

FRANCE

Implementing local development strategies

Location
Lacépède

Programming period
2007 - 2013

Axis / Priority
Axis 4 – LEADER

Measure
M311 - Diversification into
non-agricultural activities
(via LEADER)

Funding (EUR)
Total budget 107 993
EAFRD 35 638
National/regional 29 158
Private 43 197

Project duration
2010 – 2012

Project promoter
Ferme La Campelière –
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A French hazelnut farm used EAFRD support to develop a visitor centre, helping boost direct sales and educate citizens on hazelnut production and processing.

Summary

A hazelnut farm in France's Aquitaine region sought to upgrade and extend its visitor centre to improve access to children and disabled people as well as to provide more facilities. The plan also responded to a rise in overall visitors. The hazelnut farm used EAFRD funding to create an interactive educational walking tour, develop an area to watch a documentary, build a window to view the hazelnuts being processed and improve access for children and disabled people.



Results

The volume of direct sales generated by the visitor centre has doubled, with visitors attracted to the shop next door. It represents an important increase in overall farm income.

Seven people are now employed on the farm.

Since 2013, the visitor centre hosts between 100 and 300 people every day.

The development is part of a wider strategy for tourism based on local quality products. A 'Gourmand Pass' offers a discount in two other neighbourhood farms - the Museum of Foie Gras, and the Prune Museum.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ The support from the EAFRD/LEADER was not just important financially but also for enabling contact with professional designers.
- ❑ Such projects can help develop long-term partnerships with tourist offices, chambers of agriculture and schools.



Context

Hazelnut cultivation is rather recent in France, with first attempts taking place in the Aquitaine region in the 1970's. Now it represents 57% of the national production. The tree is hardy and does not require much feed and is ideally fitting the local conditions.

The Hazelnut House is located in the LEADER area of the Lot Valley, more precisely in the municipality of Lacépède, on the agricultural holding 'la Campelière' where a farming couple established its 35 hectares hazelnut farm, back in 1988.

In 2002, the owners wanted to diversify their farm. They developed educational activities on hazelnut processing, i.e. into snacks, sweets, etc. The educational activities were designed to address different types of visitors (gourmets, tourists, etc.). In 2007, the farm was awarded the 'Welcome to the farm' label and the educational activities kept growing in success. In 2009 the number of visitors increased by 30 %, and therefore there was a need for more spaces, more manpower and upgrading of the processing laboratory.

Objectives

The project aimed at reorganising the visitors centre in order to:

- Create an interactive walking tour that is both recreational and instructive.
- Open up the centre to the processing lab (building a window and making a video).
- Develop some of the pedagogical tools into a game.
- Allow improved accessibility for children and disabled people.

Activities

The LEADER – Local Action Group provided technical assistance to the project beneficiaries. They helped them to get in contact with professional designers of educational tools and games, and providers of landscape architectural services. These collaborations helped them to customize the visitor centre in compliance with the project's objectives.

Inside of the visitors centre a large window that took up a whole wall was constructed looking into the processing workshop. A new space was created so that visitors can sit and watch the documentary film on the history of hazelnut, the legends around the tree, its cultivation in relation to the environment, the hazelnut harvest, how it is used for the making of various by-products: cosmetic oil, dressing, spread, etc.

External works included some earthwork and clearing of vegetation in order to improve access to the centre for disabled people.



Additional sources of information

www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYWfztRmWUM