

The aim of the project was to secure a supply of quality regional products in shops in small villages in the SPESSART LEADER area, and by so doing to develop shops' regional products offer and enhance their long-term sustainability.

 [Full project description](#) [1] (438.29 KB)



Project summary:

Village shops help to serve the needs of less mobile populations, such as senior citizens, and act as a meeting place for village communities. Selling agricultural products in the region in which they are produced saves CO₂ on transport and boosts acceptance and appreciation for domestic agriculture. However, many village shops in the SPESSART LEADER region are threatened by a lack of succession planning and decreasing demand for their existing product offer.

The aim of the project was to secure a supply of quality regional products in shops in small villages in the SPESSART LEADER area, and by so doing to develop shops into quality retailers for regional products, thus increasing the local shops' appeal. Working with local marketing and trade experts, the LAG established a network for village shops and regional producers. Shopkeepers were introduced at meetings to regional producers and received professional advice on assortment selection, regional products, shelf design and how to arrange products. A joint order catalogue was created, and delivery routes were coordinated to save CO₂.

This project has strengthened participating village shops, thus enhanced their economic efficiency and sustainability. It has also successfully brought together groups that previously worked independently and less efficiently than they do now. The approach can be applied to other European regions, making rural areas resilient to current and future challenges through well organised local supply of regional agricultural products.

Project results:

Ten village shops and around 20 producers, butchers and bakeries are now part of the network. Shopkeepers have enhanced their regional product range and learned in-store promotion and product placement.

Village shop employees are now fully informed about each product and can advise customers accordingly.

A survey of customers, carried out in cooperation with Fulda University of Applied Sciences, showed that customers' trust in regional agriculture and locally processed products has grown as a result of the project.

The project demonstrated that a regional products range plays a key role in increasing sales in village shops and therefore strengthens their economic viability. As a result, around 23 full-time jobs in the village shops in the SPESSART region have been preserved.

Business succession for three (soon four) shops has been secured.

The shops and producers network got media coverage, for example in the Spessart tourism magazine, at the Taste Festival or at a "Village Shop Day", a new promotional event in the Spessart LEADER region.

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Links

[1]
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