

Agnieszka Piętka - construction of a milk processing plant

Increasing the production capacity of an educational farm producing organic cheese in Poland.

EAFRD-funded projects

Location: Kolonia Pogorzel, Poland

Programming period: 2014-2020

Priority: P2 - Competitiveness

Focus Area: Farm performance, restructuring & modernisation

Measures: M04 - Investments in physical assets

Funding:	Total budget	500 000 (PLN)
	EAFRD	130 000 (PLN)
	Private/own funds	370 000 (PLN)

Timeframe: 2017 to 2020

Project promoter: Sery Zagrodowe Agnieszka Piętka

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SWOJSKIE WYROBY MLECZNE
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Summary

Agnieszka Piętka's educational farm is a place where science, environmental protection and organic cheese production are combined. Located in the village of Kolonia Pogorzel, in Poland, the farm provides interactive education for those interested in organic farming, animal husbandry and the production of healthy, organic food products. The farm bases its organic farming and organic cheese production on ethical principles such as respect for animals, environmental protection and sustainability. The operations of the business are firmly based on the values of social responsibility and concern for animal welfare. CAP investment support was used to improve the on-farm cheese processing facilities by constructing a small milk processing plant to produce larger quantities in a more economical manner.

Project results

- > Thanks to the construction of the new milk processing plant, five people, including Ms. Agnieszka and her husband Dariusz, have secured their jobs.
- > The farm can now supply 18 healthy food stores located in Warsaw, Otwock and Garwolin.

Key lessons and recommendations

- > Before starting such an investment project, it is important to be aware of all legal requirements, regulations and safety and health standards that must be met.
- > Adequate personnel with experience in milk processing are needed to carry out the production process, ensuring that proper sanitary and hygiene conditions are met.
- > It is necessary to develop a strong marketing strategy to reach customers and gain their trust.

Context

Agnieszka Piętka's educational farm is a place where science, environmental protection and organic production are practised. Located in the village of Kolonia Pogorzel, in Poland, the farm provides an interactive learning environment for those interested in organic farming, animal husbandry and the production of healthy, organic food products.



The farm is situated in a pollution-free setting with good access to natural resources. The milk from its 30 dairy cows, which are raised in line with organic farming principles, is processed into a wide range of products. This includes rennet, ripened, sour and cottage cheeses, natural yogurts, kefirs, butter and buttermilk. The cheese making process is executed in a traditional and organic manner. The farm is also engaged in promoting folk culture and cultivating local traditions.

Objectives

The main aim of this investment was to improve the on-farm cheese processing facilities by constructing a small milk processing plant. This investment would enable the farm to produce larger quantities of organic cheese in a more economical manner by saving time, human resources and energy consumption specifically during the pasteurisation process.

Activities

The following activities were implemented:

- Planning and conducting market research. The potential demand for organic cheese in the area was assessed and a business plan was drawn up. This included an analysis of competitors, potential customers, raw material suppliers and respective operating costs.
- Planning the site requirements in accordance with local regulations and sanitary standards.
- Obtaining permissions. Appropriate permits and approvals required for the construction and operation of the cheese production facility were obtained. Consultations with local regulatory authorities were undertaken to ensure compliance with food, safety, hygiene and environmental regulations.
- Constructing the milk processing plant. It included spaces for production, storage, packaging and quality control. The plant is also equipped with the necessary ventilation, lighting and sanitary infrastructure. Through the implementation of the project, access to appropriate equipment and machinery was obtained, such as fermentation vats, cheese presses and milk tanks.
- Acquiring appropriate resources. Through the operation of the farm, milk was sourced from organically raised animals, suppliers of organic raw materials for fermentation cultures and other ingredients for cheese production were identified.

Main results

- Thanks to the construction of the new processing facilities, five people, including Ms. Agnieszka and her husband Dariusz, secured their jobs.
- Their products are sold at their own store located on the farm, three

nearby fairs and have the capacity to supply 18 healthy food stores located in Warsaw, Otwock and Garwolin.

Key lessons and recommendations

- The operation of an educational, organic cheese-making farm requires knowledge and commitment. This starts with the collection of fresh milk, pasteurisation, adding starter cultures and rennet, and then moulding, maturing, and storing the cheeses under proper conditions only using natural, organic ingredients that should be sourced locally.
- In addition, the ethical principles of animal husbandry and welfare, environmental protection and sustainability are important factors to be fully integrated. Also, the promotion of healthy food and eating habits, as well as awareness raising of environmental aspects are important roles of an educational farm. The integration of the local community and sharing of economic benefits through job creation need to be considered too to uphold the full credibility as an educational farm.
- It is important to choose a suitable location for the plant, such as an area with ample availability of raw materials, suitable access for transport, proximity to customers and availability of water and electricity.
- Before starting construction, it is important to know all the legal requirements, regulations and safety and health standards that must be met.
- Adequate personnel with experience in milk processing will be needed to carry out the production process and ensure proper sanitary and hygienic conditions in the plant.
- A competitive market analysis must be conducted to understand what opportunities there are.

Additional information:

www.facebook.com/people/Sery-Zagrodowe/100064425112361/



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