

Added Value of Networking



Social farming info days and study tours

Basic information	
NRN:	Estonia
Theme:	Relevant experience
Coordinator:	Meeri Klooren, Estonian NSU
Partners:	Estonian Farmers Federation
Beneficiaries:	Wider audience, beneficiaries of RDP support, potential beneficiaries
Resources:	All funding is from NSU budget
Period:	December 2010 – November 2012
Main element of networking:	Exchange of relevant experience and know-how amongst stakeholders
Other elements of networking:	Effective stakeholder engagement

Background

The Social Farming (SF) activities delivered by the Estonian Rural Network (NRN) are based on the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) thematic working group. During the 4th NRN meeting held in Seville on the 8th of June 2009, the Italian National Rural Network proposed the establishment of a specific thematic activity on SF and invited the other NRNs to express their interest in participating.

The specific purpose of the SF thematic initiative was to improve the implementation of RDPs (Rural Development Programmes) in support of social farming and to provide inputs in to the development of the future programming period at National and EU level.

Main activities

The main activities of the project included:

1. 8th December 2010 - Social farming Roundtable in the village of Pahkla Camphill.
2. 13th December 2011 - Thematic day "Social farming - opportunities in Estonia"
3. 29th November - 2nd December 2011 - thematic study trip to Italy (near Rome) about social farming. Participants included Central Association of Estonian Farmers, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Social Affairs, Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, Estonian Agricultural Registers and Information Board and the Estonian Chamber of Disabled People.

Added Value of Networking



4. December 2011 - Mini-Survey "Social farming in Estonia 2011"
5. 28th March 2012 - Thematic day "Opportunities to start Social farming"
6. 10th - 13th April 2012 - thematic study trip on social farming to Southern Finland. Participants on the trip were similar to those in Italy however this time more farmers were involved.
7. 6th of June 2012 – Participated in the Public Hearing on Social Farming: Green Care and Social and Health Policies in Brussels. Two people attended – a representative of the University of Tartu Pärnu College and a representative of Maarja Village (which offers a home to 33 young adults with learning disabilities). The aim was to spread the message further.
8. 14th November 2012 – Introduced the Estonian Rural Network activities related to Social Farming in an International Conference "Social Entrepreneurship – New Possibilities for Rural Areas", Trakai, Lithuania
9. 28th - 29th November 2012 – Thematic day about social farming together with a study visit to Estonia.
10. A Social farming web page was established at www.maainfo.ee/hooletalud where we collected different information materials including articles, events, surveys etc.

Main results/benefits

The activity on social farming carried out by the NSU has enabled the identification of a group of people who take part in the events and are willing to develop this topic further. Thanks to these activities the current situation of social farming in Estonia has also been identified. A total of 200 people have participated in the social farming events and study tours - quite a large number as social farming isn't well known in Estonia.

The leading Estonian newspaper on rural life "Maaleht" has written numerous articles about the social farming study tours and thematic days organised by the Estonian NSU.

The NSU translated 17 social farming project examples into Estonian which were collected during the social farming working group initiated by ENRD, so that everybody could read and understand them, and learn from other experiences. The projects' translation is available on:

<http://maainfo.ee/public/files/Ylevaade%20sotsiaalsest%20talupidamisest%20Euroopas.pdf>

Success factors

Examples of social farming were presented during every thematic day or study tour disseminating best practice stories in the area. As the theme of social farming is quite new in Estonia it can be difficult to involve new people.

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Organising study tours and thematic days involves a wider group of stakeholders enabling the NSU to create a good platform for cooperation and experience exchange.

Contribution of the NSU

All activities were organised by the NSU.

Contribution of the partners

The Central Association of Estonian Farmers, the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Social Affairs have contributed a lot to involve people in these activities including the distribution of information about social farming events and the research carried out.

The Estonian representative of the Central Association of Estonian Farmers is also a member of the European Economic and Social Committee, and is also taking part in the working group "Social Farming: Green care and social and health policies".

Additional information

n.a.

Pictures



Study trip to Finland 2012 - Ylitalon Alpakat Hämeenlinna, Farm that raises alpacas and lamas

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Social farming seminar in Jäneda 2011, discussion in working groups

Last Update

June 2013