

## CROATIA

### Farm performance, restructuring & modernisation

#### Location

Varaždin

#### Programming period

2014 – 2020

#### Priority

P2 – Competitiveness

#### Measure

M6 – Farm & business  
development

#### Funding (EUR)

Total budget 15 000  
EAFRD 12 750  
National/Regional 2 250

#### Project duration

2016 – 2018

#### Project promoter

OPG Amalka Vukelić

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RDP support helped a family farm to generate added value by applying a sustainable model of production through biodynamic agriculture.

### Summary

The beneficiary Ms Amalka Vukelić moved with her family from the centre of Zagreb to start a small farm in northern Croatia. Their ambition was to produce high-quality healthy food, and so they turned to biodynamic agriculture.

Over a two-year period they planted redcurrant and blackcurrant plants and quince trees and purchased the necessary machinery and equipment. At the end of the project, the 4.5 hectare family farm has an orchard of 185 quince trees, and grows 1 100 currant bushes and vegetables using the principles of biodynamic agriculture.



### Results

The project enabled the production of high-quality food according to the principles of biodynamic agriculture.

There is a very strong link between biodynamic food and health tourism. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of overnight stays in the farm's immediate vicinity.

### Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Promoting sustainable production methods can act as a catalyst to other people in Croatia to start growing value-added foods on their land.
- ❑ The beneficiary considers that the project implementation period was too long. The complexity of biodynamic agriculture makes it necessary to continue supporting such projects through rural development programmes.

## Context

The beneficiary bought a smallholding some 80km north of Zagreb and relocated from the Croatian capital with her husband and young children. Her ambition was to produce pesticide-free food. Market research suggested that there is a gap in the market for currants and quinces and food made from these fruits.

## Objectives

The objective of the project was to improve the family farm's production by investing in biodynamic cultivation. The beneficiary also wanted to process and create final products that will be available throughout the year to a large number of consumers.

## Activities

Work began in autumn 2016, with the reclamation of a plot where the currants would be planted. The soil was fertilised using farmyard manure, which was followed by winter sideration (green fertilisation). In the spring of 2017, the first currant bushes were planted and preparation of the second and third parcels took place.

In autumn 2017, parcels were prepared for planting quince, as well as additional currant bushes.

Fruit harvesting and processing equipment was purchased in spring 2018.

At the end of the project, the 4.5 hectare family farm has an orchard of 185 quince trees, and grows 1 100 currant bushes and vegetables using the principles of biodynamic agriculture.



## Main results

The project enabled the production of high-quality fruit and value-added products based on the principles of biodynamic agriculture.

Collaboration has been established with restaurants and spas near the farm, that now offer biodynamic dishes on their menus. The chefs who cook the farm's foodstuffs also organise educational workshops for spa employees, as well as for anyone interested in this kind of production.

As the link between biodynamic food and health tourism is exceptionally strong, tourism in the area has been noticeably strengthened by this unique offer. There has been an increase in the number of overnight stays in the farm's immediate vicinity.

## Main lessons

For the first time in Croatia, the RDP funded the launch of biodynamic agriculture. Promoting sustainable production methods can act as a catalyst to other people in Croatia to start growing value-added foods on their land.

The beneficiary considers that the project implementation period was too long. The complexity of biodynamic agriculture makes it necessary to continue supporting such projects through rural development programmes.

## Additional sources of information

n/a