

## ESTONIA

### Farm's performance, restructuring and modernisation

#### Location

Harjumaa

#### Programming period

2014 – 2020

#### Priority

P2 - Competitiveness

#### Measure

M4 – Investments in physical assets

#### Funding (EUR)

Total budget 600 000

EAFRD 184 077

National/regional 32 484

Private 383 439

#### Project duration

2015 – 2017

#### Project promoter

Remmelgamaa OÜ

#### Contact

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A project set out to renovate and expand an old dairy farm by using new technological solutions.

### Summary

A young farmer aimed to expand her farm in order for it to be able to accommodate increasing production needs. Thanks to RDP support she was able to renovate the cowshed by installing a new feeding system and more milking places, along with a more efficient manure-processing system.



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### Results

Remmelgamaa OÜ's profit has already doubled, despite the fact that the cowshed is not yet being used to its full capacity.

Animal welfare, as well as working conditions, have improved significantly and can support the further expansion of the cattle stock.

### Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Renovation of the cowshed was complicated to arrange, given that the animals needed to continue to use part it. In this context, it is best to seek advice from other farmers rather than the construction company, or if possible, to build a new cowshed rather than renovate an old one that is still in use.

### Context

The owner of 'Remmelgamaa OÜ' is a young farmer who took over the farm from her parents. The young farmer had worked on her parents' farm for over ten years before it came into her hands. She has studied agriculture and economics, and continues to enhance her knowledge of farming. At the same time she teaches at a vocational school in the department of agriculture.

The farm produces milk with an average of 10 000 kilos per lactation. In addition, it specialises in breeding heifers. Very carefully selected bulls are used for insemination and thanks to the high-quality breeding standards, heifers are exported to many countries.

The need for investment emerged as the number of cattle grew and the old cowshed became too small to keep up with the production needs. As there were only 46 milking places, the cows were delayed. The conditions were also not good for the calves and the workers, and the processing capacity of the manure collecting system needed to be improved.

### Objectives

The objectives of the project were to:

- Increase the income of the farm by achieving higher productivity and better milk quality;
- Improve the conditions for the animals and the workers.

### Activities

The process began after the young farmer decided to expand the dairy farm in order to maintain its competitiveness. At first she planned to construct a new cowshed with high-tech solutions and milking robots. An application was submitted during the first call for applications in 2015. However, this application had to be withdrawn in response to the big changes affecting the dairy market at that period. The young farmer realised that it was necessary to redefine her plans.

The future plans were adjusted to make the project cheaper and simpler. OÜ Remmelgamaa submitted a new application during the second call for applications in 2015. The application was successful and the project approved

for financing.

The young farmer did not use support or advice from external experts apart from the construction company that carried out the renovations to the cowshed. Some renovation was started in 2012 by the parents of the owner but the complete renovation works on the space were made in autumn 2016 thanks to the RDP support. In addition, a new system for collecting and depositing manure was set up.



### Main results

The income of Remmelgamaa OÜ has already doubled, despite the fact that the space is not yet used to its full capacity.

Animal welfare as well as working conditions have improved, and the further expansion of the cattle stock can be supported.

### Key lessons

It was complicated to arrange renovation works when animals need to use part of the cowshed during the works. In such a situation the building company could not really offer useful advice.

Thus the main lesson is not to trust construction companies entirely, even if they seem to have a lot of knowledge. It is useful to collect experiences from other farmers and to think with your own head.

Moreover, if it is possible, it would be even better to build a new cowshed rather than to renovate an old one, if it is necessary to keep using it at the same time.