

NETHERLANDS

Farm's performance, restructuring & modernisation

Location
Putten

Programming period
2014 – 2020

Priority
P2 – Competitiveness

Measure
M16 – Cooperation

Funding
Total budget 130 298 (EUR)
EAFRD 74 503 (EUR)
National/Regional 4 748 (EUR)
Private / own 51 047 (EUR)

Project duration
2021 to 2022

Project promoter
Valleivarken

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A pig meat producing short supply chain developed a marketing strategy to strengthen its brand and increase demand for its high-quality products.

Summary

‘Vallei Varken’ (Valley pig) is a multiagency partnership (between pig farmers, arable farmers, a veterinarian, a feed supplier, a slaughterhouse, and a supermarket company that operates a very short supply chain to sustainably produce high welfare pig meat. In order to raise awareness and stimulate demand, ‘Vallei Varken’ used EAFRD funds to design and implement a marketing strategy to promote their brand among consumers and other pig farmers.



Project Results

The project has so far enabled this short supply chain to implement an effective marketing strategy and to make progress in promoting its brand.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ The municipality played a key role in simplifying project implementation, providing pre-financing, and managing the administrative part of the RDP support.
- ❑ The administrative requirements and deadlines during RDP project implementation can be cumbersome. It is hoped that the shift towards a result-oriented CAP will simplify these processes.

Context

A majority of consumers believe that sustainably produced meat is expensive and only produced on small, traditional farms. The Vallei Varken (Valley Pig) is a partnership between pig farmers, arable farmers, a veterinarian, a feed supplier, a slaughterhouse, and a supermarket company, who joined forces to create a very short supply chain for sustainably produced, high welfare pig meat.

Earlier RDP financed projects enabled Vallei Varken producers to improve their animal welfare standards over the last 10-15 years (using blockchain technology to monitor the animals throughout their life), increase efficiency across the entire production process, and build a client network of 44 supermarkets.

However, demand driven production is a central feature of this short supply chain and demand for quality, high welfare meat remains low. This project set out to increase demand and also to encourage more farmers to produce meat according to similar standards.

Objectives

The goal of this project is to increase Vallei Varken's brand visibility and highlight the fact that healthy, sustainable and locally produced food can also be affordable.

Activities

Development of a marketing plan

- i. Identification of specific target groups, including partner supermarkets, catering entrepreneurs, local shops, and consumers.
- ii. Selection of brand themes.
- iii. Development of a consistent visual identity and core message: communicating farmers' stories and bringing 'the modern farm reality' closer to consumers.
- iv. Rebranding and updating the brand's website.
- v. Preparation of a marcomms strategy (multiple online and offline channels over a set period).

Implementation of the marketing plan

The marketing campaign follows four steps: A) make the Vallei Varken brand known, B) raise consumers' interest, C) stimulate consumers' desire for the product, and D) promote the product.

This involves the following actions:

- i. Start an online marketing campaign, generate and monitor the data.
- ii. Develop information and advertising (printed) materials for sales spots and events. Networking at four organised events (e.g. tasting events, workshops, company visits, etc.).
- iii. Develop a new Vallei Varken product.
- iv. Provide marketing training to the pig farmers of Vallei Varken.
- v. Measure the effects of the campaign throughout and prepare monthly reports.

A growing demand will motivate more farmers to produce meat according to the Vallei Varken quality standards. To support this, communication within the wider farming community is very important.

Main results

The project is still running at the time of writing. Nevertheless, the pig farmers of Vallei Varken have already gone through a process which helped them to further develop their product and brand concept and to better understand the needs of consumers and supermarkets. This RDP funded project has, so far, enabled this short supply chain to implement an effective marketing strategy and to make progress in specific brand promotion.

Key lessons

In strengthening the brand of a local supply chain, it is important to reflect on and gain multiple insights into the existing business model. It would have been beneficial if a marketing expert had been involved earlier in the process as the project plan would have been developed with more emphasis on this critical aspect.

In this short supply chain, the municipality played a key role in simplifying the project implementation and managing the administrative part of the RDP support. It also helped with pre-financing so that the liquidity of the farmers remained healthy.

The administrative requirements and deadlines during RDP project implementation can be cumbersome. It is hoped that the shift towards a result-oriented CAP will simplify these processes.

Additional sources of information

n/a