

ESTONIA

Biodiversity's restoration, preservation & enhancement

Location

Määra

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P4 – Ecosystems
management

Measure

M04 – Investments in
physical assets

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 21 812.8

EAFRD 16 359.6

National/Regional 5 453.2

Project duration

2016 – 2017

Project promoter

Kloostrimetsa Fideikomiss
Trust Company

Contact

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Website

<https://kloostrimetsa.eu/et>

A non-productive investment for restoring farm stone walls brings multiple practical, environmental and heritage benefits.

Summary

Stone walls are an important part of the Estonian landscape heritage. In the past, they were used as borders and fences, but they were also beneficial for the environment as they provided a habitat for many lichens and plants.



The Korjuse-Vanapere farm, located at Määra in northern Estonia, has been cultivated for more than 300 years. Its produce is sold under the brand Kloostrimetsa. The farm has many old stone walls that were in a very poor condition. Some had collapsed over time, others were overgrown with plants or covered by soil. Some parts had even been demolished on purpose. The farm owners decided to apply for support from the Estonian Rural Development Programme (RDP) to restore the old stone walls and benefit from both their productive and environmental functions.

Results

The current project financed the restoration of 1 327 metres of stone walls. Previous projects had financed the restoration of 1 243 metres. In total, 2 670 metres of stone walls have been restored.

The farm's landscape has been visually improved.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Support from the RDP has been a great motivator to restore the stone walls. The investment would have been delayed if the farmers had needed to use only their own financing for restoration. Following on from the project funding, however, the farmers have restored some stone walls without RDP support, and they plan to continue doing so.

Context

Stone walls are an important part of the Estonian landscape heritage and each region has different types. Stonewalls are of practical use since they are used to define plot borders and to fence in livestock, and at the same time they provide a habitat for many lichens and plants.

The Korjuse-Vanapere farm is located at Määra in northern Estonia and has been cultivated for more than 300 years. The farm has beef cattle, apple orchards and plantations of chokeberry, sea buckthorn and blackcurrant, as well as a vegetable garden. Since 1999, the farm has been stockpiling and selling birch sap in early spring, and in recent years, maple syrup. Agroecological farm practices aimed at causing minimum disturbance are applied, and in addition, the farm produces and consumes solar energy. The farm sells its produce under the trademark Kloostrimetsa.

The farm is located in an area where there are lots of beef cattle breeders, so the herds need to be kept separate. Stone walls have been used for this purpose for generations and they are perfectly suited to the local environment. The farm had many old, ruined stone walls, some of which had collapsed over time or been demolished on purpose, others were overgrown with plants or covered by soil.

Objectives

The objective of this project was to restore a feature of the local landscape, i.e. the old stone walls, and benefit from both their productive and environmental functions.

Activities

Support from the Estonian RDP for non-productive investments enabled the farm to restore a significant part of its damaged stone walls.

Main results

The current project financed the restoration of 1 327 metres of stone walls. Previous projects had financed the restoration of 1 243 metres, so in total, 2 670 metres of stone walls have been restored.

The farm's landscape has been visually improved.

Key lessons

Support from the RDP has provided great motivation to renovate the stone walls. The investment would have been delayed if the farmers had been confined to using only their own financing to restore them. Following on from the project, the farmers have restored some stone walls without RDP support, and they plan to continue with these restorations.

Additional sources of information

www.facebook.com/kloostrimetsa/