

Spanish truffles firm invests in new rural development opportunities

CAP funds for Spain modernise a rural agrifood firm's business processing and marketing of high-value truffle products.

EAFRD-funded projects

Location: Aragon, Spain

Programming period: 2014-2020

Priority: P3. Food chain and risk management

Focus Area: 3A. Agri-food chain integration & quality

Measures: M06. Farm & business development

Funding: Total budget 468 800 (EUR)

RDP support 91 880 (EUR)

Private/own 376 920 (EUR)

Timeframe: 01/01/2022 - 30/11/2023

Project promoter: Manjares de la Tierra SLU

Email: sofia@manjaresdelatierra.com



Project results

- The new industrial plant, with its modern machinery and efficient processes, represents a regional innovation in the way truffles are processed and marketed. This allows for faster, more precise, and higher quality production.
- Project outcomes allow Manjares de la Tierra to process up to 1 000 kg of black truffle weekly in the new company facilities. This involves working with more than 200 local producers who have generated wealth from the sale of their harvests, averaging EUR 400 per kg.
- CAP funds led to a 22% increase in the firm's workforce, with 50% of the newly hired staff being female. New markets were gained in the USA, UK, and Denmark, aided by an improved corporate image and bolstering the firm's reputation as a leader in Europe's truffle sector.

Summary

Rural development opportunities exist in Spain from marketing and processing Sarrión truffles, a gastronomic delicacy from near Valencia. CAP funds were used by a local company for this purpose. The Manjares de la Tierra firm was founded in 2003 and carried out an investment plan involving the design and implementation of a new processing plant with modern machinery, transforming its truffle processing and marketing. Business aims focused on becoming more efficient, innovative, and competitive.

CAP's support improved the company's competitive position, helping it provide better services to its customers, access new markets, and consolidate its position as a reference in the truffle industry. Manjares de la Tierra has become a national and international benchmark, exporting its products to more than 15 countries. Other benefits from the project underscore job stability in an area at risk of depopulation and in a workforce mainly composed of younger women.

Key lessons and recommendations

- Implementing the new industrial plant with advanced machinery provided Manjares de la Tierra with the capacity to process larger volumes of truffles more efficiently. This means that small local truffle growers, who are key suppliers to the company, now have a more stable and reliable market for their harvests. By increasing the demand for processed truffles, Manjares de la Tierra can buy more truffles from these producers, ensuring fair prices and a stable income. This not only strengthens the local economy but also encourages truffle growers to invest in their crops and improve their agricultural practices, while contributing positively to curbing rural depopulation in the area.



- The company differentiates itself through the continuous incorporation of new truffle-based products. This innovative product development strategy expands its offerings and attracts new customers.
- Adopting sustainable practices, such as efficient resource use and waste reduction, reflects an innovative approach to agricultural and food production.

Context

Rural development opportunities exist in Spain through the marketing and processing of Sarrión truffles, a highly valued gastronomic delicacy from near Valencia. Chefs and 'foodies' alike view truffles as a luxury ingredient capable of enhancing dishes with rich flavours. This gastronomic prestige attracts high market prices, as consumers are willing to pay a premium for such food products. The cultural significance of truffles within haute cuisine also amplifies their value.

Hence, the cultivation of this truffle can enhance local agricultural diversity and support economic revitalisation in rural Spain. By establishing a robust supply chain that includes harvesting, processing, and marketing, communities can create sustainable jobs and stimulate local economies. Promoting the Sarrión truffle on national and international markets can also attract tourism to generate further rural revenue streams.

Manjares de la Tierra was founded in 2003 to take advantage of the employment opportunities offered by truffles in this region, inspired by the International Monographic Truffle Fair (FITRUF).

Previously, truffle commercialisation had been low and lacked sophisticated presentation or packaging, despite the exceptional quality of the truffle from Sarrión, which is known as the 'Spanish Truffle Capital.'

Objectives

Manjares de la Tierra set out to provide a high-quality and robustly branded business based on the distribution of quality black truffles and truffle-based products. It was focused on innovation, including the annual incorporation of new products in collaboration with other companies, ensuring artisanal preparation with strict industrial controls.

To maintain its leadership position and increase the market share of processed products, Manjares de la Tierra needed new facilities and advanced machinery to improve operational efficiency, maintain consistent quality standards, and meet demand in a timely manner. The project of designing and implementing a new industrial plant and acquiring modern machinery was essential to increase productivity and competitiveness, ensuring the company's sustainable growth in the global market.

CAP funds were awarded to help the company:

- Improve innovation and productivity.
- Focus innovation capacity on processed products.
- Enhance its competitive position in different markets, gaining access to new international markets.
- Guarantee and expand existing jobs, especially for women and young people. The workforce is composed of 60% women.
- Increase the quality of service for different customer groups.
- Contribute to the improvement and growth of rural areas affected by the effects of depopulation for decades.

Activities

A coordinated set of project actions involved:

- Buying a new plot in an industrial zone and constructing an industrial building of 1 000 m².
- Equipping the building with workflow distribution, division of workrooms and warehouses, placement of hygiene panels and cold storage rooms, as well as the design and installation of all industrial facilities.
- Promotion of the new facilities among customers and suppliers through social media, newsletters, and on-site visits.

Main results

- The new industrial plant, with its modern machinery and efficient processes, represents a regional innovation in the way truffles are processed and marketed. This allows for faster, more precise, and higher quality production.
- Economic benefits for the Sarrión geographical area result from the project, allowing Manjares de la Tierra to process about 1 000 kg of black truffle weekly in the new company facilities. This involves working with more than 200 local producers who have generated wealth from the sale of their harvests, averaging EUR 400 per kg, which represents a notable economic benefit for this truffle-producing region.
- The new industrial plant has generated direct employment in the factory, and supports related local businesses such as transportation, logistics, and services. The economic revitalisation brought by this project will help maintain and increase the local population, providing opportunities for young families and reducing migration to the cities.
- CAP funds led to a 22% increase in the firm's workforce, with 50% of the newly hired staff being female. Customer service improved in terms of agility and ability to meet the demands of major markets in a timely and efficient manner.
- New markets were gained in the USA, UK, and Denmark. This was aided by an improved corporate image and the firm's reputation as a leader in Europe's truffle sector. The company became a national and international benchmark, exporting its products to more than 15 countries.

Key lessons and recommendations

- Implementing the new industrial plant with advanced machinery provided Manjares de la Tierra with the capacity to process larger volumes of truffles more efficiently. This means that small local truffle growers, who are key suppliers to the company, now have a more stable and reliable market for their harvests.
- By increasing the demand for processed truffles, Manjares de la Tierra can buy more truffles from these producers, ensuring fair prices and a stable income. This not only strengthens the local economy but also encourages truffle growers to invest in their crops and improve their agricultural practices, while contributing positively to curbing rural depopulation in the area.

- The company differentiates itself through the continuous incorporation of new truffle-based products. This innovative product development strategy expands its offerings and attracts new customers.
- Adopting sustainable practices, such as efficient resource use and waste reduction, reflected an innovative approach to agri-food production systems.

Quote

"As an employee of Manjares de la Tierra and responsible for the international market, this project has had a significant and meaningful impact. On one hand, it has allowed us to host numerous international clients from different countries at our new facilities. They have been impressed by the quality, innovative capacity, and advanced technology of our industrial plant, which sets us apart from the vast majority of similar companies in Spain. On the other hand, the implementation of technological improvements and new production processes has made us more efficient and competitive. This has enabled us to enter new markets worldwide and provide outstanding service to all our customers".

Francisco García, International Sales Manager.

Additional information:

Project website:

www.manjaresdelatierra.com

Project on Instagram:

www.instagram.com/manjarestuffles/

Project on Facebook:

<https://es-la.facebook.com/manjarestuffles/>

Project on LinkedIn:

www.linkedin.com/company/manjarestuffles

Project on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/@thebestblacktruffles



Funded by
the European Union