

DENMARK

Local development

Location

Hundested

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P6 – Social inclusion and local development

Measure

M19 – CLLD/LEADER

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 277 467

EAFRD 53 691

National/Regional 13 423

Private 76 125

Other 134 228

Project duration

2015 – 2017

Project promoter

Mad og Mennesker ApS

Contact

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Website

n/a

A project to shorten the value chain from the farm to the consumer, to increase the availability of high-quality, local foods and to increase local business profitability.

Summary

This project enabled the micro social enterprise Mad og Mennesker ApS (Food & People) to become established at Grønnessegaard Manor. The purpose of the initiative, and the company itself, is to increase awareness about the local food products available in Halsnæs, while creating local employment through socio-economic and outreach/inclusion activities.



The project consisted of renovating an empty agricultural building and establishing facilities - for food handling, processing, storage and distribution - which can be used collectively by local producers. An important part of the initiative is the demonstration and dissemination of knowledge regarding sustainable food production and dietary health.

Results

The Grønnessegaard communal processing facility was set up, ensuring that European standards for food safety can be adhered to by small local producers

The development, marketing, processing and distribution of two innovative, locally-sourced products (the Halsnæs food box and the Halsnæs Christmas box) is all managed at the Grønnessegaard facility

Local producers – who would not otherwise have the capacity to operate in this way – now have the advantage of a professional web shop and showroom / farm shop to facilitate the sale of their products.

Eight months after the completion of the project, the social enterprise has created one fixed work position as well as 2-3 flexible work roles.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ The project's success was dependent on cooperation with the producers and on their willingness to put their goods on sale in the showroom, in the web shop and to provide fruit and vegetables for the Halsnæs food boxes. It was therefore crucial that Grønnessegaard succeeded in reaching out to and entering into partnership with a wide range of local producers.
- ❑ The key to their success was to build on existing networks of food producers. Joining forces with existing networks provided a trusted point of entry, increased the project's credibility and ensured that the right target group was reached.

Context

Grønnessegaard manor, was originally constructed by J. F. Classen with the purpose of supplying food to the workers of a cannon foundry and gun powder mill in the nearby town of Frederiksvær. The building is centrally located in Halsnæs; near to the Kongernes Nordsjælland (Royal North Sealand) National Park and within range of important public walking and cycling paths.

In 2013, a major renovation and revitalization project was drawn up for the manor, with the aim of addressing local social challenges – principally that of the social and professional inclusion of vulnerable people.

An initial subsidy application was submitted to the “Realdania” national fund, entitled “Grønnessegaard – A local catalyst for food products and employment in Halsnæs”. The project was divided into four phases; of which the establishment of the “Food & People” social enterprise constituted phase one. The other phases of the overall project set out objectives concerning the establishment of primary facilities such as a slaughter house and flour mill.

Objectives

shorten the value chain from the farm to the consumer, to increase the availability of high-quality local foods and to increase local business profitability through two sub-objectives

1. Capacity building in the food sector by offering skills training in cooperation with local actors; thereby contributing to the creation of local jobs by developing new professional skills.
2. Establishing food processing, distribution, storage and marketing facilities with a particular focus on local, high-quality food, animal welfare and sustainability in both food production and processing (thus promoting sustainable growth and development amongst new and established local micro enterprises).

In addition, the project included a vision for increasing the attractiveness of the area for visitors and tourists by establishing facilities for communication and demonstration activities. As the Grønnessegaard estate is the only protected building complex in the area, it holds significant cultural and historical value for the local community and has done so for approx. 250 years.



Activities

The existing industrial kitchen and the out-of-use but protected cowshed at Grønnessegaard, provided the basis for the establishment of a collective food processing, storage and distribution unit. The project involved upgrading the building's existing kitchen to meet European standards for food safety. It also supported the physical renovation of the building and the installation of the facilities needed to perform the company's demonstration and dissemination activities. Finally, the subsidy covered the costs of marketing the initiative and establishing an online store.

In summary, the project allowed for the following investments in food processing:

- Setting up facilities for the processing of vegetable and animal raw materials in line with approved food safety standards.
- Creating facilities for cleaning, washing, sorting and packing vegetables, fruit and berries.
- Establishing a warehouse and a showroom, which allow for the direct sale of local foods.

These new facilities provided the basis for new activities at Grønnessegaard, which included:

- The sustainable production of food for locals, day tourists, holiday home visitors and sailors;
- Pop-up restaurants with different themes;
- Food workshops and food markets;
- Visiting days for companies, institutions, schools etc. that may include visits to the operations at Grønnessegaard and other local producers;
- Catering, including the delivery of local food to local eateries;

- The development of new sales channels covering the needs of children and the elderly, possibly through public-private cooperation;
- Participation in local and regional food markets and events;
- Functioning as a local heritage attraction: telling the story of Grønnessegaard's significance for the development of the Halsnæs municipality; its connection to the historic town of Hundested; the establishment of the cannon foundry and the gun powder mill in Frederiksværk; etc.

Main Results

The direct results of the project were:

- 1) a functional kitchen, that meets European standards for food safety, made available to local producers;
- 2) The development, marketing, processing and distribution of two innovative, locally-sourced products (the Halsnæs food box and the Halsnæs Christmas box) is all managed at the Grønnessegaard facility
- 3) Local producers – who would not otherwise have the capacity to operate in this way – now have the advantage of a professional web shop and showroom / farm shop to facilitate the sale of their products. The project has also enabled participation in regional projects with a focus on the processing and marketing of locally produced foods.

Thanks to its particular focus on meaningful employment for vulnerable people, the social enterprise has created one regular work position as well as 2-3 flexible / “gentle” work roles. As sales improve, the project is expected to create 3-5 more jobs amongst local food producers.

Furthermore, the project has established an attractive common platform/site for presenting and experiencing local food and, due to its location, is expected to improve the natural and cultural experience of visiting the local area. With this in mind, there are plans to further expand the company's activities with the addition of accommodation facilities.



Key lessons

At the heart of the project lies the purpose of increasing the availability of high-quality, local produce, so this - now realised - is the true measure of the success of the project.

The project's success was dependent on cooperation with the producers and on their willingness to put their goods on sale in the showroom, in the web shop and to provide a variety of fruit and vegetables for the Halsnæs food boxes. It is precisely the presence of local producers - going about their work and running daily activities - at the manor that creates the energetic melting pot and buzzing common marketplace that the brand wants to be known for. It was therefore crucial that Grønnessegaard succeeded in reaching out to and entering into partnership with a wide range of local producers.

The key to their success was to build on existing networks of food producers such as Pantry Halsnæs (SpisekammerHalsnæs) and Taste Northern Zealand (SmagpåNordsjælland. The Danish authorities offer a wide range of business development support opportunities to micro-companies, but as a result they tend to screen out announcements that contain calls for participation in already-supported projects. Joining forces with existing networks provided a trusted point of entry, increased the project's credibility and ensured that the right target group was reached. Furthermore, it minimized the effort required to maintain the network and minimized the risk of the cooperation falling apart due to a loss of regular contact and/or a lack of common identity.

Additional sources of information

n/a