitators.
- Design and provision of training courses in the Julio Antonio de Móra d'Ebre secondary school to inform students and teachers of the opportunities offered by coworking.
- Participation in the 2016 International Rural Women's Day, where the Cowocat Rural project was presented.
- Drafting a Communication Plan about the project.

Results

- Between 2014 and 2016, 14 shared work spaces were created. Over 130 professionals use these shared work spaces.
- The space has been promoted for use by families spending school holidays in rural areas as a way for them to continue managing their businesses.
- Positive impact on the local economy which could promote the settlement of permanent population in the area.

Lessons learned

- Shared work spaces in rural areas is an innovative concept that may contribute significantly to professionals deciding to remain and live and work in rural areas.
- Work sharing offers interesting opportunities to secondary schools students and university students who are considering living in rural areas.
- As a pioneering project (there are no other networks of shared work spaces in rural Spain), the useful information obtained comes from the experiences of the project itself.
- It would be very useful to discuss the topic and exchange views with other European rural areas to find solutions to common challenges and share business opportunities.
- Shared work spaces need high-speed, broad-band Internet as well as other basic utilities that should already be available in the area.
- The presence of committed professionals is more important than the existence of available spaces.



Catalonia

Location: Balaguer (Lleida)
RDP measure: 16-Cooperation
Funds received: €4 500
(annually). Sixth edition.
Coordinating entity: Noguera-Segrià Nord local action group
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Contact phone: +34 973 448 933

Arrenca Programme

Project summary

The Arrenca Programme is an individual action by the Noguera-Segrià Nord LAG within the framework of the ODISSEU cooperation project for bringing youth back to the rural world. It aims at showing the professional opportunities that rural areas can offer to young people. Along with other actions in the project, Arrenca is intended to help young people identify, analyse and position themselves to pursue the options offered by local companies, which in many cases are pioneers in their industry, thereby reducing the depopulation trend faced by rural areas.

The Arrenca programme is centred on two main axes: offering young people in the region tools and strategies to develop professional and/or business skills, and making them aware of the different business initiatives created and established in the area, so

They have models of success and can visualize opportunities for their professional advancement.



Main results

The main result is the dissemination and advertising of the programme:

- Dissemination across the social networks of the Consorci GAL Noguera Segrià Nord and the Oficina Jove Noguera (youth office).
- E-Bandos (electronic communications) to residents in the villages of Noguera.
- Websites of the Consorci GAL Noguera-Segrià Nord; Consell Comarcal de la Noguera; Balaguer TV; and l'IES Ciutat de Balaguer, and the GROC magazine.
- Training sessions and field visits were organised for about 150 young people.

Key lessons

- Rural depopulation is a shared problem that must be prevented by taking care of both young residents and rural companies that generate wealth.

Context

Background:

Rural areas face the following structural problems: ageing of their population, depopulation and the subsequent lack of generational renewal, and the loss of socioeconomic dynamism. These problems impact the potential for economic reactivation and threaten territorial balance, social organisation and environmental diversity.

Historically, studies of rural areas have been based on the evolution of the farming sector and its loss of relevance in terms of employment and the economy, and subsequent measures were designed along these lines. In addition, the connection between economic development policies and youth policies still has a long way to go. The current context, which is a consequence of both rural society's evolution and agricultural policy, allows a broader approach to rural development, beyond one strictly related to agriculture.

In spite of everything, efforts have been made to integrate the perspective of young people into public policies, including rural development.

The economic crisis has hit young people especially hard, leading to more European strategies focused on young people and their professional integration in particular. In this respect, policies such as the European Strategy for Youth (2010-2018) and the Catalonia Rural Development Programme (2014-2020) incorporate youth initiatives as a priority and recognize the need to work toward an improved relationship between young people and the place where they live.

The implementation of the Arrenca programme is intended to offset depopulation and ageing of rural areas. Workshops and visits generate enthusiasm, facilitate networking and idea sharing, and create

links between companies and young people.

Proposal for action:

To promote the return of young talent to rural towns, to foster the professional integration of young people in rural areas, to raise awareness among local companies of the value of young talent for their businesses, to attract population to rural areas and to make visible and facilitate access to the resources in rural areas.

Objective of the project:

Companies must be linked to young people. Companies must meet young people and offer them opportunities that facilitate future employment and allow them to stay in the area. It is necessary to ensure generational renewal in rural areas as it is a key factor in preventing depopulation. Young people must also be shown options for working and living in rural areas, and the real possibilities the rural world offers for future development. Offering practical information to young people to guide them in the business arena so that they can remain in rural areas.

Participants and partners:

- Consorci Grup d'Acció Local Noguera-Segrià Nord, in which Noguera's Oficina Jove (youth office) and Consell Comarcal (county council) are collaborators.
- Participants in the programme are local companies and students from secondary and professional training schools.



Activities

During the 2017 edition of the Arrenca programme:

- A total of 6 training workshops were held.
- A total of 4 visits to 11 different companies were organised.
- A contest was held for young people writing about their experience visiting companies.

Results

Between 2017 and 2018, students in professional training schools and in the last two years of secondary school participated in training workshops. The participating secondary schools were: IES Almatà in Balaguer, IES Ciutat in Balaguer, IES Vedruna in Balaguer, IES IV Ermengol in Bellcaire d'Urgell and IES Planells Artesa in Segre.

Attendance at the workshops:

Total number of entrepreneurs	14
Total number of young people	145

Visits to companies in the area:

Companies visited	11
Total number of participants in the visits	160

Lessons learned

Generating ideas for actions that improve the involvement of students in their local business network.

Getting to know all the parties that grow, live and undertake initiatives in an area to create positive synergies in the future.

Providing young people with tools and resources so that they can acquire professional and/or business skills that allow them to access future professional advancement in the rural world.



Catalonia

Location: Pallars Jussà and Pallars Sobirà (Lleida)

Priority: Fostering local development in rural areas.

Project category: Implementation of cooperation projects

RDP measure: 19 - Support for LEADER local development

Funds received: €30 000

Coordinating entity: Consorci Leader Pirineu Occidental

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“Gratitud Pallars”, strategic cooperation project. Social and tourist responsibility

Project summary

The Gratitud Pallars project, initially named SUMA'T i INVO-LUCRA'T, developed a method by which tourism companies, local residents and visitors can voluntarily contribute to the preservation and appreciation of natural and cultural heritage in rural areas. Tools used in the project around El Cinquè Llac and were first applied and later expanded to the area of the counties of Pallars Jussà and Pallars Sobirà.

It is an approach based on the principles of “Visitor Payback” and aims to improve the conservation and recovery of natural and cultural heritage.

The project is a collaboration with a local association, Marques de Pastor (composed of six rural holiday accommodation and a travel agency), which launched a sustainable tourism effort several years ago leading to creation of a five-stage walking circuit

around Montcortès Lake called El Cinquè Llac



Main results

- Creation of the Gratitud Pallars website.
- Improved conservation and recovery of the area's natural and cultural heritage.
- Awareness was created among local social actors of the importance of preserving and appreciating the rural landscape and heritage.
- Four micro reserves were created through land custody initiatives.
- Future creation of employment in rural areas. Loss of biodiversity and cultural and natural heritage translates into impoverished rural areas. Therefore, any action taken in order to halt and reverse such loss contributes to the possibility of creating employment in rural areas.

Lessons learned

- This project is transferable because it uses a participatory model that can be tailored to different locations and initiatives.
- This model is implemented locally since proximity and familiarity are what enable participation and awareness-raising.
- The original area was defined by the walking path, but the plan is to extend it to a wider area that can be easily identified by both residents and visitors.

Context

Background:

For years the Marques de Pastor association has led the El Cinquè Llac ecotourism initiative, which is a walking circuit that runs on old paths in Pallars and Alta Ribagorça. This initiative is based on the principles of sustainable and responsible tourism and has garnered the association several prizes as well as recognition from environmental and tourist entities.

The Consorci Leader Pirineu Occidental advocates a sustainable and responsible development model where the involvement and participation of all social actors is required.

There is a growing concern among society about the impact on the environment caused by human activity. There is abundant evidence, as many sectors recognise, that including residents and getting them actively involved in the management of resources and land is key to achieving sustainable development, particularly in rural areas.

Proposal for action:

To raise awareness of the necessity to actively participate in heritage preservation efforts and to change the relationship between society and environment from unidirectional to bidirectional by appealing to a sense of gratitude and responsibility.

- The project focuses on the region's natural, cultural and human assets.
- It suggests an innovative mechanism to engage with the environment.
- Increasing quality of life in rural areas is one of the priorities.
- It is designed to be transferable.

Objective of the project:

To mitigate increasing adverse effects caused by the development model in rural areas. Government itself does not have sufficient resources to mitigate these adverse effects and, even if it had, the cost would be very high.

To change the approach to managing heritage and the environment to enable better conservation and management of rural heritage.

To promote the reduction and mitigation of climate change effects as well as the development of sustainable tourism.

Participants and partners:

- Marques de Pastor Association
- Consorci Leader Pirineu Occidental LAG

Participation from other associations and new collaborations are expected in the future.



Activities

- Creation of the www.gratitudpallars.cat website with the following tools: become a volunteer, support a path, and offset your ecological footprint.
- Creation of a promotional video.
- Drafting of a Manual of Best Practices.

Results

Creation of the Gratiud Pallars website, main meeting point for the project that hosts its three tools:

- Become a volunteer: the association organizes a volunteer work week aiming to recover and restore some stretches of dry stone wall.
- Support a path: visitors and others can make a financial contribution to support the recovery and maintenance of traditional paths included in the El Cinquè Llac circuit (old traditional pathways are the threads of landscape memory).
- Offset your ecological footprint: any human activity has an environmental impact, including going on holiday. Visitors can estimate the ecological footprint of their travel and stay in El Cinquè Llac and then offset it in the area with a financial contribution to support the project's conservation and biodiversity actions: including micro reserves and forest management.

The project's experience was documented in a Manual of Best Practices, which includes an explanation of why the model must be transferable to other areas with similar concerns.

New tools are planned next year to work with landowners, focus on the project's transferability and above all to evaluate the results of participation and achievement of goals using tools already in place.

This project joins the general trend of organizations both at the local level and internationally that relate to different initiatives, including: The Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage adopted by the UNESCO in 1972; the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity of 1992; the Strategic Plan for Biological Diversity 2011–2020 and the Aichi Targets; the Catalonia Strategy for Natural Heritage and Biodiversity 2030; and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that guide the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Lessons learned

The starting point is at the local level, where proximity and familiarity enable participation and awareness-raising. The area is defined by a walking route. From there, the goal is to extend to a wider area. This approach can be transferred to other spaces.

Based on the experience included in the Manual of Best Practices and the actions suggested, more work will be done to transfer the experience to other areas and initiatives.



Balearic Islands

Location: Mallorca

Project category: Chemical, morphological and nutritional study

RDP measure: 16-Cooperation

Funds received: €23 381.25

Coordinating entity: Conselleria de Medi Ambient, Agricultura i Pesca, Govern de les Illes Balears (Department of Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries of the regional government of the Balearic Islands)

Contact email:

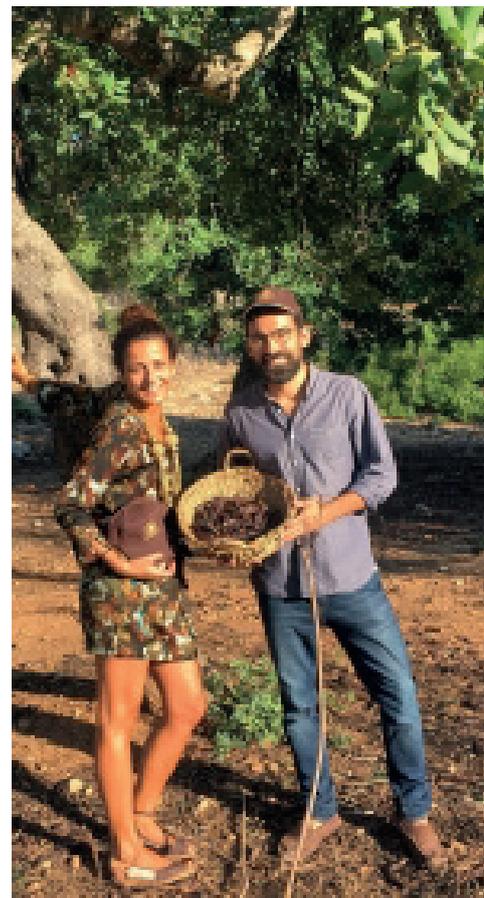
info@esgarroverdemallorca.com

Contact phone: +34 600 468 126

Es Garrover project

Project summary

Es Garrover is a family business that specialises in growing carob trees (*Ceratonia siliqua*). The Es Garrover pilot project in Mallorca provides a comparative study of autochthonous varieties of carob in Mallorca. This is being done to know their applications in the line of organic products under the Es Garrover brand, and to offer added value to quality local products that are also organic and sustainable. The relevance of this project lies in increasing the value of carob tree cultivation on the island and achieving higher yields in terms of production and quality.



Main results

- Well-known brand that is representative of organic carob in Mallorca.
- Application of knowledge to consumer products in the organic market in Mallorca.
- Synergies and partnerships with other companies on the island to make products from carob.
- Promotion of employment in rural areas: collaborators and freelancers, occasional jobs.
- Acknowledgement of carob as a quality product (its use is a trend seen in many restaurants on the island).

Key lessons

- Obtain more products and resources to develop and raise awareness of carob.
- Availability of means to disseminate in international markets.

Context

Background:

Es Garrover is a family company that specialises in growing carob trees (*Ceratonia siliqua*) on the island of Mallorca. It markets organic carob products under a registered trademark.

Proposal for action:

To foster the cultivation of carob trees, promoting the most cost-efficient and robust varieties; to encourage sustainable, organic farming in Mallorca; and to add value to carob.

Objective of the project:

To place value on island carob production, improving the yield and quality of this natural product.

Participants and partners:

- Es Garrover in Mallorca.
- Productos Martín, biologist Jaume Seguí, Quimiotest Laboratory, and farmer Biel Morell.



Activities

- Study of added value and application to local products.
- Creation of a chain from the field to the final consumer.

Results

Apart from the results mentioned above, specific figures will not be available until the end of the project, scheduled for mid-November 2018.

Lessons learned

Different growing areas have been identified on the island along with relevant varieties based on the surrounding ecology. Different farms have been visited to study the different trees as well as several aspects of the trees themselves and their development.



Catalonia

Location: Mollerusa (Lleida)

Project category: Appreciation and preservation of natural spaces

RDP measure: 19 - Support for LEADER local development

Funds received: €60 000 annually

Coordinating entity: Asociación Leader de Ponent

Contact phone: +34 973 711 313

Contact email:
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Website:
www.leaderponent.cat/es

Espais Naturals de Ponent project

Project summary

The main goal of the Espais Naturals de Ponent project is to diversify the rural economy, promoting sustainable tourism and creating services around the appreciation of natural sites in this area of Catalonia.

To this effect, it is important to raise awareness among residents so that natural sites are known and valued, thus ensuring their preservation. Furthermore, it is essential to raise awareness among tourists, promoting ecotourism that helps diversify and foster the area's economy. The resources highlighted for appreciation are natural sites, wildlife, traditional architecture, history, local music and local agri-food products.



Main results

- High participation rate, with around 1 600 participants per year including a high percentage of local population.
- Signing agreements for revitalization of natural sites. At present two agreements have been signed.
- Construction of two facilities, a refuge and a hub for bird-watching, using traditional dry stone architecture.
- In 2017, the area was extended to include Segarra, Noguera, and Segrià Nord, thus completing the Ponent area.

Key lessons

- The farming sector looks warily at the actions taken to appreciate protected natural spaces. To involve farmers in maintaining natural spaces it is important to provide them with economic opportunity and added value to their products.

Context

Background:

The project area includes natural, historical, landscape and culinary heritage of great value. This array of elements forms a very interesting tourism offering that can help diversify the rural economy.

In spite of this privileged situation, economic activity has mainly been focused on agri-food production and the services industry. A certain lack of self-esteem, combined with a lack of awareness of the area's resources and the absence of cross-sector synergies, hinders transformation of these counties in an attractive tourist destination.

It is a participatory project that includes concrete actions to involve the public sector, associations and citizens. It promotes the knowledge, value and preservation of natural sites in the Poniente counties among local and foreign population in order to diversify the rural economy.

Proposal for action:

It is necessary to diversify the rural economy, promoting sustainable tourism and the creation of services around the appreciation of natural spaces.

Objectives for the project:

To foster appreciation of the natural sites within the scope of action of the Asociación Leader de Ponent: Urgell, Pla d'Urgell, Garrigues and 14 towns in Segrià.

Participants and partners:

- County councils of Urgell, Pla d'Urgell, Garrigues, Segrià, Noguera and Segarra.
- Departamento de Territorio y Sostenibilidad de la Generalitat de Catalunya (Department of Land and Sustainability of the Regional Government of Catalonia).
- Local Action Groups: Consorci per al Desenvolupament de la Catalunya Central and Consorci Grup d'Acció Local de la Noguera i Segrià-Nord.



Activities

- Gathering and systematising information about natural sites in the area, creation of a corporate image, and audio-visual and photographic material for the different natural sites; and setting up a website (www.espaisnaturalsdeponent.cat) and profiles in social media (@espaisponent).
- In 2017, links and synergies were established with several stakeholders in the area and the project was presented to different local institutions.
- Creation of a programme with 27 activities.
- Travelling exhibition showing the values of the different natural sites that has already visited 14 towns.
- In 2018, a new programme was created to consolidate activities for the natural sites and improve communication.
- Launch of a sustainable tourism offering inspired by a visit to the "Turismo La Garrotxa" another project in the area that has been awarded the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (CETS).
- Technical workshop in Castellserà, "Ecotourism: an opportunity for rural tourism", to inform public and private actors about the ecotourism sector.
- Meetings to monitor the project were held once a month with the working group, which is formed by 74 representative members from different entities and associations in the area.

Results

Dissemination of natural, cultural and historical heritage values of the natural spaces in the Ponent counties among local population and visitors, in order to raise awareness and promote their conservation.

Creation of the activity programme, the communication strategy and social media profiles, as well as educational activities for schools in order to make the natural sites known.

Promotion of active participation and networking among local entities, associations, private companies and area actors to ensure the right kind of activation and

preservation of the spaces.

Promotion of sustainable high-quality tourism in the Espacios Naturales de Ponent encouraging local actors to get involved.

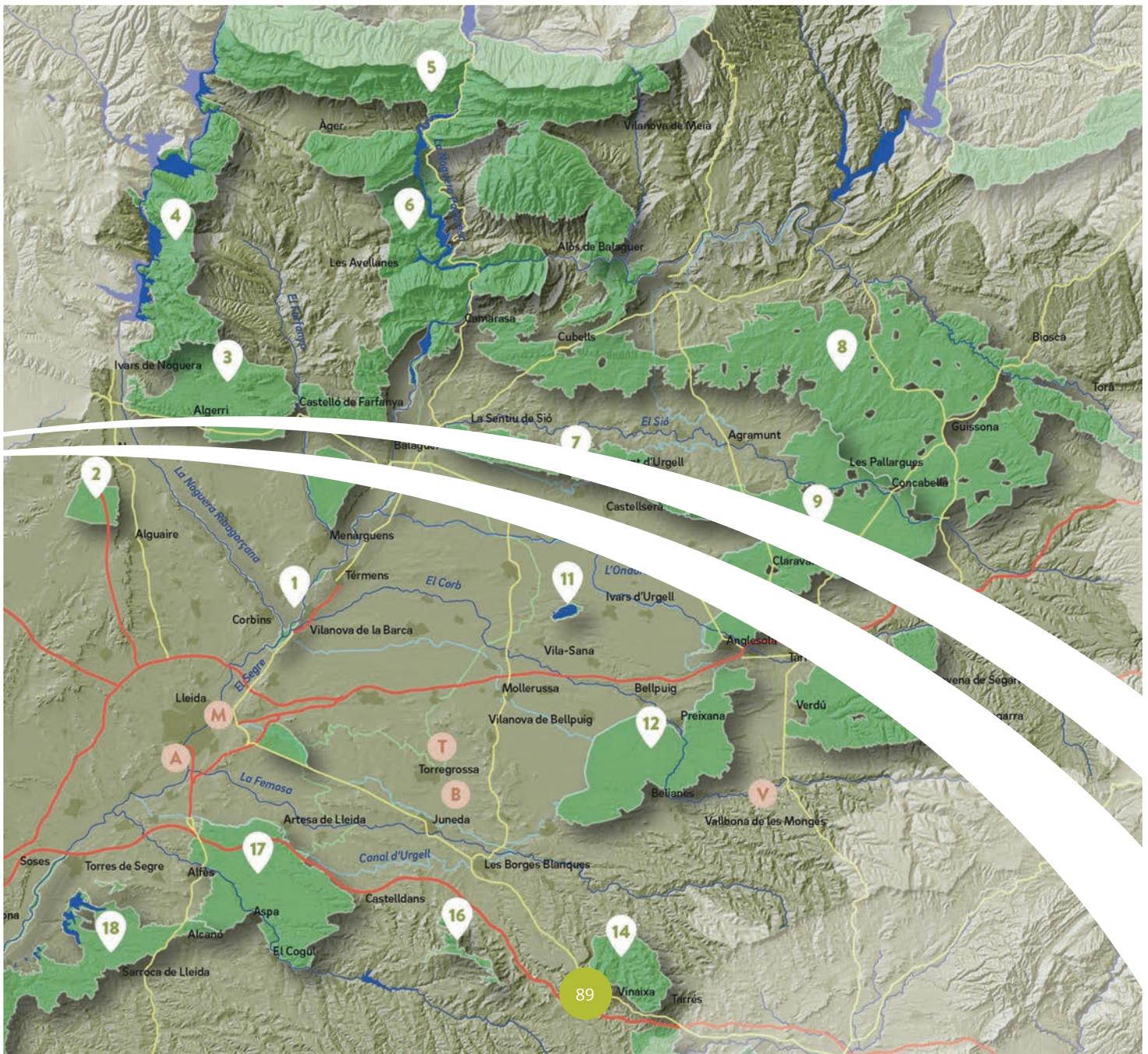
Synergies with other LEADER cooperation projects in the area, such as the LEADER Natura cooperation project by the Consorci Leader Pirineu Occidental.

Lessons learned

The private sector must be further involved in the territory. In spite of communications activities, some sectors of the population are not aware of the project.

Potential to turn Ponent counties into an attractive interior destination.

This method is considered to be transferable to other areas.



Catalonia

Location: Mollerussa (Lleida)
RDP measure: 19 – LEADER
Cooperation

Funds received: €91 862.44
(biannually 2018-2019)

Coordinating entity: Associació
Leader de Ponent

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Gustum project

Project summary

The Gustum project aims to foster rural development and economic activity by promoting quality agri-food products that are produced in the area, while enhancing synergies with restaurants, tourism and shops.

Gustum is now consolidated as a benchmark in the promotion of quality agri-food products in rural areas, giving it momentum to continue leading actions to promote and support local quality products, the territory and all actors involved in the territory's development. All of this increases economic activity in the sector and encourages new entrepreneurs.



Main results

- Identifying producers and local products and detecting their needs gives value and promotes local artisan quality products. It also recognises the organoleptic and nutritional qualities of local products, and their role as a symbol of local culture and identity.
- Tools are provided to people involved in processing and producing to support advertising and marketing of their products.
- Synergies are also created with tourism, local cuisine and retail shops (linking the agri-food sector to restaurants, shops and tourism routes to promote integrated rural development).
- Economic growth of agri-food activities is also increased, and entrepreneurs receive support in their initial stages while new business activities are created around the core of this project. This also promotes networking and partnerships within the sector.
- Educational workshops are carried out in schools about the value of agri-food products from rural areas and the link they have to the economy, the landscape and local traditions.

Key lessons

- Carrying out activities focused on promoting local artisanal products to a larger target audience.
- Project's transferability to other rural areas.
- Improving coordination with local stakeholders, entities and associations when designing new actions related to the promotion of local products.

Context

Background:

The particular impact of the agri-food industry is evidence of its role as one of the main motors of economic activity in rural Catalonia.

The “Proyecto Gustum” initiative started at the right moment, 2011, when there was a limited but growing culture of local artisanal products.

In 2012, a large number of promotion activities were carried out in order to find synergies between producers and restaurants. The promotion activities done with the sector laid the groundwork for organising food markets and fairs that showed a common image and ensured careful selection of the best products, protecting producers and processors from unnecessary intrusion while guaranteeing the safety of their products. The markets featured local products processed by the very same person selling them.

Currently, many entities use this approach.

Proposal for action:

To support the creation of local economic activity arising from the advertising and marketing of local agri-food products and the synergies with other sectors such as tourism, gastronomy and small retail.

Local agri-food products are an endogenous resource and an engine for direct and indirect economic

activity in rural areas. Local agri-food products are also important to local identity and form the base of traditional cuisine.

The project supports food sovereignty, or the right of each territory to maintain and develop its own foods, taking into account cultural diversity and the diversity of local products. This is achieved through promotion of local production, fostering short supply channels, increasing the access by citizens to local products, and raising awareness about the benefits of responsible food consumption.

Objective of the project:

To promote local products as a resource for any rural area because:

- More direct and indirect jobs are created (and thus rural exodus is decreased).
- The local economy is activated.
- It contributes to preserving the area’s identity (its landscapes and traditions).
- Product traceability is improved.
- Short supply channels are encouraged, thus reducing the environmental impact linked to food distribution.

Participants and partners:

All Local Action Groups in Catalonia.



Activities

- Actions targeting producers: Attending professional trade fairs with them to promote their products in local markets.
- Actions focused on raising awareness among consumers, encouraging new local product fairs and organising technical seminars, workshops and other activities to increase knowledge of local products.

Now that the project is more established, future plans call for transversal actions focusing on areas of greatest need. These actions are mainly aimed at:

- Supporting promotion of local products and producers as well as product commercialisation.
- Supporting local initiatives.
- Promoting products in schools through workshops.

Results

- Synergies with other associations and entities: collaboration with 7 producer associations and product brands, and 20 letters of support signed by other national and foreign local action groups.
- Creation of the 'Aquí, vins catalans' campaign increasing the presence of Catalan wines in restaurants and promoting their consumption. Approximately 70 restaurants have joined the initiative.
- Design of the 'Cúpula Gustum' project that includes an inflatable screen for watching 360° projections, an educational guide and six educational games for schools. Between November 2017 and June 2018, 62 schools and 8 000 visitors have participated.
- Thirty actions to promote local products have been performed throughout Catalonia.
- Business assessment and consulting have been provided to 34 agri-food companies through a free service.
- Creation of a digital newsletter and blog.

Lessons learned

Activities with highest impact on the promotion of local artisanal products are those focused on the target audience (restaurants, rural lodging, hotel and restaurant schools, etc.).

The project can be transferred to rural areas. Local producers and products are a resource and should be enhanced for the following reasons: they create direct and indirect jobs (halting rural exodus); they activate

the local economy; they help preserve local identity (landscapes and traditions); they enable traceability and foster short supply channels, thus reducing the environmental impact related to food distribution.

Coordination with local actors, entities and associations should be improved when designing new actions related to the promotion of local products.



Catalonia

Priority: P6 - Social Inclusion and local development

Project category: Local development

RDP measure: M19: LEADER/ CLLD

Funds received: €100 214.67 (EAFRD: €43 092.31 + national / regional: €57 122.36)

Coordinating entity: Consorci GAL Alt Urgell – Cerdanya

Contact email:

Website: www.odisseujove.cat

Odisseu project Bringing youth back to rural areas

Project summary

The project focuses on people aged under 40 and aims to provide solutions to curb the exodus of rural youth and promotes professional integration for generational renewal in the generally ageing rural world.

With five lines of work (Joves al camp, Pràcticum, Viure a rural, Retorna and Networking) supported by different activities aimed at improving generational renewal, the project provides youth with information about employment opportunities in companies located in the rural area. There is also the social and employment context of rural areas for their professional initiatives, enhancing a business approach and thus increasing employability and promoting a commitment to their original or host rural area. These are

priorities of the Catalan 2014-2020 RDP.



Main results

- In the coordination area of activity, 16 panels were held with 313 young people (mostly women) registered in the RETORNA tool, in addition to 150 000 visits to the www.odisseujove.cat website and 9 703 published materials.
- In activities focussing on keeping young population in the territory, informative talks about the resources offered by Odisseu were given at secondary schools to 701 young people, as well as 11 training seminars and workshops for 247 young people and 21 visits to different companies.
- In activities aimed at attracting new talent to the territory, there have been informative sessions at train stations and stands in four regional and industry job fairs, which succeeded in contacting 154 young people.
- In activities to foster recruitment of young people: In 2016 and 2017, there were 55 professional internships through Pràcticum ODISSEU (300 hours at 5 EUR per hour, with 50% co-financing by the company).
- In activities to diagnose and improve the conditions of young people getting involved in agriculture, the challenges and suggestions have been defined for territorial, supportive and social action, with four people joining the sector.

Key lessons

- An important element for the achievement of the project's objectives is the joint work by the LAGs and the network of youth professionals.
- It is necessary to use a higher number of more diverse actions better adapted to local needs, although this may hinder the harmonization of the overall project's results.
- Different methods are being tested, activities that prevent youth from leaving their local territories are being fostered, (since it is more difficult to contact university students or other young people, once they have already left the area), and universities are being encouraged to get involved.

Context

Background:

Communities in rural areas are currently facing depopulation and ageing, which are the consequence of lack of generational renewal and a loss of socio-economic dynamism. Experiences from LEADER and academic studies confirm that, despite this pattern, there is an increasing number of young people, especially women, who want to return to rural areas.

Supporting the economic dynamism of rural areas can create job opportunities for young people, since work is obviously a key factor for linking youth to a rural area. In the current Rural Development Programme of Catalonia, young people are a priority in all Catalan LAGs' Local Development Strategies (LDS).

In view of the current social and economic context, it is possible to give value and make visible the role of the rural world visible as a space of opportunity for young people and society as a whole. It is essential for local administrations to get actively and effectively involved together with educational centres, companies and young people in economic promotion, employment and rural development.

Proposal for action:

To design a global project with different activities (diagnosis, website, talks, monitoring and incentives programmes) and define the lines of work (attracting talent, keeping talent, fostering contacts and relations between youth and companies, diagnosis) so that youth can get better knowledge about existing opportunities for start-up a professional project in rural areas, whether they come from the area or not. Through these activities, people starting their professional lives

can get better acquainted with the context and use the available platforms and opportunities in order to connect with companies or entrepreneurship activities and thus remain in or move to a rural area.

Objective of the project:

- To promote the return of young people to rural areas.
- To halt ageing of the rural population.
- To promote professional integration of young people in rural areas.
- To raise awareness among businesses about the added value that young people can bring to their companies and to reinforce links between business and universities.

Participants and partners:

- Associació pel Desenvolupament Rural de la Catalunya Central.
- Associació Leader de Ponent.
- Associació per la Gestió del Programa Leader Ripollès Ges Bisaura.
- Consorci Leader de Desenvolupament Rural del Camp.
- Consorci Grup d'Acció Local Noguera - Segrià Nord.
- Consorci Leader Pirineu Occidental.
- Consorci Intercomarcal d'Iniciatives Socioeconòmiques
- Consorci per al Desenvolupament de la Catalunya Central.
- Consorci per al Desenvolupament del Baix Ebre i Montsià.

Activities

The project's method allows actions to be adapted to young people according to the local context and the rural development strategy of each LAG. Activities for young people have been arranged in different areas or circles that coexist in the rural world yet are related to the urban world.

"In Circle" targets young people who live in a rural area: Especially students in the last year of high school, or professional training. It includes informative talks and workshops about the project in their schools. Some project partners carry out additional specific activities, such as "Arrenca", which provides training and visits for students to innovative companies so that they can contact business networks with future employment possibilities. Other participating LAGs organise entrepreneurial training activities, networking sessions for young people, informative days on resources for recruitment processes, and presentations of experiences and success stories.

"Out Circle" targets young people living outside the rural area: young people studying or working in urban areas. Through anonymous questionnaires, the requirements to return to rural areas were assessed and young people's knowledge of employment and entrepreneurship advisory services was tested. A great number of people showed a predisposition to return to the area once they complete their university education.

"COMPANY Circle" fosters the involvement of rural companies as generators of opportunities and the main recipients of young talent, based on the weak link between companies and universities previously detected. In 2016, the first 'ODISSEU Pràcticum' was convened, offering grants for companies located in rural towns to offer paid professional internships to university students. The virtual tool 'Retorna' is another important feature that fosters the connection between young professionals and companies in rural areas. It is an online platform aimed at companies seeking to

employ young people. Young people with LinkedIn profiles, less than 40 years of age and higher education who want to work in rural areas are given visibility. The platform also offers a notification system for companies according to the search criteria of the professional sector and/or region that interest the applicant.

“**INCOMING Circle**” guides explaining the services available in their zones (coworking, housing, health, education, sports, environment and culture and leisure) were published and the <https://viurearural.cat/> platform was created to facilitate access to all this information.

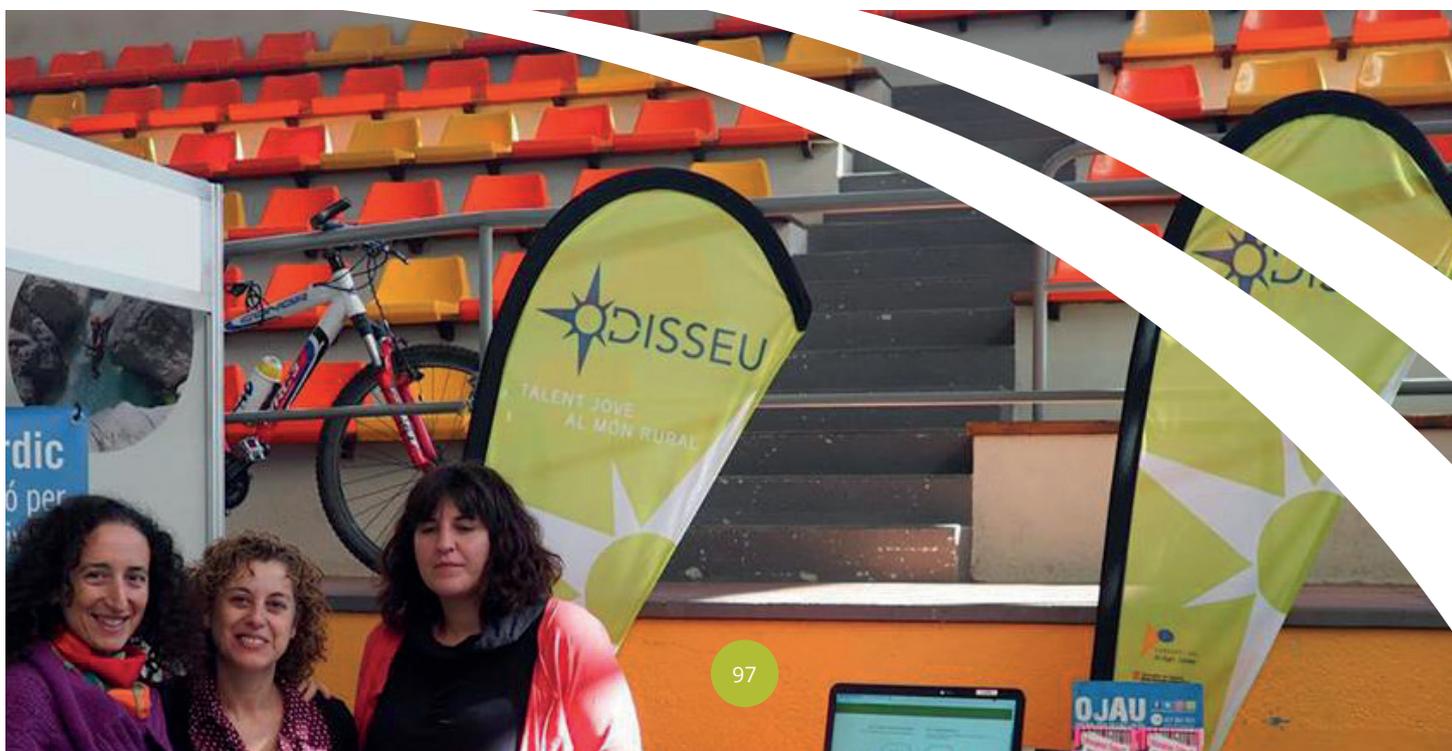
“**Young farmers circle**” aims to incorporate young people into the agricultural sector. One of the 2014-2020 RDP’s main lines of action focus on generational renewal in the sector. In 2016, Odisseu conducted a quantitative and qualitative analysis of young people entering the agricultural sector in Catalonia, thus providing an updated diagnosis and identifying the needs of this group.

Results

- Coordination activities: 16 panels held in 35 counties with 122 participants. 313 young people enrolled (2/3 women) in the “RETORNA” tool, out of whom 26% received training.
- In 2017: 145 062 visits to the www.odisseujove.cat website and 9 703 publications.
- ‘In Circle’ to keep young talent in the territory. 29 informative talks to 701 young people at secondary schools, 11 training seminars and workshops to 247 young people and 21 visits to different companies.
- ‘OutCircle’ to attract talent to the area. Two informative sessions on the train lines between Tortosa and Puigcerdà to Barcelona, 71 questionnaires filled-in, and one stand in four regional and industry job fairs reaching out to 83 young people.
- ‘Business Circle’ to foster recruitment of young people. 12 grants for Pràcticum ODISSEU in 2016 and 43 in 2017; work experience sheets for seven counties and for internships at universities.
- ‘Young farmers circle’. Four young people entered the agricultural sector, and challenges and recommendations were defined for social support actions in the area.

Lessons learned

- A key element in achieving the project’s objectives is the joint work by the LAGs and the network of youth professionals.
- It is necessary to ensure flexibility when selecting the actions to be implemented according to the needs of each territory. This means using many and varied actions.
- It can be very difficult to involve universities in a project and establish contact with university students, as well as with other young people who have already left the territory. That is why the project leaders continue to test different methods and have opted to intervene before young people leave the territory.
- In Catalonia, universities are relatively close to rural areas. Four of them are regional in nature and these were the ones that showed the greatest interest in the project.
- The results indicators are not short-term and it is difficult to measure the impacts of such projects.



Catalonia

Location: Solsona (Lleida)

Priority: 6B - Fostering local development in rural areas.

Project category: Cooperation among Catalonia Local Action Groups

RDP measure: Measure 19.3 - Cooperation

Funds received: €48 700.00

Coordinating entity: Consorci per al Desenvolupament de la Catalunya LAG

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Vida Silvestre project. Value and resource for rural development.

Project summary

The Vida Silvestre project aims at promoting and valuing wildlife as a resource for rural towns. The goal is to improve and diversify the local economy through activities related to wildlife. This project wishes to define the tourism sector related to wildlife and develop an action plan, giving training to agents in the sector through technical workshops, organising sessions with experts as well as seminars about best practices, drafting specialised guides, integrating the project with other cooperation projects (LEADER Natura, Espais Naturals de Ponent), and publicizing local resources and activities through visits.



Main results

- Completion of an evaluation and proposed action plan for wildlife tourism in rural areas.
- Delivery of three technical workshops on the creation of databases for wildlife and ecotourism actors, in addition to four information sessions held throughout the area.
- Creation of a wildlife tourism and rural lodging guide, and an introduction to wildlife tourism.

Key lessons

- The actions carried out may be transferred to other rural areas.
- This is a pioneering project within the scope of LEADER cooperation projects.

Context

Background:

In the local development strategies of LEADER groups, actions and proposals have been put forward to work on aspects of wildlife tourism and ecotourism. For instance, the LEADER Natura project promotes activities in natural sites.

Proposal for action:

To identify the current status of tourism and wildlife activities in Catalonia, train staff and publicize wildlife tourism, and increase local knowledge, all with a focus on birdwatching tourism.

Objective for the project:

To carry out actions that allow for improvement of wildlife tourism activities in Catalonia and to propose actions together with local agents, as well as to provide them with training.

Participants and partners:

Catalonia Local Action Groups.



Activities

- An evaluation and proposed action plan for wildlife tourism were drafted.
- Four technical workshops were offered about wildlife as a resource for rural development.
- Creation of a database on agents related to wildlife and ecotourism activities.
- Four information sessions throughout the area.
- Creation of the wildlife tourism and rural lodging guide.
- Creation of the introduction to wildlife tourism guide.
- Participation in the Delta Birding Festival.

Results

- Technical workshops were held in different locations (Solsona, Estany d'Ivars, Montgai, etc.), as well as technical visits (165 people participated in the activities).
- The project is supplemented with actions from the technology transfer plan of the Departamento de Agricultura, Ganadería, Pesca y Alimentación de la Generalitat de Catalunya (Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food of the Regional Government of Catalonia).
- Specialised companies were hired to carry out the actions.
- The added values generated include:
 - Wildlife tourism thematic area.
 - Creation of specialised materials.
 - Technical workshops on topics of interest and participation by international actors (from the United Kingdom and Asia, among others.).
 - Collaboration with local entities that work in wildlife tourism.
 - Resources used include specialised agents and field visits to relevant sites.

Lessons learned

- The materials created and the best practices compiled are transferable to other LEADER territories and groups.
- Dissemination of actions as well as the search for synergies with other LEADER groups and specialised entities should be improved.



*Innovation and
transfer of
knowledge*

Andalusia

Priority: P2 Competitiveness

Project category: Specialised training

RDP measure: M 1: Knowledge transfer and information actions

Funds received: €37 940.77 (EAFRD: €34 146.69 + National/Regional: €3 794.08)

Coordinating entity: Instituto Andaluz de Investigación y Formación Agraria y Pesquera-IFAPA (Andalusian Institute of Agricultural and Fisheries Research and Training)

Contact email: maria.lopez.infante@juntadeandalucia.es

Website: www.ifapa.es

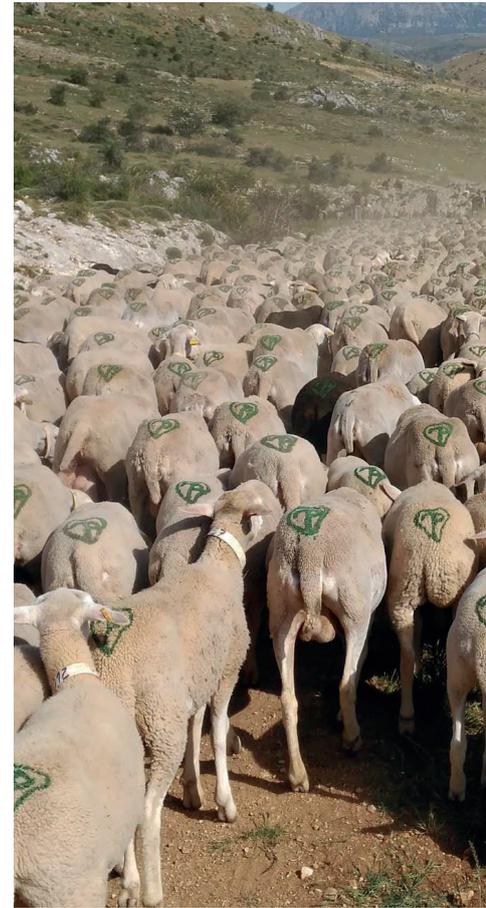
Andalusian Shepherd School 2017

Project summary

Training programme for new shepherds aimed at maintaining traditional extensive sheep and cattle grazing activities.

Shepherds contribute to the socio-economic and environmental development of rural areas. In response to demand from some young people wishing to enter the farming sector to become new shepherds, the Andalusian Shepherd School aims to provide the required training and education to get onto the professional path in this sector.

The courses, structured in theoretical and practical modules, provide the students with the required knowledge about traditional livestock and extensive grazing activities and give them the tools and skills required to innovate and face the challenges of current livestock systems, focusing particularly on the role of shepherding in environmental protection.



Main results

- 117 students over the seven editions of the programme: 90 men and 27 women.
- 82 shepherds were trained as mentors for their interns.
- Assessment of the current state and prospects for six local goat breeds (three at risk of extinction) and five local sheep breeds (two at risk of extinction).
- 60% of the trainees were professionally engaged in livestock activity.

Key lessons

- It is important to ensure the collaboration of all actors involved in this sector (administrations, professional organisations, provincial councils, associations of native breeds, companies, universities, research institutes, etc.).
- Coordination is extremely important due to the high number of parties and teachers involved in the programme and the many different locations where each course is held.
- Shepherds have valuable knowledge that does not get enough social recognition. They are involved in the activities and in knowledge transfer.
- Continuity of the programme is also very important to consolidate the structure and meet the course goals. Seven training rounds have been held so far.

Context

Background:

Andalusia has a great richness of extensive pastoral systems (which include dehesas or agro-forestry systems in semi-arid land, high plateaus and mountain areas) and high biodiversity (with several local breeds). For this reason, shepherds are required to have the specialised knowledge needed for carrying out shepherding properly while also ensuring environmental protection.

At the same time, the population in rural areas is falling, including among young people, thus aggravating the disappearance of traditional professions like shepherding, an activity that in addition to providing high-quality dairy and meat products, helps prevent fires and sustainably manage animals.

There is an opportunity appearing for those young people who are searching for job opportunities in urban areas without success, making them potential shepherds for the future but who require training to carry out this activity.

Proposal for action:

To create a pilot training and education programme that would make shepherding attractive to the young population in areas where this activity has been traditionally done. Since 2010, the government of Andalusia has been promoting this activity to maintain it, ensuring generational renewal in the sector while improving the socio-economic situation.

This programme was developed over seven years and is now part of the training element of the 2014-2020 RDP programming period in Andalusia.

Objective of the project:

- To contribute to the socio-economic development of regions with a high presence of livestock.

- To re-evaluate grazing systems and management to maintain this activity cost-effectively.
- To facilitate generational renewal in extensive livestock farms and reduce unemployment in rural areas.

Participants and partners:

- Instituto Andaluz de Investigación y Formación Agraria y Pesquera- IFAPA (Andalusian Institute of Agricultural and Fisheries Research and Training), as the coordinating entity supported by the Consejería de Agricultura, Pesca y Desarrollo Rural (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development) and the Consejería de Medio Ambiente y Ordenación del Territorio (Department of Environment and Land Planning) of the Junta de Andalucía (Regional Government of Andalusia).
- Associations of native breeds of ruminants from the autonomous community.
- Associations of goat breeds: Payoya, Malagueña, Florida, Murciano-granadina, Blanca Andaluza and Negra Serrana. Sheep: Segureña, Lojeña, Montesina, Merina and Merina de Grazalema.
- Associations of bovine cattle: Pajuna and Berrenda.
- Professional organizations: COAG (Spanish coordination of farmers and livestock breeders) and UPA (Union of small farmers and livestock breeders).
- In 2017: CORSEVILLA, a cattle cooperative in the north of the province of Seville.
- Provincial council of Granada: gives access to some of its facilities for the trainees to visit the genetic improvement centres of Murciano-granadina and Segureña breeds.
- Universities of Seville and Cordoba.
- Research centres (CSIC- Zaidín experimental station), other shepherding organizations such as "Pastores por el Monte Mediterráneo" (Shepherds for the Mediterranean mountains) and companies in the sector (food, processing and sale).



CONSEJERÍA DE AGRICULTURA, PESCA
Y DESARROLLO RURAL

Activities

The 7th edition of the Andalusian School for Shepherds took place in municipalities of Granada and Jaén (in the Santiago de la Espada-Pontones area), and the Natural Park of Sierras de Cazorla, Segura y Las Villas. The cattle systems of these areas are characteristic for their activity of transhumance: during the winter and spring, the flocks of Segureña sheep and the Andalusian white and black goats are kept in the foothills of Sierra Morena, and they spend the summer and part of the autumn in the Sierra del Segura.

To teach students in this geographical and cultural context, over 50 teachers have participated as well as a group of 70 mentors: shepherds who, after a period of theoretical training, have welcomed students on their farms to carry out field work and on-site practice.

The School of Shepherds, in addition to the training, aims to showcase and recognise the value of extensive cattle in these regions. To do so, open days are held for breeders and other activities (events and fairs) are organised for the general public.

Results

- 117 students trained (of whom 27 were women) over seven editions.
- Almost 100 shepherds trained. 82 of them remain active and are mentors for the school.
- Description of the current state of seven extensive livestock regions in Andalusia.
- Assessment of the current state and prospects of six local goat breeds (three at risk of extinction) and five local sheep breeds (two at risk of extinction).
- 60% of the trainees entered the livestock profession, or chose a job closely related to agricultural or livestock farming.
- Creation of “fire-brigades”. Livestock grazing in places that need to be cleared of wood and bushes, and thus reduce the risk of summer fires.

Lessons learned

- Collaboration and coordination of all extensive livestock stakeholders (administrations, organizations, research institutes, etc.) is required.
- It is essential to integrate environmental protection and management into this profession. The obvious link between livestock and the environment is even stronger when it comes to extensive grazing. This activity takes place in protected areas, either National or Natural Parks or Natura 2000 sites, where shepherding activity has preserved breeds, seeds, and landscapes and prevented forest fires. Therefore, all environmental bodies and stakeholders must be involved.
- Recognition must be assured for professionals that have been doing a good job in the extensive livestock sector. These professionals must take part in the activities and be involved in the project from the outset.
- The continuity of the programme is very important. So far seven training editions have been held.



Aragon

Location: Zaragoza

Priority: 2A - Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation.

Project category: Cooperation projects

RDP measure: M16.02-Cooperation

Funds received: €68 000

Coordinating entity: Colegio Oficial de Agrónomos de Aragón, Navarra y País Vasco (Association of Agronomists of Aragon, Navarre and the Basque Country).

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Red de Intercambio de Conocimiento Agroalimentario, RICA (Agricultural Knowledge Exchange Network)

Project summary

The Agricultural Knowledge Exchange Network (RICA) implements a web page (ricagroalimentacion.es) integrated in the chil.org portal, as well as a mobile application for devices based on Android and iOS that promotes a content exchange system for the parties within the agrifood sector, mainly for farmers. This application also organizes the information and knowledge exchange system.

Access to the application provides direct information about various topics: News and Events. It also provides and exchanges knowledge: Consultations, Documents, Media Library and Opinions and Experiences.

In addition, through the application this agricultural knowledge exchange network can be used as a model project for other territories, since it is transferable to other regions and sectors other than agri-food.



Main results

- The website ricagroalimentacion.es and the mobile applications, taking the spring of 2019 as a reference, has surpassed 3.5 million visits in total. The section about Opinions and Experiences is over 300,000 visits with about 170 writings.
- 25% of the visits come from Aragon, 35% from the rest of Spain and 40% from abroad.

Key lessons

- This is a good example of intercommunication in the sector. It is also a clear prototype for transferring information and technical knowledge, applicable to different spheres within the agri-food, forestry and environmental sectors, as well as to different territories.

Context

Background:

This project arose due to the need to transfer knowledge among parties in the agri-food sector.

Proposal for action

Creation of a system that offers information and exchanges knowledge among the agents of the agrifood sector.

Objectives for the project:

To facilitate the information and knowledge demanded by the sector, this application is borne out of the necessity to create a structured system.

Participants and partners:

- Colegio Oficial de Agrónomos de Aragón, Navarra y País Vasco (Association of Agronomists of Aragon, Navarre and the Basque Country).
- Colegio Oficial de Ingenieros Técnicos Agrícolas de Aragón (Association of Agricultural Engineers of Aragon).
- Federación de Cooperativas Agroalimentarias de Aragón (Aragon Agri-food Cooperatives Fedaration).

- Unión de Agricultores y Ganaderos de Aragón, UAGA (Aragon Union of Small Farmers).
- Unión de Pequeños Agricultores de Aragón, UPA Aragón (Aragon Union of Small Agricultural Farmers).
- Asociación Agraria de Jóvenes Agricultores, ASAJA (Young Agricultural Farmers Association).
- Colegio Oficial de Veterinarios de Huesca (Huesca Veterinarians Association).
- Colegio Oficial de Veterinarios de Teruel (Teruel Veterinarians Association).
- Colegio Oficial de Veterinarios de Zaragoza (Zaragoza Veterinarians Association).
- Asociación de Industrias Agroalimentarias de Aragón (Aragon Agri-food Industries Association).
- Centro de Investigación y Tecnología Agroalimentaria de Aragón, CITA (Aragon Centre for Research and Agri-Food Technology) and Asociación Promoción de la Gestión Integrada de Plagas, APROGIP (Association for the Promotion of Integrated Pest Management).



Activities

- Creation of a computer medium to provide knowledge of the agri-food sector.
- Systematisation and exchange of information about matters of interest to the sector.

Results

- Contribution to measure 2.1 on advisory services related to the RDP.
- An increase in competitiveness in the sector. Jobs are created indirectly and others are maintained in the area.
- Knowledge transfer for the agri-food sector via the Agricultural Knowledge Network and its app.

Lessons learned

- It can be transferred to many users in the agri-food sector.
- Knowledge of other sectors can be included, such as about forestry, which enables the model to be replicated and thus create new opportunities.



Catalonia

Location: Balaguer (Lleida)

RDP measure: M19-
Cooperation

Funds received: €36 000 (2017) /
€53 900 (2018)/ €21 200 (2019)

Coordinating entity: Grup
d'Acció Local Noguera Segrià
Nord

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FERCat. Teaching entrepreneurship in schools in the rural world

Project summary

Future Rural Entrepreneurs (Futuros Emprendedores Rurales, FerCAT) aims to awaken entrepreneurial talent, creativity and curiosity about the opportunities generated by the rural world among primary school students. By raising awareness among the youngest generations about such opportunities, in the future this project will help tackle two of the challenges in the rural world: the first is to prevent rural depopulation and the second is to foster economic diversification.

In order to achieve these goals and to attract these students' attention, teaching materials have been created in which the main character is a bee. Different aspects related to entrepreneurship are studied through stories and problems.



Main results

- During the 2017-2018 school year, there were 28 schools and 385 students from all over Catalonia who took part in the project (5 schools and 118 students in Noguera and Segrià Nord), with 38 teachers involved.
- So far in the 2018-2019 school year, 38 schools and 742 students from all over Catalonia have taken part (11 schools and 242 students in Noguera and Segrià Nord), with 57 teachers involved.
- The culture of entrepreneurship has been included as a cross-subject feature in the curriculum of a variety of subjects, creating the teaching materials to apply it, and disseminating the project among a variety of media and press releases.
- Visibility has been given to the LEADER approach and the development strategy in the region.

Key lessons

- In order for the students taking part in this project to learn and improve their entrepreneurial skills, motivation, critical thinking, self-confidence, innovation and creativity, it is necessary to define suitable methods and tools, and these should be accessible and transferable.

Context

Background:

FERCat is a project that involves both schools and companies from the region to stimulate the local economy. Primary school students learn about entrepreneurship and are shown the opportunities they have to create their own business in the distant future; in other words, they are shown the real situation of their environs, which is often unseen and unknown to them. Moreover, the companies from the area can explain it and show the students their experience, demonstrating that these companies generate opportunities and wealth in the rural world.

Proposal for action:

To foster entrepreneurial talent among the youngest people while they are being educated in the rural world. To make it possible to learn how to find opportunities and make use of the resources provided by the rural world, giving visibility to the companies in the area. To disseminate entrepreneurial culture in schools, incorporating values related to entrepreneurship and linking them to existing school subjects such as maths, the plastic arts, language etc., while getting the education community involved in transmitting values beyond simply explaining how a company works. To foster teamwork, debate and relationships among students. To introduce the financial culture to the students at a basic level.

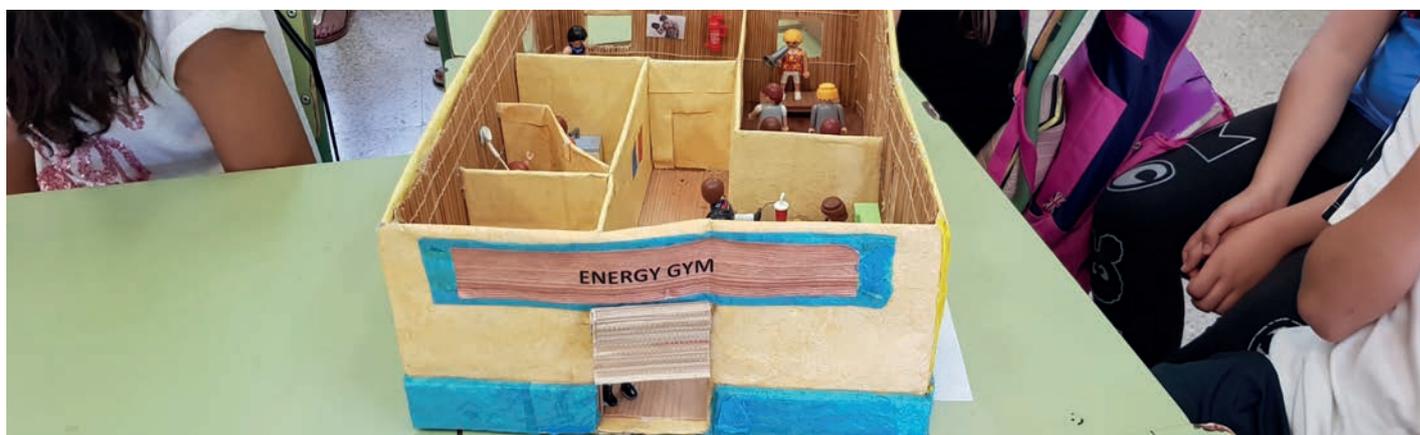
Objectives for the project:

To create entrepreneurial initiatives in the rural world, fostering the sustainable economy over time and thus also fostering the creation of more companies and preventing depopulation of rural areas.

Participants and partners:

- Consorci Grup d'Acció Local Noguera Segrià Nord (coordinating LAG).
- Associació per la Gestió del Programa Leader Ripollès Ges Bisaura.
- Consorci Leader de Desenvolupament Rural del Camp.
- Consorci GAL Alt Urgell – Cerdanya.
- Consorci per al Desenvolupament del Baix Ebre i Montsià.
- Associació Leader de Ponent.
- Consorci Leader Pirineu Occidental.
- Consorci Intercomarcal d'Iniciatives Socioeconòmiques.
- Consorci per al Desenvolupament de la Catalunya Central.
- International LAG.
- Pepsi-Alutaguse LAG (Estonia).

It should be added that the participants in the project are students from Catalonia and Estonia. The teaching resources centres also took part and collaborated in disseminating the project.



Activities

- Monitoring the project via workgroups.
- Reviewing and drafting teaching materials.
- Disseminating the project via teaching resources centres, press releases, website posts and letters of presentation for the project.
- Drafting materials for dissemination: roll ups, pamphlets, pen drives, stickers.
- Training and monitoring in schools.
- Awarding diplomas for participation.
- Managing exchanges with Catalan and Estonian schools.
- Visits and interviews from businesspeople in schools.

Results

- Publication of many news items about the project:
 - Press releases.
 - Dissemination via social networks and website.
 - Radio broadcast (R adio Balaguer):
<http://www.radiobalaguer.cat/porta/112/?E-C=ReadArticle&ArticleID=17642>
 - Reports broadcast on local television channels (TV3, Noguera TV):
- Promoting cooperation between students, teachers and schools, and also simultaneously among the participating companies.
- Recognition of companies in the rural territory. The participation from schools from Estonia is considered to lend added value to the project, since it encourages an exchange of projects, which therefore provides cultural wealth on seeing rural lands in other territories via online exchanges among the schools in different rural contexts.
- Putting the business world in contact with young people and their families.
- Improving the teachers' skills in schools in rural areas, placing value on rural entrepreneurship among teachers from cities who are teaching in rural schools, and raising awareness among city people about the problem of depopulation and its possible solutions.
- Contributing to the competitiveness of companies in the region so that in the future rural inhabitants may have different skills to take on jobs in rural areas.

Lessons learned

- Entrepreneurial skills and knowledge about business and opportunities in the rural world in the area.
- The students participating in this project learn and improve different skills such as entrepreneurship, motivation, critical thinking, self-confidence, innovation and creativity.
- The project is transferable because the problem of depopulation is common to rural areas, so initiatives must be created to prevent it.
- The material is digital and is available to all schools, training teachers so that they may train others and implement the project in future.
- The creation of digital materials and in-person meetings with children can be improved.



Murcia Region

Location: Murcia

RDP measure: 20-Technical Assistance

Coordinating entity: Managing authority of the Murcia Region RDP

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Contact phone: +34 968 395 977

Website: <https://pdr.carm.es>

Modernisation and stimulation for the Murcia Region RDP's website

Project summary

improving its usability and updates.

The website for the Murcia Region Regional Development Programme (PDR RM 2014-2020) has been adapted and modernised, since it was designed and published in the previous period and is the main means of communication to achieve greater awareness about the objectives of the rural development policy.

The website, which has been adapted and modernised beyond the new requirements in matters of information and communication for the 2014-2020 period, has continual content updates that give information ranging from the regulatory framework in force to the latest news related to the sphere of analysis.

In updating the website, appropriate technology has been used to integrate the most modern media, thereby



Main results

- Improving the ability to disseminate the Murcia Region's 2014-2020 RDP: more up-to-date information is provided to a greater number of users easily and directly.
- Information is provided about all of the measures in the Murcia Region's 2014-2020 RDP.

Context

Background:

The programming period 2014-2020 takes up the challenge of implementing strategies to give citizens greater awareness along with more clarity and information about how the EAFRD funds are being managed. In this vein, the Rural Development Programme Managing Authority publishes the Information and Communication Strategy giving details about all of its information and advertising activities, where setting up a website appears as one of the measures.

The main reason to consider that setting up the website is a best practice was its contribution to increasing the results of disseminating the RDP.

Through the website, the following communication objectives were achieved:

- Informing about the content of the Murcia Region's 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme.
- Guaranteeing clarity in managing the aid from the RDP and the EAFRD to ensure the best possible use of the funds available.

- Raising awareness among public opinion about the role played by the EU.
- Ensuring the visibility of the EU via the Murcia Region's 2014-2020 RDP.

Proposal for action:

Adapting and modernising the Murcia Region's RDP website, which replaces the one that existed in the previous period, found in the official website of the Murcia Region Autonomous Community's official website (<https://www.carm.es/>).

Objective of the project:

Providing exclusive content about the Murcia Region's 2014-2020 RDP makes the website a more visual, attractive and user-friendly tool. It also provides up-to-date content with greater flexibility and streamlining in its use so as to improve dissemination.

Participants and partners:

Managing authority of Murcia Region's 2014-2020 RDP.



Activities

The website has a menu at the top arranged in eight sections:

- RDP 2014-2020: this includes all of the versions of the RDP, the information and communication strategy, and the selection criteria for each operation.
- Measures: this gives direct access to the programme's different measures, with information about the rules and tender calls for aid via links to the National Subsidies Database, the Murcia Region's Official Journal and the guide on procedures and services.
- LEADER 2014-2020: This provides all the information about Participatory Local Development, in the context of Measure 19 of the Programme. It also includes a map of the scope of application for this aid, as well as a description of the regional local action groups, with direct links to their websites, their strategies and the aid called for.
- Monitoring and evaluation: in this section, all of the Annual Implementation Reports and assessment reports can be downloaded, as well as the Monitoring Committees held.
- Future CAP: this includes the provisional proposals on the regulations on the CAP after 2020.
- News: this includes the latest news about rural development, the events calendar, meetings and courses.
- Links of interest: this has links to pages of interest by the European Union, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Government of the Region of Murcia, and other institutions such as the Horizon 2020 website.
- Documents: This includes documents of interest.

Soon, the website will also have a space called "Our rural territory" with videos showing our rural territory.

Results

- The project has incorporated innovative resources in presenting, organising and developing the information: a new, simpler menu, which is convenient and intuitive, helps users around the website, while audio-visual media have been added that help improve understanding of the news etc.
- It provides content adapted to the target groups: the potential beneficiary entities so they may opt for the co-financed projects, the beneficiaries responsible for managing the aid, and above all the general public.
- It is having a great impact. Use of the website has been very high since it was launched in April 2018, receiving over 12,000 visits and nearly 2,500 downloads.
- Lastly, it provides continual content updates: the most up-to-date information can always be seen.

Lessons learned

The support provided by the website with a new appearance and content management makes it the main tool for disseminating the Region of Murcia's Rural Development Programme, thereby creating a virtual space for opportunities with key information reaching

the target groups.

The technology and visualisation of the content in the website for the Murcia Region's 2014-2020 RDP is transferable to other Autonomous Communities.



Basque Country

Location: Rioja Alavesa

Priority: P1 – Knowledge transfer and innovation

RDP measure: M16- Cooperation

Funds received: €266 088.92 (EAFRD €171 408.82 + national/regional €42 852.20 + private €51 827.90)

Coordinating entity: Asociación de Bodegas de la Rioja Alavesa (Association of Wineries of Rioja Alavesa)

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APPVID – Management of vine diseases

Project summary

The APPVID project for management of vine diseases is a collaborative system with accurate and useful information for viticulture. Small wineries and producers will have access to a digital tool that will help them manage disease treatment in real time. The remote sensors and the mobile app will provide users detailed information about the status of the vineyards, enabling scheduling of plant protection treatments.

As a general rule, the control of vine diseases is performed using plant protection products applied at specific times of the year based on the phenological stage of the crop, without taking into account relevant environmental parameters. This app, however, provides vine growers with real-time data about the status of the vineyards, allowing them to select more focused plant protection treatments.



Main results

- Increased profitability of the vineyard resulting from reduced costs.
- Reduced environmental impact due to the more precise use of plant protection treatments and the improved quality of grapes.
- The grapes are healthy and have fewer residues from plant protection products, which helps fermentation.

Key lessons

- Generating confidence among members is key. In order to do so, transparent management and joint decision making are required.
- Vine growers and other final users of the tool must be involved in the design process. This is the only way to make them feel that the app belongs to them.

Context

Background:

Vine growers in Álava are aware of the need to change the way plant protection treatments are applied to vines. In general, diseases are systematically treated throughout the season, but treatments should be applied depending on the phenological stage of the crop. Defining and understanding environmental factors, which affect disease progress, can be useful in determining the optimal use of plant protection products. Climate conditions, the type of grape, the planting frame and location of the vineyards as well as the cultivation practices all need to be considered.

At the same time, most wineries in Álava have atomized vine plots, which challenges the homogeneous application of plant protection products. For these reasons, vine growers need to perform more sustainable and efficient applications of plant protection products to reduce costs and improve grape quality.

Proposal for action:

To create a digital tool that helps manage vine diseases.

Objective for the project:

To develop an accessible system that notifies vine growers of the right time to apply treatments against vine diseases in each plot while providing ongoing monitoring.

Participants and partners:

- Asociación de Bodegas de la Rioja Alavesa, ABRA (Association of Wineries of Rioja Alavesa), Agricultural Labastida, Ostatu, Artuke, Eguren Vines and Gil Berzal.
- Cooperativa Agricultores y Ganaderos de Álava, AGA (Álava Agriculture and Livestock Farmers Association), representing several vine growers: Beldio Txakolina and GIP Txakoli in Álava.
- Instituto Vasco de Investigación (Basque Research Institute) providing agronomic knowledge.
- Desarrollo Agrario, NEIKER (Agricultural Development), providing agronomic knowledge.
- HAZI Fundazioa, in charge of IT support.
- AGER-Technology, a company that specialises in developing apps for the agriculture sector.



Activities

The project started in December 2016 and ended in December 2018. The system was developed and first tested in 2017. Final tests and final adjustments to the app were performed in 2018.

Considering the spatial distribution of farming plots in Álava, the use of a shared precision tool seems like a reasonable approach. This translates into a web app that analyses data provided by climate sensors placed on certain plots (previously selected based on their characteristics). The app notifies the user of the risk of different diseases in each of the plots. Once the risk is known, the vine grower can start treatments as needed.

The project poses two challenges:

- **Collaboration:** Vine growers and wineries are not used to collaborating in vineyard management. By collaborating and making sensors available to others, they help create a network for monitoring all vineyards, thus reducing costs.
- **Technology:** Developing a communication network that enables managing data in a unified way (through big data architecture, precision agriculture equipment and artificial intelligence). The user will be then able to estimate the risk of disease using the mobile app and decide when to apply plant protection products.

In the first phase, the needs of the vine growers were studied. In order to do so, growers provided the required information including: exact location of the plots; characteristics of each vineyard; and a review of management records, to determine the type of treatments applied in previous years.

Field sensors were then installed in plots to monitor climate parameters. Since it is not possible to have sensors in all vineyards, vine growers chose the ones that were most vulnerable to diseases. Collected data are sent to a web server for processing. Vine growers monitor the status of each disease and also send this information to the web server.

Data on climate and vineyards is used to develop a model that estimates the risk of disease spread. Mathematical models currently used in vineyards only take into account climate data and are not very reliable. The advantage of

this project is that collected data are related to specific characteristics of the field, its management and history. The goal is to improve these models and make them more accurate so that they can be useful for decision making.

An innovative aspect of the project is that sensors are integrated in a network. Vine growers will select the locations most vulnerable to disease to be monitored. Thus, a network of smart plots will cover the whole region and the estimation of the risk of a disease spreading in a particular vineyard will not be based on the data collected by that farmer's station, but on the information provided by the nearest station. This station might belong to a different farmer, and therefore collaboration is key. Without collaboration, the project cannot succeed. Once the pilot project shows the system's viability, other producers will be able to join.

Another important measure is the creation of an IT architecture and data flow systems to ensure that data reach the server.

Lastly, the tool intended for use is a mobile app. All information collected by the server in previous steps is analysed and studied to get notifications and recommendations about the treatment of vine diseases and the existing risk. The system also allows treatments included in the management records of vine growers to be added in a digital format.

Results

The project is still in its initial phase and results cannot yet be assessed in their totality, but it is expected that the system will help reduce the number of plant protection treatments.

This would translate to:

- Increased profitability of the vineyard by reducing costs of treatments.
- Reduced environmental impact from the activity.

- Improved quality of grapes Healthier grapes with fewer residues from plant protection products, which helps fermentation.

Moreover, the creation of an Operational Group aims at generating a trust framework and a work pattern that allows members to face new challenges in the future.

Lessons learned

Although the project is still in its initial phase, some key factors have already been identified:

- A trusting environment must be created among members. In order to do so, transparent management and joint decision making are required.

- As end users of the system, vine growers must be involved in the design process. This is the only way to make them feel that the app belongs to them.



*Environment and
Climate Change*

La Rioja

Autonomous community: La Rioja

Location: Alfaro

Priority: 4 - Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems and 5A - Increasing efficiency in water use by agriculture

Project category: Innovation team

RDP measure: 16.5 Actions undertaken with a view to mitigating climate change

Funds received: €250 000 awarded (80 percent of the total investment)

Coordinating entity: Carrera Las Planas irrigation association

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Bosola, high power photovoltaic irrigation system for the Alfaro irrigation association

Project summary

Bosola is the first high-power photovoltaic irrigation system project carried out for an irrigation association in La Rioja. It has been implemented by an innovation group. The project was created in the 2014 – 2020 period within the La Rioja Rural Development Programme and the purpose was to install of a high-power photovoltaic generator to supply renewable energy to an irrigation association's pumping station, in order to check on the technical and environmental viability of the project.

The shift to renewable energies to replace conventional energies reduces greenhouse gas emissions, thus benefiting the environment and at the same time decreasing irrigation associations' electricity costs.



Main Results

- Reduced use of traditional energies resulting in a significant positive impact on the environment.

Key lessons

- This project may be transferred to other irrigation associations with a pumping station.

Context

Background:

Nowadays, the dramatic increase in the price of electricity, along with the scarcity of and external dependence on traditional polluting fossil sources of electricity and the depletion of water reserves are all forcing agricultural irrigation to modernise, based on multidisciplinary research into energy, water and ICT solutions.

Proposal for action:

To implement a high-power photovoltaic generator to replace conventional energy with 100 percent renewable energy.

Objective of the project:

From the environmental perspective, there is a clear

need to decrease conventional energy consumption, replacing it with solar energy. In addition, electricity bills are lowered for irrigation associations thus improving the profitability of farming operations.

Participants and partners:

- Las Planas irrigation association (coordinator).
- Instituto de Energía Solar, UPM (Solar Energy Institute, Polytechnic University of Madrid).
- Faber 1900 SLP.
- Instalaciones y Montajes Eléctricos Logroñeses SL.
- Servicio de Infraestructuras Agrarias de la Consejería de Agricultura, Ganadería y Medio Ambiente del Gobierno de La Rioja (Agricultural Infrastructures Service of the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Environment of the Regional Government of La Rioja).



Activities

- Construction of a photovoltaic generator with 600 modules of 355 Wp distributed in 10 lines yielding a total power of 213 KWp.
- Installation of a shed for photovoltaic control and management equipment.
- Starting up two 75 KW pumps powered by the solar energy generated.

Results

- Creation of the first high-power photovoltaic irrigation system.
- Replacement of conventional energy with renewable energy.
- The irrigation association's electricity costs were reduced between 50 and 75 percent.

Lessons learned

- This is a transferable experience that could serve as an example for other irrigation associations to use renewable energy in their activities.



Castilla y León

Location: Astudillo (Palencia)

Priority: P4 - Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems

RDP measure: Measure 10 - Support for agri-environment-climate commitments

Funds received: €31 500.00

Coordinating entity: Junta de Castilla y León (Regional Government of Castilla y León)

Agri-environmental commitment for sustainable industrial crops

Project summary

Intensification of beet crop farming leads to weed resistance, which in turn results in a systematic increase in the rate of plant protection products used for control them, thus generating higher costs to keep up the same levels of crop production. The co-owners of the agricultural farm in the town of Astudillo sought options to reverse this trend. Following the necessary advice provided by the technical support services of their farmers' union and the Rural Development Programme of Castilla y León, they decided to implement some of the changes in the agriculture techniques linked to industrial crops included in the programme. This management alternative is based on crop rotation at the three leaves stage.

This farm adheres to the joint ownership scheme.



Main results

- Modernisation of shared irrigation infrastructures.
- Preservation and improvement of soil quality.
- Making women's employment visible through the approach of the joint ownership scheme subscribed.
- Reduced adverse impact of the farm on water quality.

Key lessons

- Sustainable management of resources based on appropriate advice may lead to improved technical and economic management of the farm, and therefore better results.
- This is a showcase experience for surrounding farms. There is narrow impact on the farm's resource management and technical and economic management.

Context

Background:

Beet cultivation, in the context of the agricultural and industrial sector, is an engine for economic and social development in the areas where it is implemented. The liberalization of the sector in Castilla y Leon has resulted in a 14 percent increase in the area sown in 2017. In this scenario, the sector's productivity and competitiveness are affected by a reduction in production costs.

Accepting the commitment of agri-environmental aid for the farm has not only resulted in savings in water consumption, fertilizers and plant protection products, but has also allowed the farm to be managed with more data and with specialised technical advice, thus professionalising the cultivation process.

On the other hand, many of these farms belong to families and thus the work carried out by women is not recognised as professional activity.

Proposal for action:

To implement the commitments associated with the financial aid and shift to a joint ownership model (Law 35/2011).

Objective of the project:

- To achieve sustainable management of the beet crop.
- To regulate and give visibility to professional activities performed by women on the farm.

Participants and partners:

- Farm under the joint ownership scheme: Ainara Bengoechea Vargas and Alfonso Retuerto Peña.



Activities

- Implementing crop rotation at the three leaves stage without repeating the same species in order to prevent soil depletion and the proliferation of pests and weeds, and enabling optimal use of resources in the 18 hectares of the arable farm.
- Farm management based on specialised technical advice for sustainable use of plant protection products, beyond the mandatory standards provided for in current regulations.
- Participation in educational activities aiming at improving irrigation efficacy and calibration of machinery and equipment for application of plant protection products.
- Setting up a fertilization programme tailored to crop needs, adjusting fertilizer doses based on regular soil analysis.
- Addition of leaves and beet harvest remains to the soil within 30 days after crop removal or harvest to sequester atmospheric CO₂.

Results

Through practical implementation of agri-environmental commitments and the change in the model of the farm's ownership to become jointly owned, a sustainable farm has been achieved in economic, social and environmental terms.

The main results include:

- Reduced production costs of the farm.
- Improvement of different aspects of farm management through training and advice.
- Change in the decision-making process to a model based on data and information processing from specialist sources.
- The joint ownership is considered to be an association initiative.
- Reduced adverse environmental effects (lower consumption of water, fertilizers and plant protection products).
- Improvement of positive environmental effects linked to the farm (higher sequestration of atmospheric CO₂).

Lessons learned

- Aid related to measure 10 (agri-environment-climate) with the right technical advice included in managing the measure, not only yields positive effects for the environment, but fosters deep changes in the management of the farm.



Andalusia

Priority: P4 Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry; Focus Area 4A. Restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 2000 areas.

Project category: “Awareness-raising and participation of local population” as part of the volunteering programmes by the regional government of Andalusia (Junta)

RDP measure: M7 - Basic services and village renewal in rural areas

Funds received: €312 739.76 (EAFRD: €234 554.82 + national/regional: €78 184.94)

Coordinating entity: Consejería de Medio Ambiente y Ordenación del Territorio (Department of Environment and Land Planning of the Regional Government of Andalusia)

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Participative project for promoting awareness about Red Natura 2000 in different natural locations in Andalusia

Project summary

Natura 2000 sites cover 29% of the territory of Andalusia. The project aimed to build connections between citizens and the protected areas by promoting voluntary activities related to the environment. It is based on the premise that only by understanding the value of nature can people assume direct, personal responsibility for the conservation of species. Therefore, in 2016 and 2017, the project supported awareness and participation activities carried out by environmental associations with volunteers throughout several different Natura 2000 sites.



Main results

- 2 213 people participated in 312 activities carried out in 18 protected areas, over 21 412 volunteering hours. The participants acquired specific knowledge on environmental protection actions in the Natura 2000 sites where they collaborated.

Key lessons

- Encouraging participation and awareness-raising actions is an indispensable part of any management plan for a protected natural area, such as Natura 2000.
- By relying on social volunteering organisations at the local level, the territories' network of associations can be reinforced, thus familiarizing citizens with the management of natural sites.
- Some financing is needed to implement the activities, but they need not be costly.
- It is necessary to strengthen civil society's mechanisms and structures so that people living in rural areas can more efficiently channel their desire to get involved in environmental protection.

Context

Background:

Natura 2000 is the largest coordinated network of protected sites in the world. It offers a haven to species in Europe's most valuable and threatened habitats. Natura 2000 sites cover 29% of Andalusia. Furthermore, it is necessary for society to become aware and committed to its environment so as to advance towards sustainable development and achieve a balanced, respectful use of natural resources.

Proposal for action:

In order to make headway in rejuvenating rural population, which is included in programme measure 7, for this project the Andalusian government focused on sub-measure 7.6: "Support for studies and investments associated with the maintenance, restoration and upgrading of the cultural and natural heritage of villages, rural landscapes and high nature value sites, including related socio-economic aspects, as well as environmental awareness actions". To achieve this goal, a series of volunteering projects have been financed through local associations in order to address modification of habitats and warn of threats to natural heritage in vulnerable areas in the region.

Objective of the project:

- Promoting the values of Andalusian natural heritage and of the Natura 2000 network by improving citizens' knowledge and appreciation.
- Highlighting the value of biodiversity and nature.
- Improving the network and connections among all factors involved in protected areas.
- Evaluating and designing a collaborative programme for each of the participating Natura 2000 sites, with the aim of carrying out specific conservation activities and improving natural habitats.

Participants and partners:

The Department of Environment and Land Planning was in charge of managing and promoting the project; local associations were involved in screening and engaging the target audience; the volunteers were mainly young people, either from the area or its surroundings, some university students studying degrees in environmental sciences and biology, and, of course, the managers of the natural sites.



Activities

Over the two years the project lasted, 312 actions were planned and carried out in 33 activity programmes. The content of the design of the actions is varied: fauna, flora, craftsmanship, maintenance and conservation of the environment, ethnological heritage, etc., as well as the types of habitats, in order to include the protected areas' different ecosystems and to inform the participating population about their values, worthy of protection and conservation, and about how the local population in each area interacts with these sites in a traditional and respectful way.

Some of the activities implemented include:

- Specific training course on how to observe and identify butterflies in order to get volunteers to join the programme. This is one of the activities in most demand and allows people from other groups that work for the environment to learn of this project. Tracking lepidoptera (butterflies and moths) as part of the Climate Change Monitoring Programme in Sierra Nevada.
- Restoration of vegetation and recovery of traditional irrigation canals in the Barranco Gavilanes gorge in Güéjar (Sierra Nevada), clearing residues to help water flow. Prior activities of planting and protecting the natural regeneration areas of *Pinus sylvestris*.
- Sampling insects of the Odonata order in Sierra de Baza mountains, including dragonflies (anisoptera) and damselflies (zygoptera), in the meadows adjacent to the main watercourse Training course on sampling aquatic invertebrates, explaining their role as bio-indicators of water quality.
- Campaign for environmental awareness about the geological heritage of Sierra de Huétor Natural Park, in Granada. Setting up Information tents to distribute brochures to visitors at the parks, a task made possible thanks to the involvement of numerous volunteers.
- Improving the habitat in the Tíscar lake, an activity that involves the development of an informative route along the Genil river, by identifying suitable observation points. Several points of interest were geo-referenced to make

information. .available in Apps. In addition, a general clean-up of the whole path was carried out.

- Bird ringing to study passerine birds' migration in Gravera de Puntales, in the Odiel marshes.
- Workshop about identification of waders in the Barbate marshes.
- Information for visitors at the bird-watching spots in the salt pans of Cabo de Gata, about their ecological value and the species in the habitat, the surroundings, the history of the salt pans, how they are run and their related wildlife, as well as about best environmental practices. Informative brochures and binoculars for bird watching were provided.
- Communication actions in restaurants, hotels, tourist offices, and yacht clubs in order to promote the values of the protected littoral areas.
- Promotion of responsible coastal aquatic activities. Information is provided on how to prevent boat's anchors from harming *Posidonia oceanica* meadows from Aguamarga beach to Cala del Plomo.
- Environmental volunteering meeting in Doñana to explain the effects of the forest fire in Las Peñuelas (Moguer) and the progress in the plan to restore the burned area. Ways have been explored for citizens to participate in carrying out environmental volunteering activities to restore and monitor the burned area. Three work panels have also been held with the following themes: 'Actions of environmental restoration', 'Actions of environmental awareness' and 'Monitoring of species of flora and fauna'.

Results

In addition to a great number of people participating in the activities carried out, in qualitative terms, awareness on Natura 2000 sites and the value of their natural and ethnographic heritage.

There was an impact on the conservation of these resources, assessing potential socio-economical options, always linked to conservation and improvement of the environment (fauna, flora, craftsmanship, maintenance and conservation of the environment,

ethnological heritage, etc.) and location.

Knowledge was promoted about the ecosystems in protected areas, their values worthy of protection and conservation, and about their unique aspects and the use by the local population within the site, in a traditional, environmentally-friendly way.

Lessons learned

- Participation and awareness actions in areas of the Natura 2000 network are an indispensable tool when introducing any protection status.
- It is necessary to promote knowledge of natural values and encourage participation from social parties involved in existing models.
- Local environmental volunteering organisations should be promoted through funding and carrying out specific activities related to knowledge of natural values. This reinforces the network of associations in the area, familiarizes people with the problems and enables improvement if the relationship with of natural areas' managers.
- Social support was weaker in areas where it was more difficult to gather volunteers, such as in the Sierra de Baza Natural Park.
- Managers of protected natural areas have welcomed the activities and request these kinds of projects to be continued in the future.

Aragon

Location: Estadilla (Huesca)

Priority: 5A - Increasing efficiency in water use by agriculture.

RDP measure: 4-Investments in physical assets (4.3-Support for investments for modernisation and improvement of irrigation infrastructures)

Funds received: €240 999.21 (45.48%)

Coordinating entity: Nuestra Señora de la Carrodilla irrigation association in Estadilla

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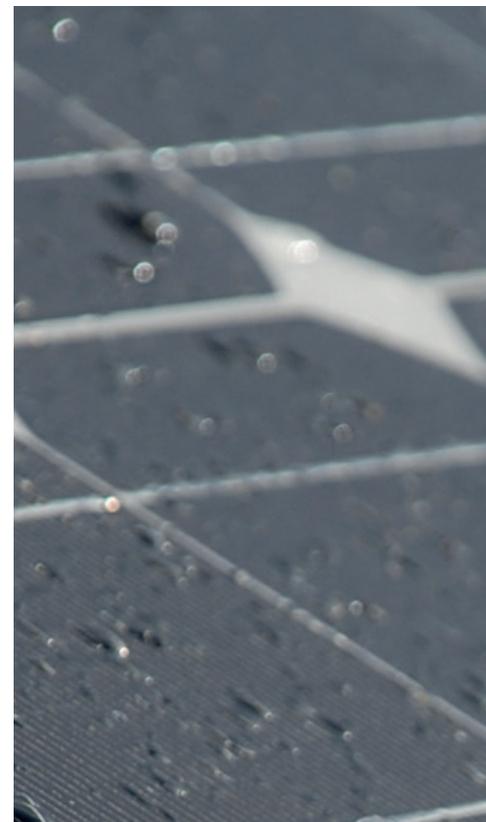
Contact phone: +34 974 305 080

Reservoir enlargement and installation of a photovoltaic solar farm in the irrigated land of the Nuestra Señora de la Carrodilla irrigation association in Estadilla

Project summary

This project involves enlargement of the reservoir and installation of a photovoltaic farm in the irrigation system of the Nuestra Señora de la Carrodilla irrigation association in Estadilla. The project is based on the results of a 2013 environmental audit, which defined two actions to reduce energy costs: enlargement of one of the irrigation reservoirs and installation of a pump powered by photovoltaic solar energy.

The use of solar energy to operate the pump allows for the irrigation association to reduce costs, increase energy independence, and reduce CO2 emissions.



Main results

- Reduced of CO2 emissions through the use of solar energy.
- Increased energy independence.
- Increased economic yield for the irrigation association resulting from lower electricity costs.
- Energy savings of around 40 percent are expected as a result of consuming energy generated by the photovoltaic farm.

Key lessons

- Energy audits of irrigation associations are necessary to determine the energy costs borne by agriculture operations.
- Energy costs are a key factor in the profitability of agricultural production.

Context

Background:

Nuestra Señora de la Carrodilla irrigation association in Estadilla has 172 users and an extension of 455 hectares. Main crops in this region include maize, barley wheat and alfalfa, as well as vineyards and pear trees.

In 2005, the irrigation association modernised the irrigation system with funding from the Aragon Rural Development Programme. The flood irrigation system was replaced with drip and sprinkler irrigation with the purpose of optimising the use of irrigation water and reducing water losses. That same year, power companies offered support to the agricultural sector through special, lower rates.

In 2008, the rate reduction ended and so options were considered to reduce energy costs. In 2013, the Nuestra Señora de la Carrodilla irrigation association in Estadilla conducted an energy audit to define how to implement cost-saving actions.

Proposal for action:

To increase the water storage capacity in reservoirs (up to 48.000 m³, equivalent to a 35 percent increase of their initial capacity); to reduce the number of hours of electrical energy use during the day (the most expensive period); and to introduce solar energy for pumping water during the day.

Objective of the project:

Reducing the energy costs of the irrigation association.

Participants and partners:

Nuestra Señora de la Carrodilla irrigation association in Estadilla.



Activities

- Enlargement of one of the irrigation reservoirs from 35 000 m³ to 48 000 m³ of water storage, or an increase of 35 percent. As a result, there is more water available for pumping during periods when the energy cost is lower (nights and weekends).
- Installation of a photovoltaic farm to power the pumping system of the reservoir. This solar array is used during high-energy cost hours (daytime) to reduce the number of high-rate hours contracted with the power supply company. The solar farm has 792 photovoltaic solar panels with 310 Wp of nominal peak power each. The panels are 2x1 metres and are mounted on a 3,4 m wide bracket with a 32° incline. The solar farm supplies energy to a new pump with characteristics similar to those of the pumping station, which can pump 730 m³/h at 58 wcm and which are equipped with 150 kW at 1 450 rpm engines.

Results

- The brief period of activity does not provide conclusive results, although some benefits can be anticipated.
- Energy savings of about 40 percent are expected during daytime hours, because the water pump connected to the solar farm will be operated during the day. In addition, a greater volume of water is available for night-time supply, when the electrical rates are lower.
- The use of electric energy from renewable sources results in reduced CO2 emissions. The use of solar energy is expected to be about 30 percent of the total energy used by the irrigation association, which means 193 Mwh/year.
- Power supply from two sources: the power company and solar energy.
- The economic yield of the irrigation association is expected to increase as a result of lower electricity costs, thus benefiting agriculture operations.

Lessons learned

Conducting energy audits in irrigation associations is necessary to assess energy costs and learn about options to improve profitability of agricultural production.

Energy policy should support the agriculture sector. Beneficiaries highlight two aspects that would make the work easier:

- Contracted power levels should vary in function with irrigation needs: lower power for the rainy season and higher power for the dry season; currently, electrical power is contracted at a fixed level throughout the year.
- It should be permitted to sell the surplus energy generated by the solar farm for pumping to the power company (this would be extra income for the irrigation association and at the same time would benefit the environment through reduced CO2 emissions).



Murcia Region

Location: Lorca

Priority: P5 Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors

Project category: Focus Area 5A. Increasing efficiency in water use by agriculture.

RDP measure: M4.3.1 - Irrigation infrastructure

Funds received: €711 932.92

Coordinating entity: Consejería de Agricultura, Ganadería y Pesca de la Región de Murcia (CARM) (Department of Agriculture, Farming and Fisheries of the Regional Government of Murcia)

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Project for a 105 885 m³ reservoir for irrigation regulation and solar pumping by the Campo Alto de Lorca irrigation association

Project summary

The Campo Alto de Lorca project for a reservoir for irrigation regulation and solar pumping promotes a more efficient system in terms of both water resources and energy savings. The Campo Alto de Lorca irrigation association will benefit from the construction of a new 105 885 m³ reservoir that will enable to store water resources for periods of water deficit.

Moreover, water pumping is powered by photovoltaic energy which will significantly reduce energy costs and contribute to a reduction in pollution.



Main results

- Improved availability of water in deficit periods through accumulation of water in the new reservoir.
- Agricultural jobs have been created as a result of improved water availability throughout the year.
- Improved water availability along with reduced energy costs contributed to increasing agricultural productivity in the holdings benefiting from the project.

Key lessons

- Modernisation of infrastructures in the region is important for the benefit of both agricultural operations and the environment.

Context

Background:

The Campo Alto de Lorca irrigation association is comprised of 300 small producers from Norte de Lorca villages with a total of around 400 hectares of rain-fed crops mostly under organic regime. Almond trees, olives, vineyards and aromatic plants are the economic lifeblood of the area. Lack of regulation within the irrigation association leads to great water losses.

Proposal for action:

In order to address the issues related to the lack of availability of water in the Campo Alto de Lorca irrigation association, the Department of Agriculture decided to promote the construction of a regulating reservoir to store water in order to use it in water deficit periods.

Objective of the project:

The town of Lorca and the rest of the Cuenca del Segura area face a structural water deficit, which is the main

limiting factor for the agricultural development of the Campo Alto de Lorca irrigation association.

Hence the importance of facing this deficit through continuous improvement in water usage efficiency and reducing as much as possible the uncertainty about water availability in the region.

Participants and partners:

Campo Alto de Lorca irrigation association is the project's beneficiary.



Activities

The main activities carried out in this project with funding from the RDP include:

- Construction of a 105 885 m³ regulation reservoir in the Campo Alto irrigation association in the town of Lorca.
- Installation of a pump powered by solar energy.

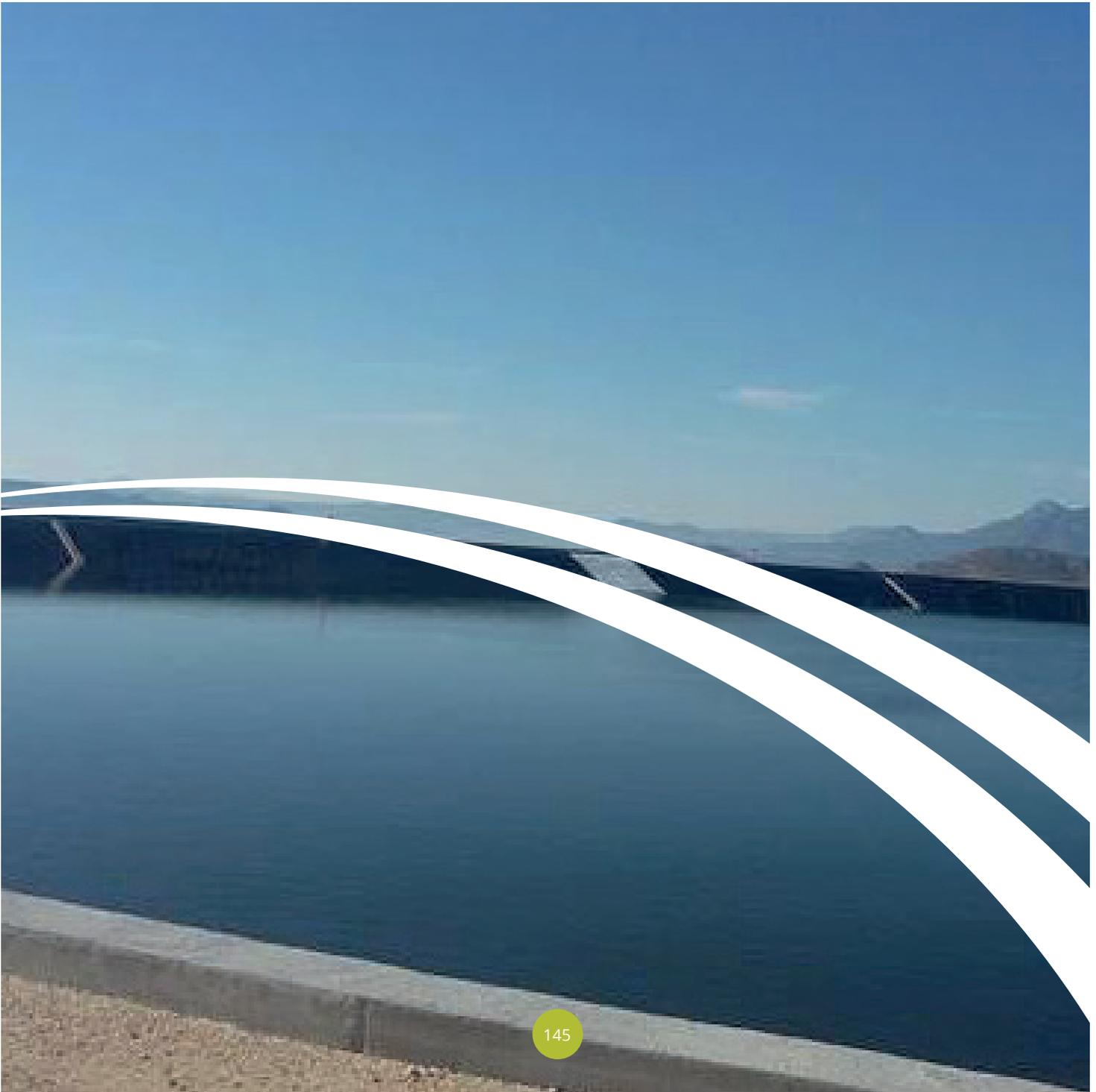
Results

- Improved regulation capacity of the irrigation association for better use of water.
- Improved energy efficiency of irrigation infrastructures.
- Improved profitability of agricultural operations through reduced energy costs resulting from the installation of a solar powered pump.
- Mitigation of climate change effects by reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the energy generation process.
- Creation of jobs for new farmers, as a result of improved productivity due to the increased availability of water and increased energy efficiency.
- This project enables water availability throughout the year, which is key for a region that suffers a water deficit during most of the year.

Lessons learned

The technology used in the project can be transferred to areas with similar characteristics: low water availability and high solar radiation. A great part of the territory presents these characteristics.

In a context of water deficits, arable land abandonment and rural population ageing, it seems key for the administration to advocate for this type of project in order to reduce the uncertainty about water availability and make the region more appealing for new farmers



Catalonia

Location: Figueres (Girona)

Priority: P6 - Social Inclusion and economic development

Project category: Promotion of local development in rural areas
RDP measure: M19 Support for LEADER local development (CLLD – community-led local development)

Funds received: €118 299 (EAFRD: €50 868.57 + regional: €67 430.43)

Coordinating entity: Asociación para el Desarrollo Rural Integral de la zona Norte-Oriental de Cataluña-ADRINOC (Association for Integral Rural Development of north-eastern Catalonia)

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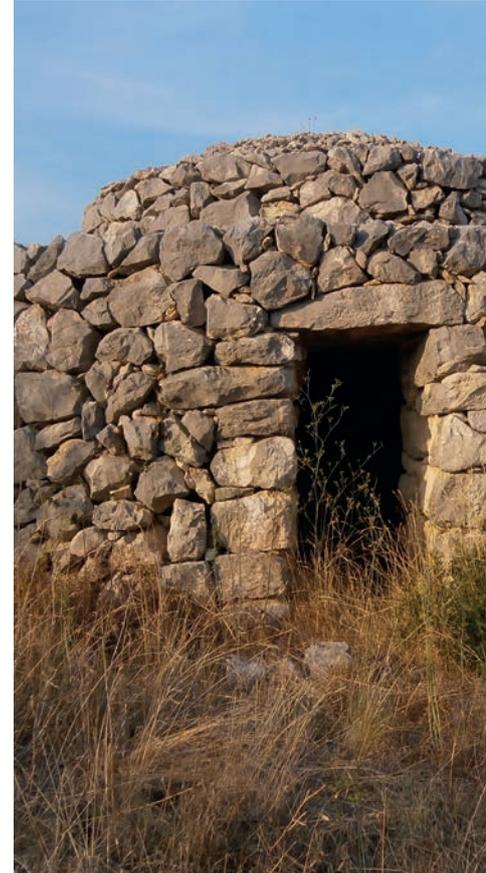
COLABORA x PAISAJE (Collaborate for landscape).

Project summary

Dry stone constructions to foster territorial development.

Dry stone traditional architecture is an element that has become part of the identity of rural Catalonia's landscapes and other Mediterranean ones.

Colabora x Paisaje is a project that develops tools aimed to encouraging people to voluntarily participate in cataloguing dry stone constructions. The main goals are to preserve this valuable heritage, include it in European grants and geo-reference it in geographic information systems, thus improving rural development. Dry stone architecture recovers a profession as well as traditional construction techniques. Sustainable tourist activities are promoted, and awareness is raised among the population about the importance of preserving and giving value to their space and heritage.



Main results

- 104 volunteers participated in the Colabora x Paisaje activities in the first year of the project.
- 84 people attended the workshops on "Dry stone constructions, adding value to the territory".
- Creation of "App de la Piedra Seca" (Dry Stone App.) for consulting inventoried in Wikipedra and recognising them in the territory.
- 20 people linked to the dry stone profession participated in the study trip to the Regional Natural Park of the Catalan Pyrenees.
- The document "Landscape, Rural Development and Citizenship" was published and distributed in all towns, partner territories and entities linked to the landscape, with examples of landscape management that increases the value of their areas.

Key lessons

- The study trip turned out to be an excellent way to share approaches and experiences, and highlighted that it is important to pay attention to the network of actors involved.
- This project is transferable; four other LAGs are interested in it. The experience could be exported to other projects related to landscape such as dolmens and menhirs.
- Training would improve with permanent courses held regularly in the long term.

Context

Background:

As project managers said, “economic and social development is key to preserving rural territories”. They added that “this must be based on each territory’s nature as well as its distinctive aspects and heritage”. Landscape is one of the most valuable elements of heritage. For this development to last, “civil society and citizens must be involved”. In the local development strategy (LDS) for the territory, the ADRINOC Local Action Groups included landscape conservation. After conversations with the Landscape Observatory of Catalonia, something came to the attention of the project promoters: an inventory for dry stone constructions that have been created with voluntary work until it became Wikipedra (playing with the words Wikipedia and pedra, the latter meaning “stone” in Catalan).

Proposal for action:

The starting point for this LEADER cooperation project was to look for further ways to diversify the economy and give value to heritage already indexed in Wikipedra. Seven local action groups in Catalonia developed the project, providing tools and resources for citizens to promote the activity and raise awareness about the importance of preserving the heritage as well as its connection to rural development. The synergistic approach combines measure 16 on cooperation and measure 19 on participatory local development.

Objective of the project:

- Creating tools for consulting and cataloguing dry stone constructions.
- Disseminating dry stone constructions and their building technique to promote awareness about the value of architectural heritage and the economic opportunities it generates in rural territories.
- Training and dissemination of the use of new dry stone constructions in the rural and urban landscape.
- Fostering dialogue and cooperation among citizens and government to tackle joint projects related to landscape.
- Communicating and giving value to landscape as a revitalizing force for territories.
- Consolidating and employing guides in the Garrotxa, which already has a route especially for dry stone.

Participants and partners:

- Consorci Leader de Desenvolupament Rural del Camp.
- Consorci per al Desenvolupament del Baix Ebre i Montsià, Associació Leader de Ponent.
- Consorci Intercomarcal d’Iniciatives Socioeconòmiques.
- Associació pel Desenvolupament Rural de la Catalunya Central.
- Parc Natural Regional des Pyrénées-Catalanes.



Activities

- Creating tools for consulting and cataloguing dry- stone constructions: “frame-sheets” for different types of constructions (huts, walls, ovens, water systems, etc.) linked to Wikipedra.
- Setting up of the “Dry Stone App”, an application created for smartphones and tablets that enables users to consult and catalogue constructions in the 85 villages included in the Regional Natural Park of the Catalan Pyrenees and the group of villages of Conflent-Canigó in France.
- Drafting and disseminating the publication “Landscape, Rural Development and Citizenship. Best practices of citizens’ collaboration in landscape management in Europe”, featuring 10 civic experiences of landscape management carried out in Europe.
- Workshops for placing value on the architectural heritage of dry stone. Five workshops around the whole territory to show the potential of dry stone as rural development element, a work trip to the Regional Natural Park of the Catalan Pyrenees to learn more about how they foster the sector and discover new uses.
- Disseminating of the dry stone constructions heritage and of the tools created through the project “Encuentros de Piedra Seca” (Dry stone Meetings).
- Motivating volunteers in training sessions and territorial activities.
- Initiating efforts to create a database of experts and professionals in the dry stone construction technique; creating new education resources; hosting a trans-border exchange among dry stone professionals; drafting a practical manual; promoting the introduction of dry stone to groups at risk of social exclusion (such as young people who have dropped out of school) and recognizing professions related to dry stone.

Results

- A total of 104 volunteers participated in the activities promoted by Colabora x Paisaje in the first year of the project.
 - There were 84 people that attended the workshops on “Dry stone constructions, adding value to the territory”, and workshops to launch the resources generated in each territory.
 - Creating and distributing standard sheets for cataloguing dry stone throughout the territory.
- Significant impact of the “Dry Stone App” on downloads, in social networks and the media to consult and check on the constructions inventoried in Wikipedra in the field.
- Distribution of the publication “Landscape, Rural Development and Citizenship” in all LEADER villages, in partner territories and entities linked to landscape.

Lesson learned

- Connecting LAGs, government and other entities enables future tourist and professional opportunities to be sought for the territory.
 - Sharing experiences with other local action groups is an excellent way to share approaches and experiences, and it highlights the most relevant common issues such as the chain of actors involved in these constructions.
 - This project is considered to be transferable, with two LAGs in Catalonia and two more in Navarra and
- Huesca interested in taking part in it. The experience can be exported to other places where, for instance, the landscape of dolmens and menhirs is promoted.
- Training is more effective with permanent regular courses in the long term.
 - Manuals and training programmes must encourage the dry stone technique among the population, since the constructions are sought after in such sites as Natural Parks.



Catalonia

Priority: P6 - Social inclusion and local development

RDP measure: M19.3- Preparation and implementation of cooperation activities of the local action group

Funds received: €466 181.63 (EAFRD: €200 458.10 + National/Regional: €265 723.53)

Coordinating entity: Asociación Leader Ripollès Ges Bisaura

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ENFOCC: Energy transition, forest management and climate change. LEADER inter-territorial cooperation project.

Project summary

ENFOCC is a project about energy transition, forest management and climate change, carried out by 11 Local Action Groups in Catalonia. The main goal is to move towards a more sustainable development model for rural populations and their territories. ENFOCC is mainly targeted at SMEs, public entities and citizens in general. It is organized along three lines of activity covering energy management, forest management and biomass, and actions against climate change. In addition, it includes assessment and implementation of energy plans in public buildings, as well as reviewing service-provision contracts and developing a software tool that allows companies and government bodies to manage, monitor and optimise energy use. There are plans to organise courses on biomass boilers, draft technical guides, carry out studies and

pilot projects, give training on advanced technologies for forest management and calculate the carbon footprint, etc.



Main results

- Energy management plans were put in place in 47 towns, with 250 000 EUR of savings.
- New savings opportunities for town-councils and companies by reducing energy consumption.
- Energy management in over 100 companies using the “ENEGEST” tool and assessment of electrical consumption in 10 municipal schools.
- Creation of procedures to reduce electrical consumption and assessment of the energy solutions applied in 9 towns using “Smart rural”.

Key lessons

- Energy-saving actions are transferable to any territory.
- The accumulated experience and the success achieved give encouragement to continue with the actions and methods tested in ENFOCC.
- Coordination with LAGs from other regions with different RDPs is more challenging due to the various methods and durations.
- New businesses could cover the energy advice service for the benefit of all the inhabitants.

Context

Background:

During the 2007-2013 scheduling period, the LAG Ripollès Bisaura coordinated a project named "Energy and Forest" which for three years (2012-2014) worked on strategic energy and forest management aspects for the Catalan territories, supplemented by activities from parallel projects such as EURENERS3 (national cooperation), ENERG-TUR (Euroregion funding) and others. The LAGs involved proposed implementing a new project taking into account the new policies, strategies and objectives of the European Union and the National and Regional RDPs.

Proposal for action:

An important aspect in the new framework of the European Union's Rural Development policy is the need to work on mitigation and adaptation to climate change. For this reason, the "Energy and Forest" project was extended into a new three-pronged project: Energy Management, Forest Management and Biomass and Climate Change, or "ENFOCC" for short.

In total, the 11 LAGs of Catalonia decided to collaborate to some extent and four LAGs from other regions in Spain and a French LAG have also shown interest in the project and will link up proposals with similar methods.

Objectives of the project:

Improving and promoting rural territories' sustainability through:

- Fostering energy saving and efficiency.
- Promoting renewable energies based on endogenous sources.
- Drafting and promoting climate change mitigation and adaptation plans.
- Promoting sustainable forest management.

Participants and partners:

- Associació per la Gestió del Programa Leader Ripollès Ges Bisaura (coordinator).
- Associació pel Desenvolupament Rural de la Catalunya.
- Consorci Leader Pirineu Occidental.
- Consorci Leader de Desenvolupament Rural del Camp.
- Consorci GAL Alt Urgell – Cerdanya.
- Associació Leader de Ponent.
- Consorci Grup d'Acció Local Noguera - Segrià Nord.
- Consorci Intercomarcal d'Iniciatives Socioeconòmiques Ribera d'Ebre – Terra Alta.
- Consorci per al Desenvolupament de la Catalunya Central.
- Consorci per al Desenvolupament del Baix Ebre i Montsià.
- Asociación Tierra Estella Desarrollo Rural TEDER (Navarra).
- GAL Terres Romanes in Pays Catalan (France).



Activities

- The energy transition aspect focused on promoting the benefits of putting in place energy plans in public buildings and reviewing service-provision contracts. The advice was given by agencies specializing in local-sourcing and saving initiatives. To stimulate awareness of energy consumption, the software ENEGEST was developed, which allows small enterprises to monitor energy use. The software was shared with 100 SMEs, 9 public schools and 47 town councils, which received advice regarding energy management.
- Within the forest management and biomass line of activity, the aim was to work on projects that can be financed by the central government for purchasing more sustainable boilers that reduce CO2 emissions. The idea has materialized in a project named "BM-CAT" for the whole region. In line with supporting sustainable energy models, three courses for biomass boilers installers were held (also explaining aspects linked to sustainable supply) and two technical guides were drafted: one on emissions in biomass installations and one on other uses of certified wood. Emissions from 13 boilers were also verified for the "ClimaFES-CO2" project within Catalan territory. In addition, three studies and pilot projects have been carried out to evaluate the feasibility of livestock grazing in the forests as a management tool, a technical course on forest inventories using the LIDAR method, feasibility studies in forestry, etc.
- As for the third line of work, Climate Change, a "Climate change mitigation and adaptation plan" was drafted including specific actions to be implemented. It is the coordinating LAG, as the pilot location of the plan, that serves as an example for the remaining territories.

In addition, the carbon footprint of eight agri-food products was also calculated with the "EURENERS3" tool (including four dairy products, one geographical protected indication product and one extra virgin olive oil.), as well as the work spaces of the participating LAGs to be incorporated to the "voluntary agreements to reduce emissions programme".

Results

- In the 47 towns and four county councils where energy management plans have been implemented, a total of 250 000 EUR of savings has been achieved.
- Analysis of energy management in over 100 companies using the "ENEGEST" tool.
- Assessment of electrical consumption in 10 municipal schools and creation of procedures to reduce it.
- Assessment of the energy solutions in 9 towns (using SmartRural).
- Feasibility analysis of the replacement of the fleet with electrical vehicles in two towns.
- Analysis of the replacement of 42 conventional boilers with 25 biomass boilers and seven heat networks as part of the Ripollés Biomass Strategic Plan.
- Technical training in the new forest inventories system.
- Awareness-raising sessions on other forestry values in rural territories.
- Training for biomass boilers installers.
- 5 774 tonnes of CO2 emission offset through replacement with a biomass boiler within the project "BM-RURAL".
- CO2 emission offset through installation of new biomass boilers throughout the whole Catalan territory during the next four years within the project "BM-RURAL".
- 200 people participated in training sessions on Smart rural grids, other forestry values, etc.
- 40 people participated in the "5th Exchange of LEADER Experiences in the territory" sessions, hosted by the NRN

Lessons learned

- Although there might be territory-specific characteristics in the energy context, energy-saving actions are transferable to any territory.
- The accumulated experience through the successive programming periods allows for continuous project-idea sharing among LAGs and inspires many of them to continue with the actions and methods tested in ENFOCC.
- It is necessary to improve coordination to enhance transnational cooperation.
- Less participation from town councils in the consultancy to reduce municipal electrical consumption due to slower administrative procedures compared to businesses.
- Business opportunities to conduct the energy consultancy service to benefit all the inhabitants.
- After the positive territorial impact of the first round of the ENFOCC project, a second phase will be presented to the next round to call for cooperation projects in Catalonia.



Navarra

Location:

Lumbier - Sangüesa county

RDP measure: M16.2-

Cooperation

Funds received: €178 166.12
(€115 807.98 EAFRD)

Coordinating entity: Asociación Laboral Josenea (Josenea Labour Association), a social and labour insertion centre

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Pilot Project: Circular bioeconomic organic waste project implemented at local level and with a social dimension

Project summary

This pilot project assesses the current local model of organic waste management which consists of collection, recycling, and use in situ of local biowaste as organic compost. In addition, this project serves as a lab for research, training and dissemination of the organic waste bio-economy model, implemented on a local scale.

The Josenea Labour Association is in charge of managing the activities and, as a social and labour insertion centre, adds social dimension to the environmental value of the project.

The same assessment used with this project can be applied in other territories where the same needs are detected.



Main results

- Innovative biowaste management pilot project implemented at the local level.
- Social and labour insertion of people in the area, since the project is supported by a company with that goal.
- Use of a new organic waste management service for 90 companies and activities that generate significant amounts of waste in the area.
- New biowaste collection system for 1 300 residents.
- Consolidation of the professional activity of 33 people employed by the Josenea Labour Association and prospects of creating 3 new jobs in the area.
- Adaptation of simple technology, since this is a “Learning by doing” study lab that tests organic compost in the soil in the long term to create and analyse new organic compost.
- Professional training of staff to implement the biowaste management model at the county level.

Key lessons

- Many groups were involved in the project, thus making it transferable.
- The procedures for obtaining administrative licenses required throughout the project should be faster. It is intended to exhaustively evaluate this particular issue in the future.

Context

Background:

Due to biowaste management deficiencies in the county, which follows a linear model that does not meet the real needs of rural territories and does not incorporate circular economy, it was decided to research this field.

Participating entities ensure the implementation of the project by providing technical knowledge, analysis methods and dissemination (UPNA) and know-how, marketing knowledge and economic revitalization (Josenea).

Proposal for action:

Creation of a circular bio-economy biowaste pilot project implemented at the local level and with a social dimension.

Objectives of the project:

To propose simple solutions to the particular needs identified.

To improve soil fertility and carbon sequestration on a farm growing organic aromatic and medicinal plants.

To diversify and consolidate the range of services offered by the Josenea Labour Association and to search new niches for rural and social employment.

Participants and partners:

- Josenea BIO (social and labour insertion centre), producer of aromatic and medicinal organic plants.
- Departamento de Producción Vegetal de la Escuela de Ingeniería Agronómica de la Universidad Pública de Navarra (Department of Plant Production of the Agronomy School of the Public University of Navarra).



Activities

- *Action 1. Definition, development and implementation, as a pilot test, of a system for municipal biowaste collection and transport to Lumbier, with service to some of the residents in Lumbier and to the large waste generators in the county of Sangüesa.*
- *Action 2. Definition, development and implementation in Lumbier of a pilot test for composting municipal biowaste from Action 1 to transform it into organic compost.*
- *Action 3. Experimental research on the model including different processing options; compost applications and their effects on plants and soil in the short- and the long-term; and analysis of general results of the management model.*
- *Action 4. Provision of training to staff to implement the biowaste management model at the county level.*
- *Action 5. Communication activities for promotion and dissemination at national level of this model for biowaste management implemented at the county level.*

Results

Knowledge gained about the short-term viability of compost used on the Josenea Labour Association's organic farm and about the long-term impact of its application to the soil. New organic composts are analysed, fostering diversification and specialisation of the market and its products. Professional training to manage the waste model at a larger scale.

Dissemination among potentially interested parties from other areas and other social and labour centres of the waste management model and its contribution to helping the county of Sangüesa (included in the pilot project) meet the current legal goals related to reuse and recycling of municipal waste defined in circular economy policies.

In order to obtain all these results, local jobs have been created in addition to a holistic analysis of the new management model at scale, from a technical, social and economic perspective.

Lessons learned

There are 10017 inhabitants in the county of Sangüesa to whom the biowaste collection service can be extended.

Town-hall officers and technicians, as well as rural development actors, from all over Spain, are invited to learn more about this initiative in order to adjust it and replicate it in their areas. This initiative may also interest other social and labour insertion companies

looking to diversify their activities.

Training is offered in this field to technicians who have just graduated or want to retrain.



ANNEXES



Annex I

Measures and sub-measures codes

<i>Measure code under current Regulation</i>	<i>Measure under Regulation (EU) n° 1305/2013 or Regulation (EU) n° 1303/2013</i>	<i>Submeasure code under the present Regulation</i>	<i>Submeasures for the purpose of programming</i>
1	Knowledge transfer and information actions	1.1	Support for vocational training and skills acquisition actions
		1.2	Support for demonstration activities and information actions
		1.3	Support for short-term farm and forest management exchange as well as farm and forest visits
2	Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services	2.1	Support to help benefiting from the use of advisory services
		2.2	Support for the setting up of farm management, farm relief and farm advisory services as well as forestry advisory services
		2.3	Support for the training of advisors
3	Quality schemes for agricultural products, and foodstuffs	3.1	Support for new participation in quality schemes
		3.2	Support for information and promotion activities implemented by groups of producers in the internal market
4	Investments in physical assets	4.1	Support for investments in agricultural holdings
		4.2	Support for investments in processing/marketing and/or development of agricultural products
		4.3	Support for investments in infrastructure related to development, modernisation or adaptation of agriculture and forestry
		4.4	Support for non-productive investments linked to the achievement of agri-environment climate objectives
5	Restoring agricultural production potential damaged by natural disasters and catastrophic events and introduction of appropriate prevention actions	5.1	Support for investments in preventive actions aimed at reducing the consequences of probable natural disasters, adverse climatic events and catastrophic events
		5.2	Support for investments for the restoration of agricultural land and production potential damaged by natural disasters, adverse climatic events and catastrophic events
6	Farm and business development	6.1	Support for business start-up aid for young farmers
		6.2	Support for business start-up aid for non-agricultural activities in rural areas
		6.3	Support for business start-up aid for the development of small farms
		6.4	Support for investments in creation and development of non-agricultural activities
		6.5	Payments for farmers eligible for the small farmers scheme established who permanently transfer their holding to another farmer

<i>Measure code under current Regulation</i>	<i>Measure under Regulation (EU) n° 1305/2013 or Regulation (EU) n° 1303/2013</i>	<i>Submeasure code under the present Regulation</i>	<i>Submeasures for the purpose of programming</i>
7	Basic services and village renewal in rural areas	7.1	Support for the drawing up and updating of plans for the development of municipalities and villages in rural areas and their basic services and of protection and management plans relating to Natura 2000 sites and other areas of high nature value
		7.2	Support for investments in the creation, improvement or expansion of all types of small scale infrastructure, including investments in renewable energy and energy saving
		7.3	Support for broadband infrastructure, including its creation, improvement and expansion, passive broadband infrastructure and provision of access to broadband and public e-government solutions
		7.4	Support for investments in the setting up, improvement or expansion of local basic services for the rural population, including leisure and culture, and the related infrastructure
		7.5	Support for investments for public use in recreational infrastructure, tourist information and small scale tourism infrastructure
		7.6	Support for studies and investments associated with the maintenance, restoration and upgrading of the cultural and natural heritage of villages, rural landscapes and high nature value sites, including related socio-economic aspects, as well as environmental awareness actions
		7.7	Support for investments targeting the relocation of activities and conversion of buildings or other facilities located within or close to rural settlements, with a view to improving the quality of life or increasing the environmental performance of the settlement
		7.8	Other

<i>Measure code under current Regulation</i>	<i>Measure under Regulation (EU) n° 1305/2013 or Regulation (EU) n° 1303/2013</i>	<i>Submeasure code under the present Regulation</i>	<i>Submeasures for the purpose of programming</i>
8	Investments in forest area development and improvement of the viability of forests	8.1	Support for afforestation and creation of woodland
		8.2	Support for establishment of agroforestry systems
		8.3	Support for prevention of damage to forests from forest fires, natural disasters and catastrophic events
		8.4	Support for restoration of damage to forests from forest fires, natural disasters and catastrophic events
		8.5	Support for investments improving the resilience and environmental value of forest ecosystems
		8.6	Support for investments in forestry technologies and in the processing, the mobilising and the marketing of forest products
9	Setting -up of producer groups and organisations	9	Support for setting up of producer groups and organisations in the agriculture and forestry sectors
10	Agri-environment-climate	10.1	Support for agri-environment-climate commitments
		10.2	Support for conservation and sustainable use and development of genetic resources in agriculture
11	Organic farming	11.1	Payment to convert to organic farming practices and methods
		11.2	Payment to maintain organic farming practices and methods
12	Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments	12.1	Compensation payments on agricultural land associated with Natura 2000
		12.2	Compensation payments on forest land associated with Natura 2000
		12.3	Compensation payments on agricultural land affected by river basin management measures
13	Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints	13.1	Compensation payment for mountain areas
		13.2	Compensation payment for other areas facing significant natural constraints
		13.3	Compensation payment to other areas affected by specific constraints
14	Animal welfare	14	Animal welfare payments
15	Forest-environmental and climate services and forest conservation	15.1	Payments for forest-environment and climate commitments
		15.2	Support for the conservation and promotion of forest genetic resources

<i>Measure code under current Regulation</i>	<i>Measure under Regulation (EU) n° 1305/2013 or Regulation (EU) n° 1303/2013</i>	<i>Submeasure code under the present Regulation</i>	<i>Submeasures for the purpose of programming</i>
16	Cooperation	16.1	Support for the establishment and operation of operational groups for the EIP for agricultural productivity and sustainability
		16.2	Support for pilot projects and for the development of new products, practices, processes and technologies
		16.3	Co-operation among small operators in organising joint work processes and sharing facilities and resources and for developing/marketing tourism
		16.4	Support for horizontal and vertical co-operation among supply chain actors for the establishment and development of short supply chains and local markets and for promotion activities in a local context relating to the development of short supply chains and local markets
		16.5	Support for joint action undertaken with a view to mitigating or adapting to climate change and for joint approaches to environmental projects and on going environmental practices
		16.6	Support for cooperation among supply chain actors for sustainable provision of biomass for use in food and energy production and industrial processes
		16.7	Support for strategies other than those of the CLLD
		16.8	Support for the drawing up of forest management plans or equivalent instruments
		16.9	Support for diversification of farming activities into activities concerning health care, social integration, community supported agriculture and education about the environment and food
			Other
17	Risk management	17.1	Premiums for crop, animal and plant insurance
		17.2	Mutual funds for economic losses caused by adverse climatic events or by the outbreak of an animal or plant disease or pest infestation or an environmental incident
		17.3	Income stabilisation tool
19	Support for LEADER local development (CLLD – community-led local development)	19.2	Support for implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy
		19.3	Support for preparation and implementation of cooperation activities of the local action group
		19.4	Support for running costs and animation
20	Technical Assistance	20.1	Support for technical assistance (except for NRN) Support for setting up and operating the NRN.

Annex II

EAFRD priorities of the European Union's development policy

1

Fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry, and rural areas with a focus on the following areas:

- a) fostering innovation, cooperation, and the development of the knowledge base in rural areas.
 - b) strengthening the links between agriculture, food production and forestry and research and innovation, including for the purpose of improved environmental management and performance.
 - c) fostering lifelong learning and vocational training in the agricultural and forestry sectors.
-

2

enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions and promoting innovative farm technologies and the sustainable management of forests, with a focus on the following areas:

- a) improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification.
 - b) facilitating the entry of adequately skilled farmers into the agricultural sector and, in particular, generational renewal.
-

3

promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture, with a focus on the following areas:

- a) improving competitiveness of primary producers by better integrating them into the agri-food chain through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and organisations and inter-branch organisations.
 - b) supporting farm risk prevention and management.
-

4

Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry, with a focus on the following areas:

- a) restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 2000 areas, and in areas facing natural or other specific constraints, and high nature value farming, as well as the state of European landscapes.
 - b) improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management;
 - c) preventing soil erosion and improving soil management.
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5

Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors, with a focus on the following areas:

- a) increasing efficiency in water use by agriculture;
 - b) increasing efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing.
 - c) facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, of by-products, wastes and residues and of other non food raw material, for the purposes of the bio-economy.
 - d) reducing greenhouse gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture.
 - e) fostering carbon conservation and sequestration in agriculture and forestry.
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6

Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas, with a focus on the following areas:

- a) facilitating diversification, creation and development of small enterprises, as well as job creation.
- b) fostering local development in rural areas.
- c) enhancing the accessibility, use and quality of information and communication technologies (ICT) in rural areas. ES L 347/500 Official Journal of the European Union 20.12.2013.



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