



# Agricultural and Rural Inspiration Awards – ARIA 2024

## Projects brochure

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the European Union

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**Managing editor:** Antonia Gamez Moreno, Head of Unit, European Commission Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development

**Editor:** Elena Di Federico, Publications Manager, EU CAP Network - CAP Implementation Contact Point

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**Main contributor:** Susan Grieve

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## Introduction

The [Agricultural and Rural Inspiration Awards \(ARIA\) 2024](#) celebrated the greenest, smartest, most socially inclusive, innovative and resilient Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) projects implemented at the local level. The new and important theme of this ARIA edition was Empowering young people, reflecting the [National Networks'](#) priorities to promote youth empowerment. For the first time, a special award was also granted to projects that are advancing gender equality.

Following up on the success of [ARIA 2023](#), the 2024 competition was open to projects supported by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund ARIA (EAGF).

National CAP Networks and National Support Units worked hard to select and submit good practice projects from their respective countries under the four ARIA categories: Smart & competitive agriculture, Environmental protection, Socio-economic fabric of rural areas, and Rural youth. Overall, 103 projects were submitted from 21 Member States.

The 24 finalists gathered in Brussels for the exciting [ARIA Awards Ceremony](#) on 4 December 2024, where an enthusiastic audience cheered for the winners and highly commended projects in each category, the winner of the special Gender Equality Award, and the winner of the Popular Vote, which recorded over 14 000 online votes from across the EU.

Browse this brochure to learn more about these inspiring projects and see how the CAP is making a difference in European rural areas!





## ARIA WINNER 2024

SMART AND COMPETITIVE  
AGRICULTURE

**€ 902 286**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 195 611**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 1

**Knowledge transfer  
& information actions**

RDP MEASURE 4

**Investments in  
physical assets**

RDP MEASURE 16

**Cooperation**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2018-2022**

COUNTRY

**Italy**

## Iris: the true scent of Tuscany

**Enhancing cultivation, processing and transformation procedures of an iconic Italian flower, boosting market opportunities and profitability for producers.**

The iris is a flower with significant historical and cultural value in Tuscany's agricultural tradition, featuring in Florence's coat of arms since around 1 000 CE and used in food products, cosmetics and perfumes.

The project aimed to enhance processing and transformation procedures, boost market opportunities and profitability for producers, and establish sustainable and resilient conditions.

In collaboration with 120 producers and the University of Florence, new stages of processing were introduced which they did not manage directly before the project began, such as distillation and quality control. As a consequence, growers can now sell their products directly to cosmetic companies instead of intermediaries, advancing in the value chain.

This improvement has increased the profitability of agricultural activities, with a 35% increase in the product's selling price, enhancing the development prospects of the supply chain by meeting higher demand from transformation. The cooperative which led the project has also increased its membership by two-thirds. The project - supported by a successful combination of different Rural Development Measures - has improved the quality of the final product, while empowering young entrepreneurs and strengthening the economy of the entire rural area.



Find out more online:

[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/iris-true-scent-tuscany](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/iris-true-scent-tuscany)



Watch the interview with the project holders.



SMART AND COMPETITIVE  
AGRICULTURE**ARIA WINNER 2024**

POPULAR VOTE

**€ 401 597**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 279 863**

EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 16

**Cooperation**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2020-2023**

COUNTRY

 **Estonia**

## Authentic honey meets DNA technology

**An innovative DNA-based method enables producers to get proof of authentic honey origin for fair and transparent competition.**

This EIP-AGRI<sup>1</sup> Operational Group established cooperation between beekeepers and researchers in Estonia to develop a very innovative DNA-based method for honey analysis that describes not only the whole biological composition of honey, but also the environment of honeybee foraging and honey production (including pollen and nectar plants, bacteria, fungi, animals and viruses). The resulting information enables producers to get proof of authentic honey origin, allowing for fair and transparent competition in the honey market.

The project methods have enabled the creation of a DNA-based test for honey as a service for producers and distributors to analyse its botanical composition, origin and authenticity, and monitor honeybee

pathogens and parasites. This is a new kind of honey analysis, not only in Estonia, but globally.

The project has provided a boost for the beekeeping industry, helped to develop laboratory expertise, brought about extensive data generation and inspired scientific interest in honey DNA analysis, engaging students ranging from high school to PhD level in research projects.



Find out more online:

[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/  
good-practice/authentic-honey-  
meets-dna-technology](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/authentic-honey-meets-dna-technology)



**Watch the interview** with the project holders.

<sup>1</sup> European Innovation Partnership for agricultural productivity and sustainability.



SMART AND COMPETITIVE  
AGRICULTURE



**HIGHLY COMMENDED**

**€ 140 779**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 96 665**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 6

**Farm & business development**

RDP MEASURE 11

**Organic farming**

RDP MEASURE 13

**Areas with  
constraints**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2018-2023**

COUNTRY

 **Croatia**

## Farm-to-face cosmetics – slow luxury

**Production and sale of natural, ecologically certified cosmetics on a family farm: a 'farm-to-face' approach that is unique within the skincare industry.**

A Croatian family used CAP support to facilitate the development of a permanent almond plantation on their farmland for future cosmetic products. They also launched a new non-agricultural activity, focusing on the production and sale of natural cosmetics using ecologically certified medicinal plants. CAP funding enabled the building of a certified laboratory to produce luxury cosmetic products, the purchase of a vehicle for deliveries, and the set-up of a web shop and social media channels.

The family farm has achieved a self-sustained production process from cultivation to market, and this unique 'farm-to-face' approach allows them to guarantee the traceability and high quality of their main ingredients.

The initiative has created new jobs, enhanced the farm's self-sustainability, and accelerated business growth, enabling the family to work and live their dream in harmony with nature. Their ecological production methods are helping to restore, preserve and enhance biodiversity. The products from their certified cosmetic lines are now distributed in over 100 stores and have gained significant media attention. The brand is currently poised to expand beyond Croatia.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/  
good-practice/farm-face-  
cosmetics-slow-luxury](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/farm-face-cosmetics-slow-luxury)





SMART AND COMPETITIVE  
AGRICULTURE

**€ 304 685**  
TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 300 000**  
EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 16

**Cooperation  
(Rhineland-Palatinate RDP)**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2019-2023**

COUNTRY

 **Germany**

## **DaLeA - permanent living mulch in arable farming**

**Testing permanent living mulch to combat climate change and its effects on crops, soil and yield.**

The DaLeA EIP-AGRI Operational Group project was developed to test and evaluate the effectiveness, feasibility and transferability of permanent living mulch. This radical approach consists of using a cover crop, permanently interplanted or undersown with a main crop, to suppress weeds, regulate soil temperature, retain water and minimise tillage.

Over three years, at three locations in Rhineland-Palatinate (Germany) and with rotating crops, a cultivation variant using clover as a permanent living mulch was compared to a variant without clover. Despite several setbacks, the approach was a success. Yield difference compared to conventional farming was cut to a third, while nutrient losses and use of fertilisers were minimised.

The project made clear the potential for long-term financial savings for farmers by adopting innovative and sustainable agricultural methods, as well as the enhanced market competitiveness to be gained by aligning with consumer demand for environmentally friendly products.

DaLeA promoted knowledge exchange, collaboration and awareness raising among farmers, researchers, and policymakers. It also contributed to food security and quality by ensuring stable crop yields and diversified farming practices.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/  
good-practice/dalea-permanent-  
living-mulch-arable-farming](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/dalea-permanent-living-mulch-arable-farming)





SMART AND COMPETITIVE AGRICULTURE

**€ 490 274**  
TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 150 000**  
EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 16

**Cooperation**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2022-2023**

COUNTRY

 **the Netherlands**



## Boer2B (Farmer2Business)

**Helping farmers create a more efficient, sustainable way to sell directly to businesses and consumers, and become more resilient.**

Farmers face many hurdles with logistics, IT, regulations, and finding partners and customers, which makes it costly and inefficient for them to use short supply chains. This EIP-AGRI Operational Group set up a central online marketplace where farmers can list their products, and buyers can easily purchase them.

Through the new platform, farmers can sell their products more easily to more customers, without worrying about delivery, sales or IT. They become more independent, cut costs, save time and charge more competitive prices. Restaurants and retailers can place orders with multiple farmers seamlessly, resulting in a more efficient system which supports

local farmers, and provides everyone with fresh, local, sustainable products, all through a user-friendly app. Boer2B ensures that within 24 hours of ordering, products are collected from various farmers, combined into a single order, and delivered.

The project organised lectures, provincial meetings, and one-on-one demonstrations to promote this efficient short supply chain. The project created a more efficient, sustainable and professional short supply chain and is achieving economic, environmental and societal improvements, with benefits for farmers, businesses and consumers.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/boer2b-farmer2business](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/boer2b-farmer2business)





SMART AND COMPETITIVE  
AGRICULTURE

**€ 47 799**  
TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 17 278**  
EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

**LEADER/CLLD**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2020-2021**

COUNTRY

 **Portugal**

## **Bananika**

**Giving bananas a happy ending: seeing the value in unused fruit reduces food waste and promotes sustainability and creativity.**

In one of Europe's outermost regions, Terceira Island (Azores archipelago), Portuguese farmer Tibério Barbeito and his German friend, business master student Leon Biermann, had the idea of giving rejected bananas a purpose.

On Terceira Island, over 100 tonnes of bananas are wasted every year due to overproduction and strict market requirements. By creating a fermented banana drink, the huge amount of waste generated is transformed into a value-added product with an extended shelf life, solving a problem faced by several banana producers on the island.

In 2022 alone, and from just one producer, 1.5 tonnes of bananas were saved from waste and transformed into cider. This unique product is opening up a new chance for Azorean banana producers to deal with their overproduction, while also generating a sense of community. Bananika has come to occupy a market segment sought after by young consumers and the brand has successfully participated in entrepreneurship and innovation competitions.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/  
good-practice/bananika](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/bananika)





**ARIA WINNER 2024**

STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO ECONOMIC  
FABRIC OF RURAL AREAS

**€ 51 316**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 29 784**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

**LEADER/CLLD**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2019-2022**

COUNTRY

**France**

## La petite conserverie / The little conserve factory

**Turning agricultural surpluses into food, promoting social cohesion and tackling food insecurity and waste.**

La petite conserverie is an innovative and cooperative project located in Normandy, which collects agricultural surpluses to transform them into preserves with the active involvement of local people.

A truck with all the necessary equipment travels several times a week around Dieppe and the surrounding rural areas. Social centres collect vegetables and other elements donated by various partners and volunteers. The truck (which was purchased and equipped thanks to CAP funding) is then parked in a public space to offer workshops for cooking and making preserves and eating on-site. Food is collected and redistributed for free.

This mobile, social factory aims to reduce food waste and promote social cohesion between rural and urban areas, addressing social isolation and food insecurity while facilitating access to healthy, local food.

This project has provided the local population with access to a new service and strengthened social cohesion. It has also highlighted participants' know-how (techniques, recipes...) and developed their soft skills.



Find out more online:  
[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/la-petite-conserverie-the-little-conserve-factory](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/la-petite-conserverie-the-little-conserve-factory)



Watch the [interview](#) with the project holders.



STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO ECONOMIC  
FABRIC OF RURAL AREAS**ARIA WINNER 2024**

GENDER EQUALITY

**€ 171 387**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 109 688**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

**LEADER/CLLD**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2019-2025**

COUNTRY

 **Austria**

## FRAU iDA - Space for women entrepreneurs

**Promoting women entrepreneurs in rural areas and providing them with opportunities for combining family and career.**

Under the FRAU iDA brand, the Waldviertler Frauenwirtschaft association offers modern, flexible offices, workspaces and meeting, practice and event rooms spanning nearly 400 m<sup>2</sup>. These spaces are available for short- or long-term use, regardless of industry affiliation.

Demand is high and the association follows a 'women first' concept, prioritising permanent office rentals to women. Collaboration with childcare and elderly care facilities just minutes away enhances work-life balance for tenants.

Women entrepreneurs pay a small yearly fee to join FRAU iDA, which is partially reimbursed in the form of educational vouchers to attend courses at the location. In addition, the services organised at FRAU iDA foster networking, new collaborations and the exchange of ideas in a professional setting. The

offer includes an ongoing seminar programme for women and personal support through a mentoring programme.

FRAU iDA helps young women to claim roles and career steps for themselves, inspiring them through role models. The project also supports young female doctoral students conducting research work on coworking spaces.



Find out more online:

[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/  
good-practice/frau-ida-space-  
women-entrepreneurs](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/frau-ida-space-women-entrepreneurs)



[Watch the interview](#) with the  
project holders.



STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO ECONOMIC FABRIC OF RURAL AREAS



**HIGHLY COMMENDED**

**€ 27 115**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 12 771**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

**LEADER/CLLD**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2020-2023**

COUNTRY

**Ireland**

## The Galway Wool Co-op

**Restoring the value of a natural Irish fibre and ensuring that local farmers are paid a fair price for their product.**

The Galway Wool Co-op is the first of its kind in Ireland. This virtual co-op used LEADER funding to develop a website (which acts as the co-op's e-commerce marketplace and trading platform) and promotional materials, which extended the impact of the initiative across the country.

The co-op sought buyers interested in preserving this rare wool in Ireland, resulting in a substantial increase in the base price of wool from EUR 0.20/kg to EUR 2.50. By harnessing the goodwill of breeders to source wool from throughout Ireland, a newly created community now works diligently together to bring awareness to the consumer of the variety of applications for strong wool.

Sheep farmers in rural Irish communities are now gaining a revenue stream from wool production and have the capacity to reinvest their earnings into every facet of small towns and villages. The crafts industry in Ireland has once again been afforded an opportunity to work with real native Irish wool and the authenticity that this gives their offering.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/galway-wool-co-op](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/galway-wool-co-op)



STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO ECONOMIC  
FABRIC OF RURAL AREAS**€ 128 301**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 48 471**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 7

**Basic services & village renewal**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2021-2023**

COUNTRY

**+ Finland**

## Boosting mental well-being in rural workplaces

**Promoting a positive image of mental health, increasing mental health literacy in Finnish workplaces and planting the seeds for change.**

Finnish employees and business-owners are experiencing more everyday stress than ever before. Burnout has become more common, and mental health challenges are the most prominent cause of sick leave and disability pensions. The burnout and suicide rates of young women are also increasing.

The project emphasises the importance of the mental footprint in daily workplace agendas, highlighting its benefits not only for the sake of morale, but also for a company's financial and competitive advantage. The project used the 'Supporting mental health at work' method, which is a 'Mental Health Friendly

Workplace' quality system set up by the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. It offers a framework to integrate mental health into all workplace processes, from daily activities to board meetings.

The project reached 90 different workplaces and nearly 1 800 people of all ages and genders from the sectors of education, health and social services, and local and international businesses. Three companies received the Mental Health Friendly Workplace certificate for their work towards improving mental health in the organisation.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/  
good-practice/boosting-  
mental-well-being-rural-  
workplaces](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/boosting-mental-well-being-rural-workplaces)



STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO ECONOMIC  
FABRIC OF RURAL AREAS

**€ 279 258**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 44 423**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

**LEADER/CLLD**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2018-2019**

COUNTRY

 **Poland**



## Creation of an educational farm - Pszczelandia

**Sharing the secrets of beekeeping and ecology with children and adults while contributing to the environment, the local community and its economy.**

This is an innovative initiative created by Dariusz and Małgorzata Pucer, who wished to convey their knowledge of beekeeping and ecology to a wide range of people. With CAP co-funding and financial support from the Marshal's Office of the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, they successfully created an interactive educational farm, considered the best in the region.

Since opening in 2020, Pszczelandia has become a popular place, visited daily by children, young people and adults. Małgorzata has developed several educational trails related to the role of pollinators in the environment, beekeeping, healthy food and

ecology. After completing an apitherapy seminar, Małgorzata introduced new workshops for young people and adults where they learn about the world of bees, taste honey rarities and participate in scientific demonstrations.

Pszczelandia has been accepted into the National Network of Educational Farms, underlining its importance for environmental education. It provides high-quality education and inspires concern for nature.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/  
good-practice/creation-  
educational-farm-pszczelandia](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/creation-educational-farm-pszczelandia)



STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO ECONOMIC  
FABRIC OF RURAL AREAS**€ 793 432**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 334 417**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 4

**Investments in physical assets**

RDP MEASURE 19

**LEADER/CLLD**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2019-2022**

COUNTRY

 **Portugal**

## Quinta da Moscadinha

**A hotel, restaurant and cider distillery bringing visitors to a Madeiran village and driving the local economy.**

Márcio Nóbrega is a local entrepreneur who has already been heavily involved in several different projects on the Island of Madeira. His Quinta da Moscadinha project was originally seen solely as a business opportunity that would tap into the trend for rural tourism. However, the work generated a connection with the local community and its history, tradition and current challenges, and most specifically with the long-lost art of cider production.

The Quinta de Moscadinha hotel now has the aim of being a cider tourism focal point, nestling in beautiful countryside and featuring a typical Madeiran restaurant and cider cellar, designed to help locals and visitors know more about Madeiran cider.

Besides significant economic and tourism results, the project is having positive impacts on food waste reduction (80 tonnes of apples have already been used for cider instead of being wasted) and environmental protection (20 abandoned orchards - ca. 3 000 trees - have been recovered). Overall, the project has been able to create 32 full-time jobs, many of them for local women and young people.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/  
good-practice/quinta-da-  
moscadinha](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/quinta-da-moscadinha)



ARIA WINNER 2024

RURAL YOUTH



HIGHLY COMMENDED

€ 312 500

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 162 625

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 20

Technical Assistance

PROJECT PERIOD

2022-2024

COUNTRY

Italy

## Open farms, rural connections

**A learning experience on sustainability, quality, innovation and local development connecting institutions, education, farms and young people.**

Open Farms was conceived after the COVID-19 pandemic to connect systems traditionally considered separate (institutions, education and farms), and to stimulate young people to share knowledge, ideas and good practices, and actively participate in the future of agriculture.

The core mission is to promote a deeper understanding of the evolving needs of farmers, providing opportunities for meeting, reflection and discussions on common challenges, to generate innovative solutions in a participatory way.

The innovative format is structured around four main pillars – learn, discover, work, share – and combines virtual learning with hands-on experiences, involving students at every stage, from identifying needs to engaging in dialogue with various stakeholders, and from designing activities to implementing actions.

The project generated recognition of curricular internships and educational credits for 475 participants in online training activities. It also opened access to scholarships, Erasmus+ places and internships for the 70 participants of the in-person activities. Its motivational and aggregative format has already produced synergies and concrete collaborations among young people.



Find out more online:

[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/open-farms-rural-connections](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/open-farms-rural-connections)



Watch the [interview](#) with the project holders.





RURAL YOUTH

**HIGHLY COMMENDED****€ 83 325**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 74 993**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 16

**Cooperation**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2021-2023**

COUNTRY

 **Belgium**

## Mental well-being starts at school

### Strengthening mental health literacy to support future farmers and horticulturalists.

Research shows that the mental health of farmers and horticulturalists is under great pressure. Mental health literacy can support them by increasing knowledge and improving health skills.

The education system is an important setting for health prevention and influencing mental health literacy. This EIP-AGRI Operational group developed a 'mental health literacy' educational trajectory for future farmers and horticulturalists in Flemish higher education.

Via co-creation sessions, the project examined how the existing happiness triangle can be used to design tools for future farmers and horticulturalists to take their mental well-being into their own hands.

A course was designed, consisting of ready-to-use teaching materials and magazines with information, exercises and testimonials from farmers. The method and tools were tested with students and adjusted according to their feedback.

Guidelines and materials developed by the project are now available to all courses in higher agricultural education in Flanders, and can be downloaded from the website or requested as a ready-to-use package from BOEK (Boeren Op Een Kruispunt - Farmers at a crossroads).

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/  
good-practice/mental-well-  
being-starts-school](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/mental-well-being-starts-school)



RURAL YOUTH

**€ 158 500**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 66 701**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

**LEADER/CLLD**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2021-2024**

COUNTRY

 **the Netherlands**

## Food station

**An innovative learning lab for fruit-growers to become sustainable food entrepreneurs and regional stakeholders of the future.**

Two young food companies moved in 2021 into a former furniture factory in Culemborg and developed the idea to start the Food Station (Voedelsestation) in the factory and surrounding land.

The Food Station is a cooperative currently with ten members / producers, expected to grow to 20-25 in the coming years. They are all focused on making, processing and innovating around fruit-based products and aim to contribute to making the food system more sustainable through short regional and circular value chain concepts.

The Food Station plays an important role as a 'learning-work factory' for fruit-growers and other regional stakeholders via training programmes. It is an important partner and hub for educational activities

on food system innovation and food processing. The growers and farmers meet and work together with the innovative food-makers, residents and customers in the region.

Among other activities, the project contributed to the development of 'The future fruit entrepreneur' living lab, with 22 participants taking part in two week-long courses, and around 80 participants joining in two series of Fruit Innovation Labs.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/food-station](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/food-station)





RURAL YOUTH

**€ 26 799**  
TOTAL BUDGET**€ 10 597**  
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 1

**Knowledge transfer  
& information actions**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2023**

COUNTRY

 **Austria**

## Young entrepreneurs training course

**A high-quality professional development course to promote young people's personal strengths and leadership qualities.**

Rural Youth Austria, a non-formal education provider, used CAP funding to design and implement a training course for young entrepreneurs. This annual high-quality professional development course is structured in four modules: self-confidence and moderation, project management, conflict management and motivation, and project implementation.

Taking part in the project helps young people generate value for their rural regions or farms. International trainers are available to provide theoretical input and help transfer knowledge from theory to practice.

30 young people take part in the training course every year, with Rural Youth Austria ensuring gender balance when selecting candidates. The course goes on to have a long-lasting effect on young people in

rural areas, with 300 projects each year implemented or co-initiated by graduates in communities or on farms. Some projects carried out as part of the training programme have won national awards and enhanced the reputation of agriculture and rural regions.

The training course is categorised at level 4 in the Austrian National Qualification Framework, which is structured in line with the eight-level European Qualifications Framework.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/young-entrepreneurs-training-course](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/young-entrepreneurs-training-course)





RURAL YOUTH

**€ 43 217**  
TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 19 998**  
EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19  
**LEADER/CLLD**

PROJECT PERIOD    COUNTRY  
**2022-2023**     **Estonia**

## Mobile youth centre

**Getting young people involved in creating their own mobile youth centre from a repurposed sea container.**

Through the determination and collaboration of young people, along with supportive individuals, companies and the municipality itself, a mobile youth centre housed in a repurposed 20-foot sea container became a very special gathering place for young people in Toila (Eastern Estonia).

The centre is located in different areas of the municipality throughout the summer, and offers a service with an innovative and sustainable approach to local youth between the ages of 7 and 26, which empowers and supports the development of independent, initiative-taking, entrepreneurial young people who contribute to society.

The concept of the youth centre was created in cooperation with a team of young people and based on their wishes, needs and interests. The sea container

can be moved to different areas where young people gather, extending to people who are not usually reached by such services.

In the first season (June – September 2023), 170 young people visited the mobile youth centre (87 boys, 83 girls). Around 40 youngsters were able to participate in activities related to youth work for the first time.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/mobile-youth-centre](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/mobile-youth-centre)





RURAL YOUTH

**€ 41 090**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 36 981**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

**LEADER/CLLD**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2019-2021**

COUNTRY

 **Hungary**

## CTAY youth centres - with young people, for young people

**Raising awareness of youth work and projects, developing responsible local young people who can be the future of the region, and seeing them as partners.**

The CTAY - Central Transdanubian Alliance for Youth project took place in the area of the Balaton Uplands Local Action Group and was divided into three sections: the Value Guard Programme (expanding the Value Guard network, which involves young people in the mapping, archiving and recording of local values); the incubator programme (building contacts between local young people and the business community); and the key youth workers programme (bringing together key youth workers and building cooperation).

The project organised 4 major events, 16 workshops and 9 study tours for young people to get to know the trademark-holder businesspeople of the region, also creating recruitment opportunities. There where

5 'kalákas' (community work events) organised, with more than 100 young people and 10 youth workers participating. These events strengthened the attachment to the region of young people, who were given tasks and responsibilities.

Notable results include the creation of two new Value Guard groups, with more young people involved in the Value Guard Programme; involving 20 young people in the youth incubator programme; and establishing a wider professional network of young workers.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/ctay-youth-centres-young-people-young-people](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/ctay-youth-centres-young-people-young-people)





**ARIA WINNER 2024**

ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION

**€ 276 271**  
TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 116 034**  
EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 16

**Cooperation**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2022-2024**

COUNTRY

**+ Finland**



## Recycling farm plastics

### Developing sustainable solutions for storing, managing and reusing agricultural plastic waste.

This EIP-AGRI Operational Group aimed to develop sustainable solutions for storing, managing and reusing agricultural plastic waste, focusing on improving recycling across farms, logistics and material technology.

It was led by Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences and its partners included a university of applied sciences and a regional farmers' association. The project team combined professionals in agriculture, horticulture, logistics, materials engineering and chemistry, with participation from several farms and businesses.

Plastic waste was investigated on a total of 377 farms, and information related to its transport and utilisation was collected from 15 companies in the waste chain (logistics, plastics processors and plastic waste users). The project collected more than 1 500 million kilograms of plastic waste from 173 farms. Profitable business opportunities were modelled fairly for all par-

ties in the value chain, and preconditions for sorting, collecting and reusing plastic waste were developed.

The project facilitated collaboration among all stakeholders in the agricultural plastic waste chain, sharing information on previously unidentified waste management challenges. It developed operating models for logistics and a service for collecting plastic waste, and prepared guidelines for plastics recycling.



Find out more online:

[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/recycling-farm-plastics](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/recycling-farm-plastics)



Watch the [interview](#) with the project holders.

ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION**HIGHLY COMMENDED****€ 73 781**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 25 196**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 10

**Agri-environment-climate**

RDP MEASURE 13

**Areas with constraints**

PROJECT PERIOD

COUNTRY

**2022-2026** **Spain**

## La Junquera regenerative farm and rural development initiative

**Implementing sustainable farming practices and offering educational and entrepreneurial opportunities to rural youth.**

This innovative project in south-east Spain focuses on implementing regenerative and sustainable farming practices while offering educational and entrepreneurial opportunities to rural youth. It also created the Regeneration Academy, where participants learn about agroecology, soil conservation and organic farming practices, promoting the revitalisation of rural communities.

Since its inception, the project has restored 2 500 hectares, planted 30 000 trees, and trained over 1 000 young farmers and professionals in regenerative agriculture techniques.

The project is focused on young farmers (under 40 years old), university and high school students, rural entrepreneurs and local community members,

and involves collaboration with universities for research programmes, as well as partnerships with environmental organisations for reforestation and biodiversity conservation.

The project also served as an example of good networking, with the creation of a network of young entrepreneurs and professionals sharing knowledge and best practices in regenerative agriculture. The research programme in the Regeneration Academy is made up of 65 % women and 35 % men, fostering a balanced and inclusive learning environment.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/la-junquera-regenerative-agriculture-and-rural-development-initiative](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/la-junquera-regenerative-agriculture-and-rural-development-initiative)





ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION

**€ 160 000**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 67 200**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 7

**Basic services & village renewal**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2020-2021**

COUNTRY

**+ Finland**

## Lapland shepherd holidays: authentic experiences and open landscapes

**Promoting the diversity of agricultural environments and village tourism while involving the locals in the restoration of cultural landscapes.**

The project aimed to promote the diversity of agricultural environments and village tourism in Lapland, a rapidly expanding destination, while also increasing the residents' competence and knowledge in restoring cultural landscapes.

The project selected seven pilot villages across Lapland and identified development measures based on their needs, the cultural environment and the development of village tourism. It organised 49 participatory events related to cultural history, the restoration of building heritage and landscape management, with a total of 596 participants.

The result was the Lapland Shepherd Holidays concept, a sustainable tourism experience focused on

caring for animals that are part of cultural landscapes. The Lapland Shepherd Holiday Network was developed, offering holidays at eight sites.

The project involved different stakeholders in an extensive cooperation network related to the management of cultural environments. The project had a particular emphasis on young people and women. Overall, 19 young people found employment in landscape management thanks to the project.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/lapland-shepherd-holidays-authentic-experiences-and-open-landscapes](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/lapland-shepherd-holidays-authentic-experiences-and-open-landscapes)



ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION**€ 1 723 540**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 1 723 540**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 16

**Cooperation**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2021-2024**

COUNTRY

 **Ireland**

## Farm Carbon E.I.P.

**Sustainable solutions to reduce emissions from agricultural peat pastures, restoring degraded peatlands and researching viable crops.**

This two-year pilot project, run by Green Restoration Ireland, set out to find sustainable solutions to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from agricultural peat pastures – one of Ireland's most significant sources of greenhouse gases. The project worked with 23 farmers in three counties and was an EIP-AGRI Operational Group.

Farm Carbon adopted a three-stage process: baseline participating farm habitats across the key environmental 'pillars' of biodiversity, carbon and water quality; implementing measures to improve environmental performance in these areas for all farm habitats; and measuring the subsequent improvements.

Large areas of on-farm peatland and other habitats were restored, upgraded and/or created as a result of the project actions. An enormous amount of ed-

ucation and awareness-raising was carried out and helped to increase the understanding of the options for the sustainable use of peatland resources, rather than just writing them off as merely for intensive agriculture or even as wastelands.

Farm Carbon E.I.P. is also developing an Irish Peatland Community Code to finance the restoration of degraded Irish peatlands. The research findings will provide policy recommendations for sustainable peat-based agriculture in Ireland.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/  
good-practice/farm-carbon-eip](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/farm-carbon-eip)



ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION

€ 262 104  
TOTAL BUDGET

€ 84 867  
EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 4

**Investments in physical assets**

RDP MEASURE 19

**LEADER/CLLD**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2014-2022**

COUNTRY



## Utopia Space

**Technology and agriculture unite to promote a greener, more sustainable future, raising awareness of the urgency to change habits.**

Utopia Space is a pioneering nationwide project in the field of sustainability and environmental preservation, created by Plako, a technology company located in a village, which acquired an agricultural area of over a hectare.

Utopia combines a co-working space with an organic farm, creating a harmonious environment between work and nature. One of the most emblematic milestones is the construction of the main building, featuring 2 200 used tyres, 11 000 soda cans and 75 000 cork stoppers and using resource-efficient technology.

Integrated into this space, AMU.bio is a certified biological nursery for aromatic and medicinal plants, producing over 90 species, sold exclusively through the online store. It is one of the few nurseries to propagate plants by cuttings with 100 % success in all seasons and the only organic producers to produce national varieties such as oregano and rosemary.

Utopia's commitment to sustainability and innovation has already attracted over 1 200 national and international visitors to this unique environment to learn about the plant production processes.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/  
good-practice/utopia-space](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/utopia-space)



ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION**€ 248 785**

TOTAL BUDGET

**€ 187 491**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP SUB-MEASURE 16.5

**Support for joint action to mitigate or adapt to climate change and joint approaches to environmental projects and sustainable environmental practices**

PROJECT PERIOD

**2021-2024**

COUNTRY

**Slovenia**

## Farming with, and for, biodiversity on lowland farms

**New conservation measures for three species of bird also improved conditions at nature reserves and adapted them to face climate change.**

The project designed new conservation measures for three species of birds which nest mainly on arable fields, as well as steps to protect pollinators and restore two grassland habitat types.

Its principal achievement was conserving and improving habitat types. The project established 5 000 m<sup>2</sup> of nature reserves and fostered the adoption of measures to help the area adapt to climate change, including planting clover grass strips, flower strips and fallow land, and hedgerows. A feasibility study of transferring tested measures into practice was performed.

The main target group of the project included those directly relevant to its success and sustainability, namely farmers and agricultural advisers in the area,

professional ornithologists and volunteers, and agricultural, biological and environmental sciences experts and students. The extended target group reached stakeholders at the national level and was key to the wider dissemination of the project results.


Knowledge on biodiversity and practical experiences were disseminated to 60 farm holdings, 43 experts and 20 students. A network of 'lapwing volunteers' was also formed and a training course for farmers held.

Find out more online:





[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/  
good-practice/farming-and-  
biodiversity-lowland-farms](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/farming-and-biodiversity-lowland-farms)


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