

Development of vegetable production on the RE Pumpuri farm

CAP funds have been used to help establish an organic vegetable farm that promotes cooperation between organic farmers and wider sector development.

EAFRD-funded projects

Country: Latvia

Location: Sigulda municipality

Programming period: 2014-2020

RDP Priority: P2. Competitiveness

Focus Area: Entry of skilled/younger farmers

Measures: M06. Farm & business development

Funding:

Total budget	15 000 (EUR)
EAFRD	11 346 (EUR)
National/regional	3 654 (EUR)

Timeframe: 07.2019 - 12.2022

Project promoter: Ltd. RE Pumpuri

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- At first the farm was cultivating just one hectare of arable land which now increased to 10.5 ha. The plan is to harvest 60-80-tonnes of potatoes as well as up to 10 tonnes of pumpkins in 2023.

The farm has played a key role in establishing an organic agriculture cooperative in the region.

Lessons & Recommendations

- Organic agri-food systems are increasingly prioritised by CAP funding.
- CAP support was crucial for both the launch and the development of this farm-based bio business.

Context

RE Pumpuri, a 10-hectare farm in Latvia's Sigulda municipality, near Riga, had been conceived of as a multi-sectoral farm focused on both small animal husbandry and agriculture. However, until the current owners took it over, it only existed as a legal entity and had never actually produced anything.

Summary

RE Pumpuri Ltd, which is based in the Sigulda municipality of Latvia, took over a non-operating farm in order to produce organic vegetables. Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) funds enabled the farm owners to purchase equipment for vegetable production, processing and harvesting. This included a tractor with potato harvester and planter, watering machine, cultivator and other machinery.

Project results

- This investment allowed the farm to plant 10 times more vegetables than would have been possible had the support not been provided.
- Annual turnover has increased by 80% and several seasonal jobs have been created.



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The new owners identified a high demand for organic products on the Latvian market. The supply of organic products in Latvia is very limited due to the fragmentation of the sector, where many small farms produce small quantities that cannot satisfy the demands of retailers and public procurement.

The relaunch of the RE Pumpuri farm began, quite simply, with one hectare of potatoes that produced 10-12-tonnes of harvest. The conversion to organic farming started in 2020 and it is expected that all the land will meet the criteria by 2024.

Objectives

The operational aim of the project was to improve the farm's production capacity by developing vegetable farming and to increase turnover by at least 20%-30% compared to the start of the project.

The general objectives of this project were to increase the supply of high-quality organic vegetables on the Latvian market, where demand outstrips supply. The owners also promoted sustainable farming in the region and across Latvia and they hope to help create a network of organic farmers to strengthen opportunities for cooperation, knowledge exchange and support.

Activities

CAP funding was used to purchase the machinery and equipment that are necessary for growing, processing and harvesting vegetables:

- a second-hand tractor;
- a potato harvester and planter;
- a watering machine;
- a cultivator;
- a furrower;
- a harrow for agriculture;
- a tractor-mounted grass cutting machine.

All the machinery is adapted for use with the tractor.

Main results

- The turnover of the farm increased by 80% compared to the start of the project, when they were cultivating only one hectare of land.
- The farm now cultivates 10.5 ha of arable land. In 2023, the owners expect to harvest 60-80 tonnes of potatoes and between five and 10 tonnes of pumpkins. They have also planted a one-hectare area of perennial raspberries.
- Customers may order online or in the store and delivery is made to addresses nearby and in the capital city, Riga. The farm can also post products to customers (orders up to 10 kg).
- Several seasonal jobs have been created.
- The farm has received bio certification.
- The farm owners also played a key role in establishing the organic agriculture cooperative Ekoloģisks.lv, which brings together 20 organic farmers from across the region.
- The farm, together with other local vegetable farms, is working on the plan to provide local schools with locally grown organic vegetables. To reach this goal, the farm is playing an active role in cooperation with State and municipality level authorities, ministries, the National CAP Network, a local action group, the Latvian Rural Forum, organic farmers, potential new farmers and other partners.



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Key lessons

- Farmers can make good use of the many opportunities from CAP funding for contributions to the EU organic action plan.
- CAP support was crucial for both the launch of the farm business in the first place and for enabling it to reach this level of development. CAP funding was particularly helpful in facilitating cooperation actions and wider networking, which enabled the formation of the cooperative and access to the local schools' market via public procurement.
- The cooperative aimed to strengthen the community of organic vegetable growers and to ensure that they are up to date with and implementing best practices. Ekologisks.lv, which also supports its members with digital e-commerce as well as traditional marketing, hopes to become the leading cooperative in organic farming.

“The project created a strong basis for our future development. It led to much bigger projects and ambitions than expected. I am pleased with the fact that our farm is a co-creator of the leading certified organic agriculture cooperative Ekologisks.lv and actively participate in encouraging as well as supporting new farmers to start biological farming in vegetable production. There is still a long way to go. However, we see steps and actions needed and we are working on them.”

Farm owner Elvijs Ozolins

Additional information:

<https://ekologisks.lv/>

www.novadagarsa.lv/saimnieciba/1227/sia-re-pumpuri



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