

# Vadna's JUST FOR THE SAKE OF IT! - the birth of a small but all the more successful farm in Vadna

Battling through financial and societal turbulence to create a successful Hungarian winery.

## EAFRD-funded projects

**Location:** Vadna, Zemplén County, Hungary

**Programming period:** 2014-2020

**Priority:** P6 - Social inclusion and local development

**Focus Area:** Local development

**Measures:** M19 - LEADER CLLD

<b>Funding:</b>	Total budget	52 000 (EUR)
	EAFRD	20 800 (EUR)
	National/Regional	5 200 (EUR)
	Private/own	26 000 (EUR)

**Timeframe:** 2019 - 2020

**Project promoter:** Mária Tamási

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## Summary

Mária and her husband András were full-time chemical engineers in Budapest, Hungary. In 2010, they inherited a 0.25 hectare (ha) abandoned vineyard in Vadna, a village in North-Eastern Hungary, and decided to start a new life, moved to Vadna and built their farm. They acquired an additional hectare of land, planted seven grape varieties and gained the necessary qualifications for wine-making. Nine years later, with the help of LEADER grants, they built a winery. This involved the construction of a processing plant and purchasing necessary equipment and tools. A tasting area and rural accommodation were funded with LEADER support, complementing their existing farm activities. With their wines, the couple consistently win small and large wine competitions. Mária and András have continually developed the family farm for 13 years through COVID-19, inflation and other obstacles, but they stayed determined to continue shaping and creating their farming life for the future.

## Project results

- › Seven hectares of saline soil sustainably regenerated.
- › The farm started to generate income and create employment. Mária works full-time on the farm. Her husband, András, their two daughters and father-in-law help on a regular basis.
- › The wines are sold in Budapest to restaurants, hotels, craft markets, festivals and wine shops in the 40 kilometre catchment area of the winery.

## Key lessons and recommendations

- › Since their start as winemakers in 2010, the family farm has come a long and difficult way, but Mária and her husband never gave up. First, the difficult terrain caused more work than expected, then came COVID-19 with quarantine restrictions in the middle of construction, and then inflation.



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## Context

Mária Tamási and her husband worked as chemical engineers for most of their lives in Budapest, Hungary. When Mária inherited a small (0.25 ha) area of abandoned and overgrown vineyards in her native village of Vadna, the couple decided to build their own farm in 2010. Since moving there, they have increased their land area to one ha. A lot of work was needed to develop the new vineyards. Trees, bushes and old vines had to be completely removed and decisions had to be made as to which grape varieties would grow best under the given climatic and soil conditions. Winegrowing and its knowledge had disappeared from the area for years, therefore, in spite of the small size of the vineyard, the couple decided to plant seven different grape varieties to find out themselves. In 2014, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir were planted on the cleared land. In 2016, Sauvignon Blanc, Rhine Riesling, Szürkebarát, Feketeleányka and Királyleányka vines followed.

Besides grapes, the farm also produces certified organic vegetables and fruits in a 0.4 ha garden. Fruit and vegetable juices made in the traditional artisanal way and other vegetables produced in the crop rotation manner are sold locally.

A consistent effort led to their first wine production in 2019. When the newcomers assessed the technical development of their farm, they became aware of a LEADER call from the Borsod-Torna-Gömör Local Action Group. They applied and were successful in receiving EUR 40 000 of financial support to build a small processing factory including equipment.

## Objectives

The main aim of the funding application was to gain financial support for building and equipping a small wine processing plant so that the farm's winemaking activity could become a profitable business.

Within the scope of the LEADER support, the aim was to create a wine-tasting room in the building and accommodation on the upper floor.

## Activities

LEADER funding supported the construction of a 132 m<sup>2</sup> wine processing plant. This involved converting and expanding an abandoned outbuilding and purchasing equipment, including a nine-hectolitre pneumatic press, mash pump and heat pump cooler/heater.

Further LEADER applications supported the purchase of seven 1 100-liter cooling-heating tanks operated by a heat pump system, a tractor, a stalk crusher and a digger.

Additional activities of the LEADER project included purchasing a bottling machine and a screw-capping machine from their own resources.

In 2020, a winemaking and bottling license for the new building was obtained.



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## Main results

The main results of the EAFRD interventions included:

- The completion of a 132 m<sup>2</sup> wine processing plant.
- The purchase of tools and machines necessary for winemaking.
- The farm started to generate income. Mária works full-time on the farm. Her husband András, their two daughters, and her father-in-law help out regularly.
- The wines are sold in Budapest to restaurants, hotels, craft markets, festivals, and wine shops in the winery's 40 km catchment area.
- The produced wines increasingly gained recognition. First, in smaller wine competitions, which resulted in six gold, nine silver and one bronze medals, and then followed by more serious competitions where the wines were included in the TOP 100 best Hungarian wines and won a gold medal at the 'WineLovers' international wine competition.

## Key lessons and recommendations

- 'JUST FOR THE SAKE OF IT!' became the name, slogan and life philosophy of Mária's family farm. Since their start as winemakers in 2010, the family farm has come a long and difficult way, but Mária and her husband never gave up, they fought and did it "just for the sake of it". First, the difficult terrain caused more work than expected, then came the COVID-19 crisis with quarantine restrictions in the middle of construction and then inflation. Nevertheless, they continued going forward even if it was not always at the pace they had planned, without giving up.
- In a previous LEADER application, the couple wanted to create a fruit and vegetable juice factory along with the winery. However, due to inflation in Hungary, they had to postpone this implementation due to the significant price rises and lack of funds.

## Additional information:

Project promoter's website:

<https://vadnaicsakazertis.hu/>

Project promoter's Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/vadnaicsakazertis](https://www.facebook.com/vadnaicsakazertis)

Project promoter's Instagram account:

[@vadnai\\_csakazertis](https://www.instagram.com/vadnai_csakazertis)

