

CZECH REPUBLIC

Entry of skilled/younger farmers

Location
Starovičky

Programming period
2014 – 2020

Priority
P2 – Competitiveness

Measure
M06 – Farm & business
development

Funding (EUR)
Total budget 90 070
EAFRD 22 275
National/Regional 22725
Private 45 070

Project duration
2017 – 2019

Project promoter
Lavandia s.r.o.

Contact
biza@hands.cz

Website
www.levandulezmoravy.cz

A young farmer with reduced mobility used support from the Rural Development Programme (RDP) to expand his organic lavender farm and create jobs for people with disabilities.

Summary

Lavandia is an organic lavender farm located in a picturesque wine growing region of South Moravia. As a wheelchair user himself, the farmer is committed to helping people with disabilities.



The main objective of this project was to establish a complete lavender production process – from the growing and processing of the herb, to the manufacture and marketing of the final products. The project provided the necessary funds to purchase a tractor and a distillation unit for lavender oil extraction, both adapted for operation by people with disabilities. The farmer also purchased land for cultivation.

Results

Thanks to this RDP investment project the farm employs a total of 12 disabled people.

The farmer purchased machinery and equipment which helped to establish business efficiency and limit strenuous manual work.

Before the project, the farmer did not have enough reserve funds to make investments. Currently, he can make new investments using the profits generated by the farm.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ CAP support can be used to help ensure that no one is left behind during the development of rural Europe.
- ❑ Climate-friendly economic development/diversification opportunities exist in niche markets for organic plant-based products.
- ❑ Circular economy and climate action outcomes can be integrated within farm development business plans. For example, in 2020 the farmer started producing fuel pellets from the residues of used plants as a new investment. This supports local supply chains for renewable energy fuel.

Context

Stanislav Bíza established the Lavandia Lavender Farm in 2014. Stanislav is a young farmer who uses a wheelchair because of an accident that limited his mobility. His goal was to set up a farm that would manage the complete lavender production process – from growing and processing the herb, through to the packaging and marketing of the final products. At the same time, he wanted to employ people who face similar difficulties in their life.

In 2014 he planted more than 40 000 medical lavender plants on a field located in the small village of Starovičky, near Hustopeče and the Lednice-Valtice area.

Stanislav grows medical lavender without using chemicals. The gentle processing of the plants enables them to produce very high-quality flowers. These are used in the production of food as well as in products that are for decoration, relaxation, or cosmetic use.

Objectives

The investment project's overall objective was to develop and expand the farm, strengthen its market position, and provide employment for people who are often excluded from the jobs market.

Activities

The project provided the young farmer with the necessary funds to modernise the farm's production process so that it can be easily managed by people with disabilities. With this in mind, all newly purchased machinery and equipment were adapted for operation by disabled people. This included a modified tractor to make work easier and a distillation unit for lavender oil extraction, which is a valuable raw material for further processing.

The young farmer also purchased land. The land acquisition allowed him to gain long-term business confidence and avoid the risk of uncertainty that may be involved when investing in agri-food projects on leased land.

Main results

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The farmer was able to secure business partnerships with other organic farmers in the region. Indicatively, the farm cooperates with Sonnentor, a producer of organic teas.

The farm has become a popular destination in the region, especially in the summer months when the lavender is in bloom. Various events take place on the farm including excursions, workshops, and weddings. The farm has hosted field trips organized by the National Rural Network, as well as seminars on social farming in the Czech Republic. Visitors are able to buy the farm's products on site.



Key lessons

CAP support can be used to help ensure that no one is left behind during the development of rural Europe.

Climate-friendly economic development/diversification opportunities exist in niche markets for organic plant-based products.

Circular economy and climate action outcomes can be integrated within farm development business plans. For example, in 2020 the farmer started producing fuel pellets from the residues of used plants as a new investment. This supports local supply chains for renewable energy fuel.

"I am really happy that we managed to combine farming with the production of final products made from our own crops and through the employment of disabled persons. It is not always easy, and I really appreciate that EU funding is available to support us."

Stanislav Bíza

Additional sources of information

n/a