

NETHERLANDS

Diversify the
rural economy

Location

Molenaarsgraaf

Programming period

2007 - 2013

Axis / Priority

Axis 3 – The quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy

Measure

M311 - Diversification into non-agricultural activities

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 123 000

EAFRD 46 000

National/Region. 46 000

Private 31 000

Project duration

FEB 2012 – MAR 2014

Project promoter

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A young farmer made his business less depended on agriculture by establishing with EAFRD support an agricultural day care centre.

Summary

Farmers need to develop their business and there are several ways to do so. Some farmers enlarge their farming scale, but in the rural area of the Alblasserwaard for several reasons this was not an option. The future is in a multifunctional agriculture which serves social, environmental and consumer needs.



One such example is young farmer Matthijs Baan. Mr Baan was looking for ways to extend his agricultural business. He was seeking for a way to diversify his activities and make his business less dependent on agriculture. After research he found that establishing a professional Agricultural Day Care Centre was a brand new opportunity in the area. His approach would be unique in the region. Thus, having also professional advice by an architect he converted one of the farm buildings into the Centre. Aside the centre he also designed a green and inspiring outdoors playground.

Results

- The investment helped to a successful start-up of new business on the field of multifunctional agriculture in the area.
- About 20 jobs were created.
- The project was so successful that a second location was realised.
- Indirectly, the establishment of the centre helped increase the participation of women on the labour market by creating good facilities for their children.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ There is a need for high level quality services to be supplied by Day Care Centres. When a decision is to be taken to develop such a service it will be needed to *“think big and professionalize the idea”*.
- ❑ First, the beneficiary thought to serve local families. But actually it were the citizens who found the centre. They preferred a rural environment for their children and they made the conscious choice for an Agricultural Day Care Centre. For the local families the rural area is common sense and they valued an Agricultural Day Care Centre less than the people from the city.