

HUNGARY

Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector

Location

Hajdúböszörmény

Programming period

2007-2013

Axis / Priority

Axis 1 & Axis 4

Measure

M112 – Young farmers,
M121 – Modernisation of
agricultural holdings,
M123 – Adding value to
agricultural products
LEADER

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 95 200*
EAFRD 40000 (M112), 5940
(LEADER), 13000 (M121),
9650 (M123)

Project duration*

JAN 2011 – JUL 2015

Project promoter

Individual farmer

Contact

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* All measures

A young farmer realised her dream to set up a farm in her hometown for breeding a local Hungarian swine using support from multiple RDP measures.

Summary

A young entrepreneur, Ms Zsóka Fekete, after her studies on animal product processing decided to set up her own farm breeding the native Hungarian swine breed, called Mangalica. RDP support from different measures was received following the different stages of the farm's development.



Initially setting up young farmers support was received and was used to buy land for growing fruits and vegetables. LEADER support helped buy some special machines, such as fruit and vegetable cleaner, fruit and vegetable slicing machine, etc. When livestock production started expanding the young farmer used farm modernisation support to obtain a tractor and a trailer. These were used on crop production which was used to feed the swine. Finally, to do food processing a series of different specialised machines (hydraulic filling machine, meat mincer, vacuum packaging machine etc.) were purchase by using support from measure "Adding value to agricultural products.

Results

Ms Zsóka created her own Mangalica livestock of more than 40 sows and 300 pigs, that is fed by her own and her father's organic forage.

The investment enabled the beneficiary to become self-employed and create 1 full-time job.

The farm has gain recognition and often it participates in events, exhibitions, professional conferences both at national and international levels.

The farm's products were awarded the Hajdu-Bihar County Quality Product Award and since 2013 the products won prizes on the National Mangalica Festivals.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ RDP support should be fully exploited as it significantly contributes in setting up a viable farm.
- ❑ It is important to gain some professional knowledge before start-up such a business.
- ❑ Cooperation is also key since without creating a professional network, participating in different events, festivals, etc. the farm hardly could have survived.
- ❑ Success requires a lot of personal investment and dedication.
- ❑ In this instance the beneficiary's family background and support contributed significantly to the success of this investment.

Context

Ms Zsóka Fekete studied at the Corvinus University of Budapest, Faculty of Food Science, where she obtained her MSc on animal product processing. After her studies she decided to move back to her hometown, Hajdúböszörmény, to realize her dream of setting up her own farm. Without any professional experience but based on her university knowledge and as a career entrant, she applied for support under the “Setting up of young farmers” measure. She started to build her farm near Hajdúböszörmény at Görbeháza. As a first step she bought land for growing fruits and vegetables. Later on, in 2012 she expanded her activities into animal husbandry as she wanted to breed the native Hungarian swine breed, called Mangalica.

Objectives

Ms Zsóka’s overall objective was to set up a complex farm that would produce according to the “From farm to fork” principle. More specifically she wanted to breed Mangalica swine in an integrated way from producing her own animal feed, create livestock from her own breeding stock, selling breeding and fattening pigs while also producing from her own animals her own high quality products. A further aim was to promote her Mangalica products more widely both in Hungary and abroad.

Activities

The development of the farm went through different phases and received support from different RDP measures.

In 2010, Ms Zsóka received support from the Young farmer measure (M112). The support received was used for buying land for fruit and vegetable production. Later on support LEADER support enabled her to buy some special machines, such as fruit and vegetable cleaner, fruit and vegetable slicing machine, etc.

In a second phase followed the animal breeding. For the investment to be successful it was important to have a pedigreed livestock, thus she contacted and became a member of the National Association of Mangalica Farmers. The Association has significantly supported her work. Initially the farm started with a stock of 20 blond Mangalica sows and due to the ongoing stock expansion,

today it has a stock of 300 pigs.



In order to produce quality meat it is very important to give the most appropriate feed and provide the best living conditions to the animals. For this reason, she provides part of the forage to her animals from her own production while the rest is bought from her father and it is certified organic. The main forages produced on the farm are barley, wheat, triticale, peas, sunflower, green fodder: alfalfa, pumpkin, etc. In relation to the crop production Ms Zsóka used RDP support under measure “Modernization of holdings” (M121) to buy a small tractor and a trailer.

The farm processes the Mangalica meat into a wide range of products using traditional “Hajdúsági” recipes. Products include fresh and smoked sausage, chitterlings, different bacons, greaves, lard and greaves creams, salami, different hams and she sell the products on fairs, local markets and national events. To do the food processing she needed a series of different specialised machines (hydraulic filling machine, meat mincer, vacuum packaging machine etc.) which were purchase by using support from measure “Adding value to agricultural products” (M123).



Main Results

RDP support enabled Ms Zsóka to create her own Mangalica livestock of more than 40 sows and 300 pigs, that is fed by her own and her father's organic forage.

Ms Zsóka became self-employed and created 1 full-time job. The livestock is constantly expanding and there is potential to further develop the farm's product range and increase the sales of pigs and products.

Due to the successful cooperation and active participation in NGOs and professional organizations, Ms Zsóka is invited to more and more events, exhibitions, professional conferences both at national and international levels.

The farm's products were awarded the Hajdu-Bihar County Quality Product Award which is used as a label on the meat products. Since 2013 the products won prizes on the National Mangalica Festivals.

The marketing activity is continuously developing; the farm developed a new website, new logo and a new product range.

The farm also offers the opportunity to different students to visit and gain some first-hand experience on animal husbandry, animal welfare and food processing.

Key lessons

One of the most important lessons from this success story is that the funding opportunities should be taken advantage of, since it is great support towards creating a viable farm. The beneficiary's studies helped her significantly to set up and run the farm, however, it is important to gain some professional knowledge before start-up such a business.

Cooperation is a key success factor. Without creating a professional network, participating in different events, festivals, fairs and exhibitions, the farm hardly could have survived. Despite the fact that raising awareness activities on the high quality meat products took a lot of time and energy, it was the only way to create a steady clientele.

Success requires a lot of personal investment since dedication and love are needed. Ms Zsóka is still at the beginning of her business, and there are many things to improve, however she has already achieved her basic goal that is to be able to build-up her dream farm.

It is very important to emphasize that without her family background, without her grandfather, her father and her mother the farm couldn't have been created.



Additional sources of information

n/a