

## Establishing an almond plantation

Organic almond orchard start-up in Romania supported with CAP investment funds.

### EAFRD-funded projects

**Country:** Romania

**Location:** Jurilovca Commune

**Programming period:** 2014-2020

**RDP Priority:** P2. Competitiveness

**Focus Area:** Farm performance, restructuring & modernisation

**Measures:** M04. Investments in physical assets

**Funding:**

Total budget	915 446 (EUR)
EAFRD	577 806 (EUR)
National/regional	101 966 (EUR)
Private/own	235 674 (EUR)

**Timeframe:** 19.10.2018 - 29.08.2022

**Project promoter:** S.C. Real Nucet S.R.L.

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### Summary

Paul Bălaşa had been observing the emergence of almond production in the Dobrogea for about 15 years; taking note of the new approaches and technologies that were being introduced. When the opportunity presented itself, he took advantage of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) investment support and established an 8.4-hectare organic almond orchard on his family farm in Sălciuara, Jurilovca Commune. The CAP support enabled Paul and his wife Giorgiana to equip their holding with almond-growing machinery and a processing unit.

### Project results

- CAP investment support enabled the farmers to establish a new organic almond orchard along with the necessary facilities and equipment.
- This has helped them further integrate into the local food chain,

as contributors to its diversification, and has connected them with wider networks of cooperation and support.

### Lessons & Recommendations

- Such investment projects can create new job opportunities, especially for workers with low qualifications, during the harvest period.
- CAP investment support has an important impact on the introduction of environmentally friendly land management practices.
- This investment demonstrates the possibilities in terms of using CAP with other complementary policy mechanisms.



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### Context

Real Nucet SRL was founded by Paul and Giorgiana Balasa in 2016, in Sălciuara, in Romania's Jurilovca Commune of Tulcea. Paul Balasa was interested in organic farming and had a specific interest: almond plantations adapted to the climate in Romania. The couple saw good economic potential in almond production



since demand is sufficiently high at national level, the profit rate is significantly higher than that of other nuts and there was limited competition.

Another factor in favour of this plan was that their farm is in an area that would be suitable for almond production because of its southern exposure, which protects it from wind, fog and late frosts. These conditions are quite typical of the counties along the Danube and the Black Sea littoral, where Paul and Giorgiana are located.

The organic fruit growing sector was still in an emerging phase in Romania, with only 15 905 ha of certified organic fruit trees cultivated in 2019, which represented only 4% of the total organic agricultural production at national level.

## Objectives

The main aim of this investment project was to establish an organic almond orchard on an area of 8.4 hectares in Sălcioara, Jurilovca Commune.

The operational objectives were to equip the farm holding with fruit-growing machinery, an almond processing unit and the financial resources to carry out marketing activities.

## Activities

The main activities carried out were:

- Hiring a contractor for the establishment of an almond plantation. Works carried out included land fencing, the construction of a building and the drilling of a well to access water.
- Planting the almond trees and setting up the irrigation system.
- Constructing, expanding, modernising and equipping the buildings intended for processing the produce.
- Planting more almond seedlings in 2022.
- Constructing a fruit storage unit.
- Obtaining the authentication documentation for the conversion to organic production (which defined the main activities for the 2021-2023 period, such as arranging scheduled controls).

## Main results

- The investment support enabled the farmers to establish a new organic almond orchard along with the necessary facilities and equipment.
- This has helped them further integrate into the local food chain, as contributors to its diversification and has connected them with wider networks of cooperation and support.

## Key lessons

- Such investment projects can create new job opportunities, especially for workers with low qualifications during the harvest period. However, the seasonal demand for such labour can often outstrip local supply.
- CAP investment support has an important impact on the introduction of environmentally friendly land management practices because the selection criteria stipulate this. However, it is ultimately the market demand for the produce itself that makes the investments worthwhile.
- When applying for investment support, the selection criteria for water savings addressed risks of double counting of results.
- This investment demonstrates the possibilities in terms of using CAP with other complementary policy mechanisms such as the Danube Delta Integrated Territorial Instrument.

## Additional information:

[www.itideltadunarii.com/vizite-de-lucru/15-04-2020-plantatie-migdal-salcioara/7](http://www.itideltadunarii.com/vizite-de-lucru/15-04-2020-plantatie-migdal-salcioara/7)

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