

Portugal

Entry of skilled/younger farmers

Location

Madalena

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P2 – Competitiveness

Measure

M06 - Farm and business development

Funding

Total budget 95 162.56 (EUR)

EAFRD 40 517.52 (EUR)

National/Regional 7 127.62

(EUR)

Private 47 517.42 (EUR)

Project duration

2018 – 2022

Project promoter

Luis Filipe da Silva Pereira

Email

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Website

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A producer of artisanal Spirulina used CAP support to differentiate and promote his artisanal product in the Portuguese market.

Summary

A producer of artisanal Spirulina used support from the Portuguese Rural Development Programme to differentiate and promote his high-quality niche product. He used the funds to establish the brand Tomar Natural and its dedicated logo, which is used on the packaging to distinguish his Spirulina for its quality. In addition, he set up a website with an online store.



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Project Results

The artisanal Spirulina of Tomar Natural is available at more than 20 points of sale all over the country.

Tomar Natural has gained nationwide appreciation and publicity as the product and the farm have captured the interest of television programmes, academic research, chefs, and the wider food industry.

The project offered an entrepreneurial opportunity to create a new income stream through producing, processing, and promoting a novel product.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ The final price of a product is often determined by a value-added premium for a niche product. This requires building a brand name so that the product is widely recognised by customers.

Context

In the Portuguese food market, there is a growing demand for natural, organic products, vitamins and supplements. Spirulina is a food that fully corresponds with this demand. The same trend applies to the consumption of superfoods, a category in which Spirulina is also included.

Luis Filipe da Silva Pereira is an organic farmer whose farm is near the city of Tomar, located in central Portugal. The area around Tomar is one of the most fertile regions not only in the country but the whole of the Iberian Peninsula. Previously, part of the farm was uncultivated, and in considering whether something could be produced there, Luis determined that the land could be used for cultivating Spirulina. Spirulina is a niche product with high revenues in the Portuguese market. At the same time, its cultivation requires little space, is not resource intensive and produces very little waste.

Objectives

The aim of this project was to invest in the production and processing of a competitive niche product that would create a new income source for the farm, but which would result in minimum environmental impact.

Activities

Initially, in 2018 Luis started investing in the new product using his own funds. He established cultivation ponds with paddle wheels, which are sheltered in greenhouses. The paddle wheels are necessary to maintain constant mixing of the algae. This ensures that the whole algae mass will have sufficient access to light and thus prevent reduced productivity of the pond. The processing plant also includes screen harvesting facilities, solar drying and on-site packaging and storing. The farm applies an artisanal production method. The Spirulina microalgae are filtered, pressed, moulded and dehydrated at a low temperature (37°C). This allows them to obtain 100 % pure Spirulina straws with a soft taste and smell and a crunchy texture, ideal for incorporating into several recipes.

In December 2019, Luis received support from the Rural Development Programme to undertake awareness-raising and promotional activities. He established the brand Tomar Natural and its dedicated logo, which are used on the packaging to distinguish the product for its quality. In addition, he set up a dedicated website with an online store.

On this basis, Luis actively started marketing his product. He participated in various events to promote and sell the product as well as establish contacts with new retailers. In 2020, he also started participating in different social networks and receiving visits from individuals, institutional groups and potential new producers.

Main Results

The artisanal Spirulina of Tomar Natural is available at more than 20 points of sale all over the country.

Tomar Natural has gained nationwide appreciation and publicity as the product and the farm have captured the interest of television programmes, academic research, chefs, and the wider food industry.

The project offered an entrepreneurial opportunity for the farmer to create a new income stream for his operation through producing, processing, and promoting a novel product.

Key lessons

The final price of a product is often determined by a value-added premium for a niche product. This requires building a brand name so that the product is widely recognised by customers.

Additional information

www.facebook.com/tomarnatural/
www.instagram.com/tomarnatural/
www.youtube.com/channel/UCXvhZx6vdGZAvicV621wrvq