



**CASE
STUDIES**



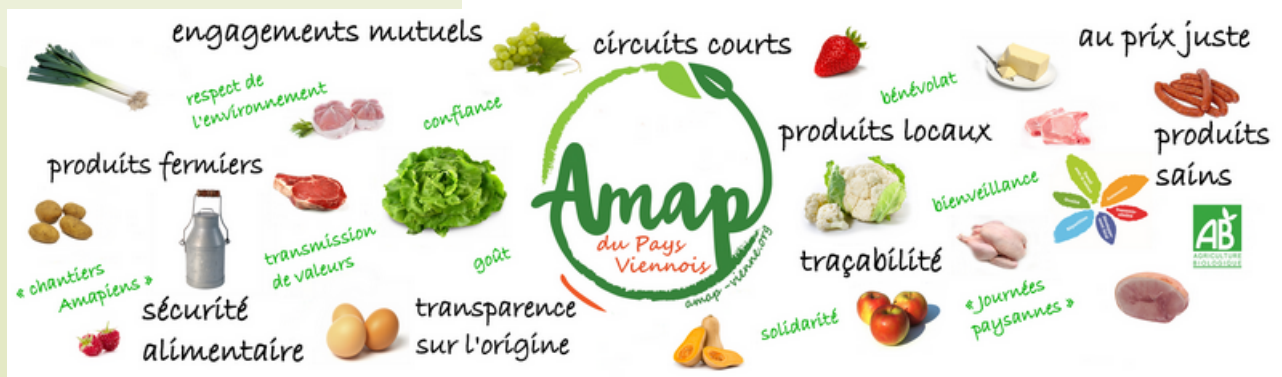
CASE STUDY 1



AMAP France

Overview

AMAP, Association pour le Maintien d'une Agriculture Paysanne. The aim of these associations is to create a direct link between producers and consumers, in order to promote peasant and organic farming.



Challenges

- Distribution of healthy products
- Use of short food chains
- Fair trade

Solution

The principle of an AMAP is based on a contract between the producer and the customer for a whole season. During this period, the consumer undertakes to buy a basket, the size and price of which are fixed in advance.

Depending on the partners in the association, the baskets are composed of dairy products, eggs, meat, bread, fruit and vegetables.

Some AMAPs may also provide regional specialties such as biscuits, cider, honey, sweet or alcoholic drinks, etc. The products vary according to the season and the farmers.

Results

With nearly 1,600 AMAPs in France, the AMAP model is present throughout the country.

Baskets are distributed on days and at times defined by each AMAP.

The AMAPs can be housed on a farm, if a number of partners are located in the vicinity. Or they can have a distribution point in the city centre to be closer to their consumers: grocery shop, community centre, community hall, religious building, car park, etc.

The website of the national network can be used to identify the nearest AMAP, link: <http://www.reseau-amap.org/recherche-amap.php>



CASE STUDY 2



La Ruche Qui Dit Oui

Overview

La Ruche qui dit oui! is a French commercial enterprise based on the collaborative economy. It provides farmers and food processors with an internet platform to facilitate short-circuit sales. This service is intended for the marketing of agricultural food production and food processing, with the hive manager and Equanum SAS being the intermediaries interested in the percentage of the transactions between the food producers and processors and the consumers.



Challenges

Equanum SAS is a for-profit company, which aims to "reduce the number of intermediaries between producers and artisans and consumers". To achieve this, users are put in touch with producers and processors on the website when they join a "Beehive". The hive, characterised by a fixed address, can offer products from producers and processors. Via this website, producers and processors put the products and processes they can provide in the catalogue, at the price they want, and consumers place orders. If the number of orders for a product is too low, producers can decide not to deliver it, in order to remain profitable. Members only pay for the products that are delivered.

Each Hive has a manager who looks for producers and processors, members and a place to host the distributions. Once he has a large enough community, he prepares the sales and then the distribution. In order to perpetuate the hive, the manager canvasses suppliers, his role being to animate the community.

Solution

The company, founded on 1 October 2010 by Guilhem Chéron, Marc-David Choukroun and Mounir Mahjoubi, presents its platform as an "optimisation of short circuit sales by offering producers and craftsmen an interactive web platform that allows them to propose products each week where members can come and collect their order in their presence". The first sales area opened on 21 September 2011 in Le Fauga, near Toulouse. The concept is being replicated in France, mainly around major cities.

In November 2012, La Ruche qui dit Oui! obtained the "Social Enterprise" approval. Since the law on the social economy of 2014, this approval has been replaced by the "Social Utility Company" (ESUS) approval, which it holds until its renewal in 2019 [ref. needed].

Results

Key figures:

1,500 Beehives - 10,000 Producers - 225,000 distributions - 210,000 clients - 250 million euros - 10,000 press articles - 250,000 visits per month.



Future plans

There are plans "La Ruche qui dit Oui!" to become a network of shops, after the success of its short circuit sales system.



CASE STUDY 3



RMT alimentation locale

Overview

Short food circuits have been on the rise since the end of the 1990s, in France as in many countries around the world. The Local Food Mixed Technology Network (MTN), supported by the French Ministry of Agriculture, brings together more than thirty research, development and training organisations with a view to improving knowledge of these circuits, extended to the notion of "short local food chains", and to provide better support for them, with a view to sustainable food.

Challenges

The Local Food Mixed Technology Network (RMT), by bringing together players in research, training, and development, aims to provide both answers and tools to producers and the organisations that support them, local authorities, associations, etc., not forgetting the agricultural colleges.

Led by the Fédération Régionale des CIVAM (Centres d'initiatives pour valoriser l'agriculture et le milieu rural) de Bretagne, co-led by Inrae (Institut national de recherche pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et l'environnement) and affiliated to Acta (Association de coordination technique agricole), it is structured around 2 axes and 4 working groups with a view to:

- o Capitalising on the knowledge available on these chains and examining in depth the subjects that are important for their actors, with a view to strengthening the contribution of these chains to the sustainability of agriculture, food, and the development of territories
- o Train actors, and transfer knowledge and tools for successful integration in these chains
- o Disseminate knowledge about these chains through meetings, summaries, articles for professionals and the general public, etc.

Solution

2 work directions:

Axis 1

Entrepreneurial strategies in sustainability: agro-ecological transition, small-scale processing, and value chain.

Axis 2

Relocation of food in the resilience of territories: local supply, territorialized food systems, and food transition.

Results

Publications produced within the framework of the RMT Local Food are published on the RMT website: www.rmt-alimentation-locale.org and widely distributed through the channels appropriate to the type of publication.

Future plans



In the future, they want to continue to work with separate groups to raise awareness about the importance of local food produced in a natural way. Culinary workshops were held for staff working in the kitchens of public institutions. The chef asked the school cooks which dishes were not preferred by schoolchildren. He then prepared these meals in a slightly different way to make them more visually appealing and acceptable, encouraging them to adapt to children's tastes without compromising on the quality and nutritional value of the meals.



CASE STUDY 4

IL MULINO DELLA ROCCA

Overview

The company is located in a small medieval village, Roccaprebalza, in the municipality of Berceto, defined by the owners as uncontaminated territory, where they make their km0 products.

They have been cultivating uncultivated fields with passion and organic methods for more than 60 years, rediscovering traditions and flavours of the past.



Challenges

Farmers had to find new solutions in order to differentiate themselves from longer supply chains and meet consumer's needs. Il mulino della Rocca offers to their costumers high quality products, cropped through a biological method.

Their products are cultivated in an uncontaminated area, not so much populated but that still allows to create a direct and trusting relationship with the consumer. This area for a very long time was uncultivated thus the main goal was to regenerate the fields and start with a smaller production to test revenues.

Solution

To overcome the problems linked to a small customer base they created:

A website
Social media platforms
Newsletter
Online shop
Events and new content

To allow their products to reach as many customers as possible.

Results

Il mulino della Rocca continues to invest, communicate with their customers through their social media platforms and website. They try to involve as much as possible the consumer into their production.

They are part of the Altevalli consortium which supports and protects nature, agriculture and the natural production cycle.

The website of the national network can be used to identify the nearest AMAP, link: <http://www.reseau-amap.org/recherche-amap.php>



Future plans

Their objectives for the future are the following:

Increase raw material selfproduction
Become a multifunctional company
Become more interactive with the consumer



CASE STUDY 5

MONTAGNA VERDE



Overview

Montagna Verde agriturismo was born on 15 July 1995, located in Lunigiana, upper Tuscany. The building had been abandoned for decades and had greatly deteriorated over time. It is now considered one of the most evocative towers in Lunigiana, a land of ancient civilisation and ancient traditions.



Challenges

Farmers had to find new solutions in order to differentiate themselves from longer supply chains and meet consumer's needs. Montagna Verde is located in a small area, focused in qualitative production. As an agriturismo they are able to offer their products not only by selling them directly but also by offering these through their restaurant. Their main aim is to respect biodiversity and small-scale productions.

Solution

To overcome the problem linked with a small customer base they created:

A website

Social media platforms

Newsletter

Online shop

Various activities (i.e., educational farm)

To allow their products to reach as many customers as possible.

Results

Montagna Verde continues to invest and focus on qualitative production that respects biodiversity.

They are able to offer various types of activities outside of the agritourism thanks to connections with other close companies.



Future plans

Their objectives for the future are the following:

Increase raw material selfproduction

Social media presence



CASE STUDY 6

PODERE CRISTINA

Overview

Podere Cristina is a multifunctional farm, established in 2012. It is located in the countryside, near Parma.

Parma is the know Italian food valley, characterized by several food productions and small to medium companies dedicated to food.



Challenges

Farmers had to find new solutions in order to differentiate themselves from longer supply chains and meet consumer's needs. Podere Cristina values its products and wishes to guarantee high quality to their consumers. They wish to put in light what the countryside has to offer through a production system that respects the seasonality of the products.

Their approach with the costumer is closer and more direct, indeed they offer special experiences such as: rent meeting rooms, cooking classes, experiences in the farm and excursions.

Solution

To overcome the problem linked with a small customer base they created:

A website
Social media platforms
Newsletter
Online shop

To allow their products to reach as many customers as possible.

Results

Podere Cristina continues to invest, to communicate with the consumer and try to come in contact as much as possible with them through social media platforms. They also continue making connections with other small companies such as Pezzarossa, really close to them, which is helping them with wool supply and their “wool project” initiated to valorize the cornigliese sheep wool. Podere Cristina continues to support a circular economy by minimizing waste as much as possible and biological farming to become more sustainable.



Future plans

Their objectives for the future are the following:

Increase raw material selfproduction
Strengthen circular economy approach
Social media presence



CASE STUDY 7

Eco-school canteens in a Biosphere Reserve: short circuits, seasonal products and health (Galicia- Spain)



Overview

The Mariñas Coruñesas e Terras do Mandeo Biosphere Reserve sits by the Atlantic Ocean, in Galicia, occupying 116,000 hectares, formed by the hydrographic basins of the Mero and Mandeo rivers. With 200,000 inhabitants, it is one of the most populated Reserves in Spain. Historically, the territory was the main food provider for the city of A Coruña.

However, in recent decades many agricultural lands have been abandoned, which has led to depopulation in rural areas, and, consequently, the risk of fires, loss of biodiversity and traditional landscape.

Mariñas Coruñesas is creating a Local Food System. It promotes organic agriculture as an employment opportunity among young people. In last years, are developing different initiatives:

- Identification of areas for people who wants to create a farm
- Promotion seasonal and local products in Eco-production
- Creation an own brand for local products (Biosphere Reserve label)
- Identification of employment opportunities (fruit production, orchard)
- Development of local supply chains
- Promotion the recovery of local varieties
- Establishment of eco-canteens in schools



The initiative was promoted by the Local Action Group (LAG) "Mariñas - Betanzos", managing the LEADER programme in partnership with the regional government, within the framework of the CAP (2014-2021) and supported by EAFRD funds.

Challenges

Offering children quality food and balanced menus is a duty of society, and the school canteen service can become another educational space to convey values such as healthy eating, based on environmentally friendly production.

The initiative seeks the collaboration of all the agents involved (students, teachers, kitchen staff, families, producers, administrations, farms, etc.) so that priority is given to local, seasonal and organic food, thus improving the nutritional balance of the school menu, promoting the local economy, the socio-economic development of the environment and contributing to the mitigation of climate change.

Solution

Through the EcoComedores initiative, the school canteens, will have the opportunity to use local organic products to prepare their menus.

Results

In 2015, a pilot programme was launched for the introduction of organic menus in schools in the area.

Within the framework of this project, it was possible to offer one organic menu to around **800 pupils** from three schools during the 2014-2015 academic year.

A total of **eleven local organic producers** took part in the initiative. This project became a catalyst for the subsequent supply of organic products to some schools in the area by enabling contact with the schools, involving the kitchen staff, organising the farms and improving logistics.

As a result of this collaboration between LAG, School-Canteen and Acaracola organic farms, several certified farms began to join forces and try to offer a common service to schools that trusted the initiative. Thus, in 2017, **the Producers' Association ALEGA was created to organise production and synchronise it with the needs of the schools.**

Throughout 2017 and 2018, work was carried out to train producers and kitchen staff, gradually increasing awareness of the objectives pursued. Crops were planned annually and purchasing and distribution systems were organised to reach a peak of 15 schools involved for a total of **2,600 menus served** at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year.



Future plans

The project has evolved from the initial simple telephone contact between producers and schools to a spreadsheet in the cloud. Nowadays the project is in the process of defining a virtual purchasing "marketplace" structure. This online marketplace should facilitate the centralisation of supply and demand in order to improve the service for all parties involved. If this initiative proves to be effective, the next phase would be to assess the technical and economic feasibility of a potential physical logistics centre.

This project is being supported for the years 2021 and 2022 by the Carasso Foundation (<https://www.fondationcarasso.org/es/>), through its Sustainable Food Programme. Corporate Canteens are in contact with the project, for its incorporation.

Info: www.marinabetanzos.gal



CASE STUDY 8



Son de Lugo. Marketplace for food producers from the province of Lugo-Spain.

Overview

Son de Lugo was born in 2021 from the union of 13 agri-food producers from the province of Lugo who started a cooperation network to sell and distribute their products throughout Galicia and the Iberian Peninsula through a joint online platform or marketplace. Prompted by the fall in demand as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the HORECA sector (acronym for HOtel, RestAurant and CAFé), these producers sought new formulas and tools to provide added value to the products of SMEs and micro-SMEs based in Lugo's rural areas.

The project is inspired by the idea of traditional markets and local fairs, with short distribution channels, and it uses technological tools to allow a direct connection between producers and end-consumers, thus encouraging consumer loyalty.

The initiative is supported and funded by the Rural Environment Department of the Deputación de Lugo (Provincial Council) and it is coordinated by Román Sánchez, manager of the cooperative 'A Carqueixa', which has a successful experience in the online marketing of their meat production through the brand 'O Sabor dos Ancares'.



Challenges

Son de Lugo is based on the idea of bringing together innovative projects, rooted in and linked to the territory and its gastronomic culture, to help to change society's view of the countryside, to fight against rural depopulation and to put people at the centre.

In addition, the project opens the possibility for producers to sell and distribute their products jointly using digital tools, which would otherwise be very complex and costly for these small producers on an individual basis.

Solution

On their website (<https://sondelugo.com/es/>) potential customers can access to a large number of quality products produced in Lugo, including cheeses from the three protected designations of origin (PDI) in Galicia, wine from the Ribeira Sacra protected designation of origin, beans from the Faba de Lourenzá protected designation of origin, Ternera Galega Suprema beef, Porco Celta pork and purebred Galician foal meat.

Other available products include 'butelos', 'androllas' and other typical cold meats from the Lugo mountains; hake from Celeiro´s port, caught using methods that respect the marine ecosystem, and other seafood from the Cantabrian Sea, with special attention to the fishing season for albacore tuna known as 'costera'.

Son de Lugo's catalogue also includes honey from various producers, bakery products, dehydrated organic turnip greens, herbs for infusions, spices, oleates and natural cosmetic products.

NUESTROS PRODUCTORES



Results

There are currently more than 30 brands of producers selling through this website, reaching more and more customers with a wide range of products in constant evolution and growth.

The heart of the project Son de Lugo was the initial design of a marketing strategy based on the 4 pillars that make a project profitable: Product, Price, Distribution and Communication.

- o The keystones of the product strategy are profitability, differentiation, and quality.
- o The keystones of the communication strategy are the achievement of results (sales and visibility) and a sound foundation for long-term, sustainable and profitable work.
- o The keystones of the distribution strategy are agility in the management of shipments and simplification of the process to ensure the smooth functioning of the platform and to keep costs under control.

Future plans

In 2022, the website consolidated its position and many producers joined it. In 2023, the aim will be to take a great leap forward in the marketing strategy through the sale of ready-to-eat cooked dishes, thus achieving greater added value and increasing the producers' income.

The support of the existing infrastructure and the experience gained over the years will allow them to use the existing distribution channels and delivery centre, as a basis for developing these new business channels, while maintaining the identity and objectives of the project.

At present, the implementation of the e-commerce platform has enabled the consolidation of three jobs: the person in charge of coordinating the advice provided to integrated producers, the person in charge of logistics and distribution (who receives the orders, packs the sets and manages the deliveries), and the communication coordinator, in charge of controlling and updating the contents of the website and social media.

To sum up, Son de Lugo is a project with a life of its own, whose sustainable development is based on the union and joint work of all the entrepreneurs involved in it, at all levels of operation and organisation of the online platform.

Solution

The association works at a regional level and has three sections: the Eco market in Plaza de España in Valladolid, the shared-use kitchen, and the Food hub (collection and distribution centre). The shared-use kitchen and the Food hub are in Mercaolid facilities, an important food distribution center in Castilla y León.

The Eco market in Plaza de España takes place every second Sunday of the month. It is a space to promote local farmers' markets, short food supply chain models, and organic consumption.



The shared-use kitchen is financed with the support of the Foundation Daniel and Nina Carasso. It allows producers to have seasonal products bottled all year round with sanitary guarantees, bringing added value by transforming the raw material into preserves. This means they can take advantage of production peaks and avoid harvest losses.



Food hub: the collection and distribution centre began to operate autonomously and definitively in November 2020. Distribution and sales are time-consuming and complex tasks for producers. This model of aggregation, distribution, and marketing strengthens the capacity of producers to satisfy wholesale, retail, and institutional demand.



Results

The eco market in the Plaza de España is now held every second Sunday of the month and has recovered the same turnout as before Covid-19 lockdown.

The shared-use kitchen is currently working with 4 different production lines:

- o Bakery and pastries
- o Gluten-free bakery and pastries
- o Processed vegetables (preserves, dried fruit and nuts, jams, etc.)
- o Prepared dishes (fifth range products)

The 22 active members cover a wide range of products including fresh vegetables, nuts, sweets, mushrooms, eggs, chicken meat, milk and cheese, gluten-free bakery, snails, and special products such as spirulina.

The food hub has started to collaborate with other Spanish local food hubs in the area of digitalisation and online sales.



Members

Future plans

Seeking ways to de-seasonalise the attendance at the Eco market in Plaza de España. Attendance decreases during the winter when the range of fresh produce is reduced

Promoting the food hub in Mercaolid, which is not yet widely known by consumers

Developing a co-manufacture approach for farmers who lack the time to do their own processing during harvest season

Fostering the fourth range products line (fruits and vegetables ready to use or for consumption) demanded by collective catering (hospitals, schools, etc.)

Increasing the number and the degree of compromise of producers

Increasing market share by bundling and by extending the season (pre-season crop planning)



CASE STUDY 10

LAS Notranjska, Slovenia



Overview

LAS Notranjska, together with the Local Action Groups of Southern and South-Eastern Slovenia, implemented a two-and-a-half-year project "Hand in hand to quality nutrition", co-financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). The Regional Development Agency Zeleni kras and LOA d.o.o. from Cerknica also participated in the project within the LAS Notranjska.

The aim of the project was to create the conditions for an efficient system of local sustainable supply of local food, especially to public institutions, and thus to create short supply chains. Participants adopted a comprehensive approach to creating the conditions for a sustainable supply of local food. They examined both the existing local supply and its potential for expansion and the needs of the final consumers, i.e. schools, kindergartens and nursing homes.



Challenges

On both sides, certain obstacles were identified from the outset and confirmed by the situation analysis. On the side of the local suppliers, the problem is insufficient quantities to enter the market on their own, the neglect of peaks, and the lack of cohesion between suppliers. In order to make the organisation of school meals more appropriate and to involve more local food providers, the main obstacles identified in public institutions were a lack of knowledge of public procurement legislation, a lack of knowledge of the local market and the absence of professional catering organisers.

Solution

On the basis of these starting points and the analysis of the situation, a number of activities have been carried out to reduce these barriers. A model tender documentation for the procurement of food has been prepared for public institutions and is available to all public institutions. A primary school preparing a call for tenders for school meals was assisted in the preparation of lots, which do not have to be included in the public procurement but can be supplied directly from local suppliers. LOA Ltd. was also involved in this process and set up a distribution centre as part of the project. They buy produced and processed food from local suppliers and supply them to public institutions and other interested final consumers (during the Covid-19 epidemic, deliveries to households increased). Public institutions had the greatest interest for seasonal vegetables and fruit, and milk and dairy products. The establishment of this centre overcame several obstacles on both sides by shortening the procedures with providers and institutions.

Results

A lot of activities have been devoted to awareness-raising. For kindergarten and first-grade pupils, a board game called "The Good Eats Family Garden" was created to encourage children to think about the benefits of seasonal and local food in an entertaining way. School gardens were set up in primary schools, where schoolchildren learned to build raised beds, sow and plant, set up insect hotels, dry herbs for teas and carry out various other activities. For adults, study circles were organised on how to use local herbs and spices.

Future plans

In the future, they want to continue to work with separate groups to raise awareness about the importance of local food produced in a natural way. Culinary workshops were held for staff working in the kitchens of public institutions. The chef asked the school cooks which dishes were not preferred by schoolchildren. He then prepared these meals in a slightly different way to make them more visually appealing and acceptable, encouraging them to adapt to children's tastes without compromising on the quality and nutritional value of the meals.





CASE STUDY 11



Company LOA, Slovenia

Overview

LOA d.o.o. has been working in the field of local self-sufficiency since 2013. The company's mission is to connect local producers and supply the wider community with quality products from the local area. The company started its operations in the small town of Pivka, Slovenia with the opening of the Štacuna store. The shop offered only locally sourced products. The problem was that the purchasing power was too small, so they closed the shop and switched to supplying public institutions (e.g. kindergartens, schools, and elderly homes) with local produce.



Challenges

In the beginning, the problem was how to gain the trust of farmers and how to link farmers and public institutions. The following problems were encountered:

- Most of the difficulties were on the part of the public institutions, as it was almost impossible to compete with the prices of imported produce suppliers. Only a certain proportion of foodstuffs can be excluded from the tender
- Lack of supply from farmers. Nature and harvests are unpredictable.
- Slovenia is so small that when a natural disaster affects crops, they are affected in most of the country
- Decline of rural farms in Slovenia
- Covid pandemic

Solution

Public institutions are cash-strapped, as they cannot exceed the amount earmarked for food. Only a certain proportion of food can be excluded from a tender. With this idea in mind, the LOA employees have started contacting the staff of institutions to see whether they have tenders prepared in this way and whether they can offer them locally-produced food. It has been a long and difficult road, but over the years, with perseverance, it has worked. In the beginning, there was a lot of mistrust from the public institutions because they did not know the company. There was also fear whether LOA would be able to provide them with the quantities they needed.

In 2018, together with LAS Notranjska, they joined the project "Hand in hand to quality food", as one of its activities was to encourage young farmers to grow fruit and vegetables.

Results

Over time, they have gained trust and are now working with public institutions in Notranjska, Dolenjska, and central Slovenia.

Future plans

The Covid pandemic brought huge problems, as public institutions closed and there were no more contracts. They had to adapt to the situation. LOA started offering home-delivered boxes of fruit and vegetables. This meant a completely different dynamic for the company. They needed more space to prepare the boxes, as home delivery orders were smaller with many items, which required more preparation space, more packaging and additional packing. An additional person had to be recruited. Perseverance paid off and they got through the uncertain years. Due to uncertain times, they extended their offer to companies for which fruit boxes are prepared.





CASE STUDY 12



MAJNIKA ECOLOGICAL GREEN GARDEN, Žiče, Slovenia

Overview

The Majnika organic herb garden in Žiče (municipality of Slovenske Konjice) was designed by Majda Temnik, who has run a complementary activity on the farm since about 20 years ago. She was later joined by her daughter Katja, a former top Slovenian basketball player. Majnika Farm follows the principles of biodynamics. Artificial fertilisers, sprays, hybrids, plastic film, or heavy machinery are not used. Their motto is: The earth heals people with disabilities, just as people with disabilities heal the earth. But come to think of it, we are all "special needs" today, we all need treatment of one kind or another.



Challenges

It was a difficult start because of the long-established practice in public institutions to purchase most of their food products from large retailers selected by public tender.

The decisive criterion for tendering is low price.

The second problem was that the organisation of catering in public institutions was the responsibility of the staff in addition to all other regular duties. Often without the appropriate training and sufficient time for the organisation of catering. Small local providers such as Majnika had no experience working with institutions that require large quantities of food for their residents. They had to learn to adapt their offer to these orders and to adhere to agreements on the exact time of delivery of produce.

Solution

Majnika's performance has improved in recent years mainly due to four elements:

- 1) a change in the law which allowed public institutions to purchase a certain quantity of local foodstuffs outside the public tender procedure;
- 2) the training of chefs and the recruitment of suitably qualified persons to the post of catering organiser;
- 3) general awareness-raising by public institutions and the private sector about the higher quality of locally produced food, which does not take months to get from farm to fork and thousands of kilometres of travel;
- 4) Local providers have been trained in serious professional business and are aware of the need to meet their obligations to the letter.

Results

They want to continue their mission in future and bring the knowledge and understanding of natural education and the use of herbs and medicinal plants to the widest public possible. Therefore they organise natural history days, educational children's games, herbal cooking days, lectures and workshops on herbs and biodynamics, etc. In the herbal garden of the Žička Charterhouse, which they rent, they organise events such as the Light of Silence meditation in nature. They present their activity as an example of good practice: why and how they earned the titles of Innovative Young Farmer 2019, as chosen by the public, and Agrobusiness 2020 - Best Entrepreneur in Agriculture, as chosen by the expert jury.



Future plans

Despite the positive developments in recent years, they believe there is still a lot of space for cooperation between public institutions and local food providers. For this potential to be realised, it will require even more commitment on the part of the public institutions in this direction and even more flexibility on the part of local providers to respond to the needs of the institutions as quickly as possible. As in many areas of life, this type of cooperation shows that people who are aware of the great benefits of sourcing local food are willing to go above and beyond the call of duty to do so.

CASE STUDY 13



Virágoskút Biogazdaság – a community-driven biofarm in Balmazújváros, Hungary

Overview

Virágoskút Biogazdaság is a biofarm located in Balmazújváros, Hungary that produces high-quality seasonal products including fresh vegetables, fruits, meat, milk products, and canned goods. The farm has a community of 3000 conscious customers who buy on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. The farm was established over 41 years ago by Péter Rózsa, an independent farmer who began selling his products on small markets. In the 90s, the farm began exporting vegetables to multinational companies and Péter Rózsa became a biofarmer. He raises many kinds of animals, mostly native Hungarian species, and also has bees that play a key role in pollination and ensuring the quality of their products. The farm has access to a variety of native species and a supportive community of conscious customers who value high-quality, locally sourced products. The farm's focus on responsible and sustainable food production aligns with Hungary's growing interest in agroecological production and local and responsible consumption. The farm has diversified its product range and established its own factories to process its own animals and produce canned goods and milk products. They have overcome challenges in accessing markets and distribution channels by developing a loyal community of conscious consumers and building a network of collaboration with other local producers to promote short food supply chains and agroecological production.

Challenges

The farm faced challenges in accessing markets and distribution channels, high competition from large supermarkets and multinational food companies, and limited financial resources for expanding production and facilities.

Virágoskút Biogazdaság faced various challenges while developing their business, including:

- Limited access to markets and distribution channels
- High competition from large supermarkets and multinational food companies
- Limited financial resources for expanding production and facilities

Short food supply chains were a good solution for the farm as it allowed them to develop a community of conscious consumers who valued locally sourced, high-quality products. This approach enabled the farm to cut out intermediaries and sell directly to consumers, reducing costs and improving margins. The farm's focus on sustainable and responsible food production also aligns with the values of the local community and increases consumer trust.

Solution

To overcome the challenges faced, Virágoskút Biogazdaság implemented several solutions, including:

- Developing a community of conscious customers who valued locally sourced, high-quality products
- Building a network of collaboration with other local producers to promote short food supply chains and agroecological production
- Diversifying their product range and establishing their own factories to process their own animals and produce canned goods and milk products

The farm's **community**-driven approach allowed them to create a loyal customer base, which helped to reduce marketing and distribution costs. The farm also worked with other local producers to establish a network of collaboration, which allowed them to increase their reach and expand their product range. Additionally, the farm's focus on agroecological production and sustainable food practices helped to build consumer trust and differentiate them from larger competitors.

Results

Virágoskút Biogazdaság's focus on short food supply chains and sustainable food production has yielded several positive results, including:

- Building a loyal community of conscious consumers who value locally sourced, high-quality products
- Increasing consumer awareness and trust in sustainable food practices
- Creating a network of collaboration with other local producers to promote short food supply chains and agroecological production
- Diversifying their product range and expanding their facilities to process their own animals and produce canned goods and milk products
- Improving profit margins by selling directly to consumers and reducing marketing and distribution costs.



CASE STUDY 14



Zugló Community - Connecting Conscious Consumers with Sustainable Producers in Budapest, Hungary

Overview

In Budapest's Zugló district, an initiative was launched in February 2019 to address the community's need for direct access to ethically produced, sustainably grown, and preferably chemical-free food. The initiative, known as Zugló Bread Community's Handover Day, takes place every second Thursday of the week. It aims to bring together small-scale and artisanal farmers and to connect them with conscious customers, creating a network of producers who offer high-quality products. The market day initially started with a tasting event to gauge the demand among Zugló residents, and it received significant interest from nearby residents of all age groups.



Challenges

The main challenges faced by the Zugló Community's Handover Day include:

- Finding the right location to provide a convenient option for the buying community.
- Inviting quality producers who are committed to sustainability and chemical-free production.
- Ensuring a reliable source of clean and safe food for individuals with sensitivities.

Solution

To overcome these challenges, the Zugló Community's Handover Day has implemented the following solutions:

- Organizing a bi-weekly market day to facilitate direct producer and customer contact, providing an opportunity for personalized sales and meeting individual customer needs.
- Selecting producers and farmers based on quality criteria, personal experience, and their commitment to chemical-free production, sustainability, and fair market practices.
- Establishing a network of cooperation between short food supply chains and conscious consumers who value ecological production.

The Handover Day serves as a vital platform for conscious consumers to directly access chemical-free and sustainable food from trusted producers. This initiative fills the gap in Budapest's retail landscape, where finding high-quality produce from reliable sources can be challenging. The personal sales approach and direct contact between producers and customers allow for tailored offerings and build consumer confidence in the sustainable food industry.

Results

The Zugló Community's Handover Day has achieved the following results:

- Created a large and stable community of conscious customers who value sustainable and chemical-free products.
- Fostered direct producer and customer contact, enhancing transparency and trust.
- Established a successful model of meeting specific customer needs through direct collaboration between producers and buyers.
- Contributed to the growth of consumer confidence in the sustainable food industry.
- Facilitated the development of a network of cooperation within short food supply chains, benefiting conscious consumers and agroecological production.



CASE STUDY 15



Tóthék Picnic - Tóth Ferenc Winery

Overview

Tóthék Picnic - Tóth Ferenc Winery

Tóth Ferenc Winery is a 30 hectare winery located in Eger, Hungary, in the wine region of Eger. The family winery has been producing grapes and wine in the wine region for several generations. Their vineyards are located in four main vineyards, of which the Síkhegy vineyard is the second highest altitude vineyard in the Eger wine region with 66 hectares and seven hectares of vineyards. This is the site of the initiative called "Tóthék Piknik". At the centre of this area is a huge tree from which a magnificent panorama of the vineyards of the region can be admired.



Challenges

The main idea of the Tóthék Picnic was that the winery manager wanted to show what a wonderful place he lives in, how dazzling the wine region of Eger is and to show what beautiful wines can be made here. To show that as a wine region, it is equally suitable for making white and red wines. To convey this information and positive feeling, the wine-growing region was chosen as the venue for a public picnic event. Something to talk about wine, have music and make people feel good.

A problem was the location as an outdoor area and as a new programme event the introduction of this was a task to promote.

Solution

In order to make their event interesting, the first event in 2021 was linked to some kind of vine-related event, such as flowering, harvest and harvest festival. They communicated intensively at local level and on their online platforms.

Results

In 2022, due to the great interest, the winery decided to organise a public Tóthék Picnic every month in case of good weather. They receive continuous positive feedback, about the beauty of the place and the opportunity to meet the winery's representatives in person. The number of visitors to the programme is increasing.

The result is that a personal relationship can be established between producer and consumer through participation in an informal leisure programme, which leads to positive consumer behaviour.





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International partnership

Foodimprov'iders partners are organisations from six different EU countries. Sharing experience and ideas is one of the greatest assets of the project



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