

Austria

Local Development

EAFRD funds contributed to the implementation of a nationwide programme that raises awareness among school children about sustainable food production.

Summary

An organic farm offers educational activities about the CO₂-neutral production of healthy food, specifically that grown in the traditional meadow orchards of the Mariazellerland region. The programme is part of the nationwide initiative 'Schule am Bauernhof,' which brings children closer to sustainable food production. As part



of its annual cycle of activities, the organic farm in Mariazell, used EAFRD funding through LEADER to purchase fruit trees which were planted on the farm by school children and observed by them over the course of a school year.

Location

Mariazellerland

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P6 – Social inclusion & local developmen

Measure

M19 – LEADER/CLLD

Funding

Total budget 4 242.00 (EUR)

EAFRD 2 714.88 (EUR)

National/Regional 678.72 (EUR)

Private 848.40 (EUR)

Project duration

2021 – 2021

Project promoter

Birgit and Franz Eder

Email

feldbauer@aon.at

Website

www.feldbauerhof.at

Project Results

40 orchard trees (old, more resilient varieties of apple, pear, plum, and creeper) planted by 60 children from the Mariazell elementary and secondary school.

In a few years time, the trees will bear fruit and the school programme will be further adapted to include the processing of the harvested fruit.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Raising public awareness about CO₂-neutral food production is an increasingly prominent issue, and programmes like 'Schule am Bauernhof' play a key role in enabling children and young people to understand and engage with the topics of climate change, resources use and the circular economy.

Context

Since 1998, the 'Schule am Bauernhof' programme has been one of the most successful educational initiatives focussed on Austria's agricultural sector. It started when committed young students started to design educational initiatives to help children - especially those from the city - make a closer connection to agriculture. During half- or full-day excursions, children and young people gain insight into the processes and procedures of different types of farming; such as dairy, arable, pig production, organic, alpine pasture and beekeeping.

The project 'Meadow Orchards in Mariazell' is part of the 'Schule am Bauernhof' programme, which Ms Eder's organic farm has been supporting for over 25 years. For centuries, this type of meadow orchard has contributed to the nutrition of the local population. Unfortunately, they are increasingly disappearing from the rural landscape due to changing climatic conditions.

Objectives

The aim of the 'Meadow Orchards in Mariazell' is to transfer knowledge and raise awareness among school students and young people about CO₂-neutral food production.

Activities

Ms Eder teaches school students about the rich biodiversity that exists in meadow orchards, the annual cycle of fruit trees, and the natural production of food.

Under this EAFRD funded LEADER initiative, a total of 40 orchard trees (old, more resilient varieties of apple, pear, plum, and creeper) were planted on Ms Eder's organic farm in collaboration with about 60 children from the Mariazell elementary and secondary school.

The aim was to teach them how to plant and manage young trees, with the students regularly visiting the meadow orchard to observe their growth over the course of the school year.

Main results

Since April 2021, the meadow orchard has attracted lots of local visitors from the region, in addition to students and teachers of the participating schools.

In a few years time, the trees will bear fruit and the school programme will be further adapted to include the processing of the harvested fruit.

Key lessons

Given that today's children and young people are tomorrow's consumers, these kinds of visits to organic farms are vital to help society to better understand and appreciate the food production process and the diversity of plants and animals that thrive on farms.

Additional information

www.schuleambauernhof.at

www.mariazellerland-

blog.at/streuobstwiese-beim-feldbauer-fam-eder-bepflanzung/allgemein/58242/



Funded by
the European Union