

AUSTRIA

Enhancing farm viability and competitiveness

Location

Hintenbachalm

Programming period

2007 - 2013

Axis / Priority

Axis 4 – LEADER

Measure

M123 - Adding value to agricultural and forestry products & M411 - Competitiveness

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 957 000

RDP 151 969*

(*Total RDP support including EU & national contribution)

Project duration

2010 – 2011

Project promoter

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An Austrian farmer used EAFRD funding to build a cheese processing facility on an Alpine pasture offering tours and events to learn about cheese and Alpine farming.

Summary

Over half of dairy cows in Austria's Tyrol region spend the summer on Alpine pastures. But only 9 % of the milk is processed into cheese in these areas. The project aimed to create a cheese processing facility to give visitors an insight into the cheese-making process and work of an Alpine farmer.



The project used EAFRD funding to develop a cheese processing facility, while educational activities are organised on site such as tours, tastings and day-to-day activities. The funding was also used for a ripening cellar and to set up the tasting room. Courses are also organised.

Results

Creation of a cheese processing facility, ripening cellar and tasting room on an Alpine pasture.

During summer, 100 000 litres of milk are processed into 10 tonnes of cheese or 1 100 cheese slices. 70 % is sold to hikers or as holiday souvenirs, 30 % to hotels.

The cheeses have won awards.

Cheese tours allow visitors to taste regional specialities and learn about the process.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Cooperation with food and tourism organisations is important for marketing the dairy facility.

Context

Alpine pastures are an essential part of agricultural production in the Berne region. By supplying high-quality food such as milk, butter, cheese and meat, the areas make a significant contribution to farmers' income. Pastures are also an attractive, well-kept cultural landscape that is an important driving force for tourism.

Tyrol is the state that has most of the pastures with dairy cows. More than 56 % of the dairy cows in Tyrol spend the summer on alpine pastures. However, only 9% of the milk produced on the Tyrol pastures is processed directly on site to alpine cheese. In addition, taverns are present on only 13 % of the alpine pastures.

For the area, it is important to produce directly on the pasture, increase products' added value and step up marketing of farm produce. Summer tourism is also key and therefore better cooperation between agriculture and tourism is of great importance.

Objectives

The Hintenbachalm is located at an altitude of 1 140m and is part of the mountain group Hintenbach-Schöntal in the conservation area of Spertental. About 50 dairy cows are kept on the alpine pasture over the summer.

The aim of the project was to construct a cheese processing facility on the pasture ('Kasplatzl') to give visitors an insight into how milk is processed into butter and cheese and the daily work of an Alpine dairy farmer.

The products can be consumed directly on the alpine pasture. In addition to processing the milk from their own cows, the project organises educational events such as cheese courses and day-to-day activities to do with cheese and pastures.

The project's objective was to provide visitors with healthy nutrition and an insight into the production and processing of a regional product.

Activities

They built the premises for the 'Cheese tour' in 2009, including a dairy site and cellar for ripening. They also set

up a tasting room to allow the products to be consumed on the alpine pasture. Courses are also held here. In addition, they marketed the products for example through greater cooperation with tourism associations.

The cheese factory is open from May to October. The Alpine farmer can be seen at work. Hygiene rules prohibit visits inside the cheese factory but visitors can get interesting insights into the art of cheese-making on the 'Cheese tours'.

On this tour, you can taste the different Kasplatzl creations including homemade cheese, home-made bacon and sausage specialties, fresh almond, natural dairy products and bread.



Main Results

During the summer, some 100,000 litres of milk are processed into 10 tonnes of cheese or 1,100 cheese slices. The Bergkäse (Rettensteiner) cheese received the gold medal at the Käseolympiade in Galtür and the sliced cheese (Hintenbacher) earned the silver medal.

More than 70% of all cheese products from the Hintenbachalm area are sold in the Kasplatzl, to hikers for food or as holiday souvenirs.

The remaining 30% are sold to the hotel industry in the village.

Key lessons

Cooperation with food and tourism organisations is important for marketing the products of the dairy facility.

Additional sources of information

www.rm-tirol.at/projekte/einzel/projekt/alm-schaukaeserei-hintenbachalm-kirchberg-1.html

www.hotel-elisabeth-tirol.com/kaeserei-kasplatzl-kitzbuehel.html

www.almwirtschaft.com/Almwirtschaft-Tirol/allgemeines-zur-almwirtschaft-in-tirol.html