

AUSTRIA

Implementing Local Development Strategies

Location

St. Martin im Mühlkreis

Programming period

2007 - 2013

Axis / Priority

Axis 4 – LEADER

Measure

M311b & M413

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 305 700

EAFRD 88 500*

(* total RDP funding - EU & regional)

Project duration

2009 – 2013

Project promoter

LAG Donau-Böhmerwald,
Andrea und Jürgen
Enzenhofer

Contact

Andrea und Jürgen
Enzenhofer

juergen.enzenhofer@aon.at

Website

www.xn--reittherapie-bhbl-g3bb.at/

An Austrian farm used EAFRD funding to convert the holding into a horse-assisted therapy centre for children and adults with special needs.

Summary

Andrea Enzenhofer, who studied horse-assisted therapy, wanted to convert her conventional farm into a therapy centre. The development would create local employment opportunities and social care for children and adults with special needs. The farm also works with local partners such as schools, kindergartens and specialists.



The farm used the EAFRD funding to create a barrier-free riding centre, purchase therapy equipment and launch an internet homepage. They built a multi-person elevator from the riding centre to the living area. The riding centre is designed to allow movement-restricted children to be hoisted on to the horses by straps.

Results

Conversion of a conventional farm into a horse-assisted therapy centre offering hippotherapy, ergotherapy, curative pedagogy and vaulting.

45 people can be looked after each week.

8 therapists are employed on the farm.

Partnerships have been established with local schools, kindergartens, an agricultural institute and specialists as well as facilities for the care of people with special needs.

Lessons & Recommendations

- Andrea Enzenhofer was always self confident and determined that her concept would work.
- The family supported their vision, while her husband helped with his construction company and his contacts with skilled craftsmen.



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Context

The horse therapy centre Bühübl is a pioneer in the field of nature-based social care. By offering social services on farms, new job opportunities are created as well as helping to develop the farm.

The farm began by offering a 'school on the farm' programme in 2006. Andrea Enzenhofer, who studied for a diploma in special-needs education and horse-assisted therapy, had the goal of working with children with special-needs.

They gained full ownership of the farm as a family business, as a place where children could experience nature with all their senses.

Objectives

The Bühübl farm in Sankt Martin im Mühlkrei in Austria, supported by LEADER, integrates social services in an innovative way. The newly-built horse therapy centre offers barrier-free therapies for children, adolescents and adults with special needs.

The aim of the project is to combine medicine, pedagogy and sport through: hippotherapy for people with impairments, therapeutic pedagogic vaulting for children with special needs (e.g. behavioural problems, learning difficulties, emotional and social integration difficulties), acrobatics and gymnastics on horseback.

Activities

The horse-assisted therapy farm Bühübl opened its doors in 2012. They needed to make considerable investments, because the holding, which was previously farmed in a conventional manner, had to be adapted for the disabled. The funding supported the creation of a barrier-free riding centre, the purchase of therapy equipment and the launch of an internet homepage.

They built a multi-person elevator leading down from the riding hall into the living area. The riding hall is designed to allow movement-restricted children to be hoisted on to horses by straps. The walls are decorated with the riding tracks with numbers and letters, but also with soft toys and coloured cloths. The doors are wide and each room is fully accessible.

Main Results

The horse-assisted therapy centre Bühübl is now been and financed by health insurance funds, which cover rehabilitation. In addition to hippotherapy, the farm also offers ergotherapy, curative pedagogy and vaulting.

The farm has six therapy horses, which have a completed pacing training (Tellington Touch) by Andrea Enzenhofer over multiple years, making them quiet and receptive to the child's character.

Eight therapists are employed at the farm, offering flexible part-time employment opportunities for women. Currently, 45 clients can be looked after each week.

Since 2013, the Bühübl farm has also been a training centre for the agricultural training institute for work with horses. Other partners include: regional health insurance funds, specialists, district management, schools and kindergartens as well as facilities for the care of people with special needs.

Key lessons

Andrea Enzenhofer was always sure her concept would work. The family supported their vision, her husband helped with his construction company and his contacts with skilled craftsmen.



"We wanted to give people with special needs the opportunity to take control of their daily lives, to forget everyday problems and to overcome their impairment"

Andrea Enzenhofer, horse-assisted therapist

Additional sources of information

www.land-oberoesterreich.gv.at/126581.htm