

NETHERLANDS

Farm performance, restructuring & modernisation

Location

BG Diessen

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority P2 - Competitiveness

Measure

M16 - Cooperation

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 529 378

EAFRD 117 412

National/Regional 117 412

Private 294 554

Project duration

2016 – 2019

Project promoter

De Laarhoeve BV

Partners

Akkerbouwbedrijf

Verschuure CV

Aldo BV

Cooperation Heibloem

ZLTO

Helicon

Contact

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Website

www.delaarhoeve.nl

A farm employing people with special needs, set up a process line and an experimental kitchen where non-commercial agricultural produce can be turned into new products.

Summary

A farm employing persons with mental health issues, used RDP support to promote a new business model.



De Laarhoeve

The farm set up a new processing line to work with non commercial agricultural produce and a professional kitchen that can be used safely by persons with disabilities. This creates a space where cooperating farmers, research institutions and the farm's employees can experiment and develop new products.

Results

Cooperation was established between farmers and an institution for education in nutrition and technology who use the farm's premises to develop new products which contain less sugar, less salt, taste good and have high nutritional value.

The first products developed are called "Kromme Pollepel" and are now on the market.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ A lot of detailed information is needed for the RDP application. It can be difficult to foresee all of the requirements to receive RDP support and documentation when working on an innovative concept.
- ❑ Building cooperation takes time and it is vital for beneficiaries to invest in good relationships before starting a project.

Context

De Laarhoeve is a care farm employing people with mental issues who cannot enter the labour market. The care farm is open to the public, the aim being to encourage communication between the farm's employees and visitors.

For a number of years, **De Laarhoeve** has processed agricultural products that are not suitable for the market. Due to a different shape, colour or ripeness, lower quality products are usually processed into animal feed, or discarded. However, more and more farmers and growers want to process their lower quality produce, in order to reduce food waste. This can be done at the care farm. In addition, farmers have the choice to market the final products themselves, or sell them under the De Laarhoeve label.

Objectives

The objective of this project was to establish a work place (processing line and kitchen) that would allow the development of a new business model.

The market for traditional local products is highly competitive. For both farmers and De Laarhoeve, it was therefore a challenge to create new products and open up to new markets.

Activities

RDP support was used to design and construct a high-tech processing line that enables employees to process products that are unsuitable for the fresh market.

The project set up an ultra-modern kitchen, which is used to try out new recipes. All its equipment was selected because it is safe for the care farm's employees to use.

The farm also set up a network of farmers, educational organisations, marketers, cooks, logistics providers and retailers.

Main results

Cooperation was established between the 'Helicon institution on Education for Nutrition & Technology' and three farmers who want to process their non-commercial vegetables, fruits and eggs. They used the farm's premises to develop tasty products with less sugar, less salt and a high nutritional value.

The first developed products called "Kromme Pollepel" are available.



Key lessons

A lot of detailed information is needed for the RDP application. However, it was difficult to anticipate all the support requirements and documentation for such an innovative concept. Once the project was approved there was less flexibility to adapt things during implementation. Finding the balance between an overall project plan and the detailed operational activity plan, which will enable the beneficiary to adapt is key.

Building cooperation takes time and it is vital for beneficiaries to invest in good relationships before they start a project.

In the Netherlands, the national government has decentralised social support to local authorities. However, private companies are often used to deliver the necessary services.

"In this project we are not only working with chefs on new products, but also on financial aspects, such as cost calculations, design and marketing of products, and finding access to retailers. In particular, finding new sales channels is a challenge. This makes it a real cooperation project and not only with the project partners"

Marjon Krol (ZLTO Farmers association)

Additional sources of information

<https://twitter.com/laarhoeve>

www.facebook.com/De-Laarhoeve-553308948135817