

## Malta

### Entry of skilled/younger farmers

#### CAP funds help young farmer establish a family business in horticulture in Malta.

#### Summary

After finishing his studies and working in a university, Charles Zara decided to return home and take over the family farm. Following a review of market opportunities, he used CAP co-finance to set up his own cut flower business. The young farmer invested in two greenhouses (one high-tech and one traditionally managed) and set up a website to enable direct sales to his customers.



#### Location

Silema

#### Programming period

2014 – 2020

#### Priority

P2 – Competitiveness

#### Measure

M06 – Farm & business development

#### Funding

Total budget 70 000 (EUR)  
EAFRD 52 500 (EUR)  
National/Regional 17 500 (EUR)

#### Project duration

2019 – 2023

#### Project promoter

Charles Zara

#### Email

[info@themaltaflorist.com](mailto:info@themaltaflorist.com)

#### Website

<https://maltaflorist.com/>

#### Project Results

The beneficiary produces indoor- and outdoor-grown cut flowers across some 0,5 hectares of land.

Indoor production takes place in two greenhouses: the new one of 650 m<sup>2</sup> and a pre-existing, traditional one of 850 m<sup>2</sup>.

Thanks to direct e-sales, the business' profit margins turned out to be much higher (more than 200%) compared to flower sales via wholesalers.

The farm recovers and uses rainwater for irrigation, which covers 90% of its water needs.

#### Lessons & Recommendations

- The beneficiary designed and tested precise business models on several different crops before making his decision to invest in the cut-flowers niche.
- High-tech, modern greenhouses are the most cost-efficient method for cultivating flowers all year round.

## Context

Charles Zara's farm is in Rabat on the western side of the main island of Malta. After having completed his studies in business management he worked as a researcher at the University. However, when his father expressed his wish to retire, Charles decided to take over the family farm. He did an analysis to see which niche farming options would be the most profitable for a newly-established farmer, and he decided to invest in producing outdoor and indoor cut-flowers. He believed that by setting up an innovative, high-tech greenhouse business he could develop an activity that would provide him with the right balance of personal wellbeing and economic stability.

## Objectives

The aim of this investment project was to support a young farmer in establishing an innovative and competitive sustainable farming business.

## Activities

CAP co-finance was used for:

- setting up a new 650 m<sup>2</sup> greenhouse equipped with high-tech irrigation and climate-control systems, including shading and passive-venting equipment.
- starting the cut-flower cultivation both outdoor (growing sunflower, chrysanthemum, and stock flowers) and indoors (growing tulips, calla and lisianthus).
- creating a website to enable direct sales to Maltese customers ([www.themaltflorist.com](http://www.themaltflorist.com)).

## Main results

The beneficiary produced indoor- and outdoor-grown cut flowers across some 0.5 hectares of land in two different areas of the island (Rabat and Garghur). Indoor production takes place in two greenhouses: the new one of 650 m<sup>2</sup> and a pre-existing, traditional one of 850 m<sup>2</sup>.

Thanks to direct e-sales, the business' profit margins turned out to be much higher (more than 200%) compared to flower sales via wholesalers. As a result, Charles and his family make a decent income from their farm activities and plan to continue investing in the business.

The farm recovers and uses rainwater for irrigation, which covers 90% of its water needs.

## Key lessons

The planning phase of the project was very important. The beneficiary designed and tested precise business models on several different crops before making his decision to invest in the cut-flowers niche.

A key success factor was that the public authorities were very cooperative and supportive during the project development and implementation.

*"I love my small enterprise and I am confident that it will continue to be successful in the future."*