The modernisation of Bożena and Wiesław Rutkowski's farm

CAP funds in Poland are helping to modernise milk production and expanding the use of renewables.

RDP-funded projects

Country: Poland
Location: Pisz municipality
Programming period: 2014-2020
RDP Priority: P2. Competitiveness
Focus Area: Farm performance, restructuring & modernisation
Measures: M04. Investments in physical assets
Funding:

Total budget	1 300 000 (PLN)
RDP support	610 000 (PLN)
Private/own	690 000 (PLN)

Timeframe: 02.2021 – 07.2022
Project promoter: Gospodarstwo Rolne Wiesław Rutkowski
Email: bwr23@wp.pl

Summary

Mr. Wieslaw and Mrs. Bozena Rutkowski of Kotlo Duży in the Pisz municipality are the owners of a thriving dairy farm rearing 75 dairy cows and 100 heifers with calves. It is now one of the most modern livestock farms in the Pisz municipality. The couple used Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) investment support to modernise their family farm by adopting new technological solutions such as a digitalised herd management system and solar energy production.

Project results

- Herd productivity has increased to about 12 500 litres of milk per head annually.
- The digital herd management system has improved the nutrition of the animals, which has reduced reproductive and metabolic disorders.
- The photovoltaic panels give the farm greater energy independence and will significantly reduce their running costs.

Lessons & Recommendations

- The efficiency of food production systems can be better optimised through CAP-funded farm digitalisation tools.
- CAP funds can help expand the use of renewable energy systems.

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Context

Bozena and Wieslaw Rutkowski live in the Polish municipality of Pisz. Their 77-hectare farm mainly produces milk (from their 75 dairy cows and 100 heifers with calves), with around 45 ha of land used to grow livestock feed corn. The Rutkowskis have previously used CAP funds to help replace and upgrade their harvesting machinery, alongside investing their own funds in the construction of a new barn. They decided to make further improvements to their business to make it more efficient and sustainable.

Objectives

The aim of the current investment was to modernise their farm by adopting new technological solutions and by investing in renewable energy. The aim was for these investments to allow the farm to reach a new level of production efficiency and quality, which would translate into greater stability and profitability on the farm.

Activities

In 2021-2022, CAP co-financing was awarded to implement the following activities:

- Build a modern shed to protect agricultural machinery from adverse weather conditions.
- Purchase agricultural machinery, including a digitalised herd management system that allows them to monitor the nutrition and health of each animal individually.
- Install a photovoltaic system on the roof of the barn, providing 40 KW and battery capacity.

Main results

- The investments significantly increased herd productivity and improved milk quality. Currently their dairy cows produce about 12 500 litres of milk per head annually. This has had a positive impact on the profitability of the farm.
- The digital herd management system improved the nutrition of the animals, which also contributed to reducing reproductive and metabolic disorders.
- The installation of photovoltaic panels will generate a total of 40 KW. This will give the farm greater energy independence and will significantly reduce their running costs.

Key lessons

- CAP support can help modernise the efficiency of food production systems through digitalisation tools that also improve animal welfare and business competitiveness.
- CAP funds can be used to help farms adopt more renewable energy systems.

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