

HUNGARY

Farm's performance, restructuring & modernisation

Location

Hódmezővásárhely

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P2 – Competitiveness

Measure

M04 – Investments in physical assets

Funding

Total budget 72 200 (EUR)

EAFRD 33 300 (EUR)

National/Regional 6 660 (EUR)

Private 38 900 (EUR)

Project duration

2019 to 2019

Project promoter

Szilvia Lencse Family farm

Email

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Website

n/a

A farmer used CAP funding to start a new chinchilla breeding activity using renewable energy.

Summary

On Szilvia Lencse's family farm, a 90m² building had been unused for a long time. After a lot of consideration, Szilvia decided to use the space for breeding chinchillas. Her successful application for support from the Hungarian Rural Development Programme provided a 50% non-refundable grant for the renovation of the building and the acquisition of the necessary equipment, including solar panels to produce renewable energy.



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Project Results

Thanks to the solar panels, the farm breeds chinchillas using 100% renewable energy sources.

The initial colony of 132 mothers and 44 bucks has increased to 192 mothers and 54 bucks.

The farm established two sales channels within the first year of operation.

Lessons & Recommendations

- Peer to peer exchanges between farmers are essential when starting a new farming activity. This is especially true for niche farming activities.
- Potential RDP applicants [in Hungary] should consider engaging professional application writers when applying for support.

Context

Szilvia Lencse's family, in Hódmezővásárhely, Southern Hungary, have always been involved in agriculture. After the regime change in 1989 and beginning with the purchase of a small plot of land, her grandparents started independently managing what is now a 25-hectare cattle farm (12.5 ha owned, 12.5 ha leased).

Szilvia, her mother, and her 18-year-old son work full-time on the farm and her husband works on the farm in addition to his full-time job. Most of the land is used to produce feed for their livestock. A 90 m² building had stood unused for some time and Szilvia wanted to find a use for it that would generate a new income stream for the family without creating too much extra work or energy costs.

After a lengthy period of planning, she decided to start breeding chinchillas, but with no prior experience of the fur industry, Szilvia knew she would need support and advice.

Objectives

EAFRD funds financed the restructuring of a family farm while prioritizing the use of sustainable energy.

Activities

The investment was realised between January 2019 and December 2019 and involved:

- the renovation and adaption of the 90m² building: construction of a new ceiling, a concrete subfloor, installation of external and internal insulation and new windows, external painting, a heating and cooling system and a ventilation system and LED lighting;
- the purchase of equipment (132 cages for chinchilla mothers and 462 cages for juveniles);
- Installation of a drinker and an animal husbandry system;
- Installation of solar panels with a capacity of 6.7 kW.

The purchase of 132 chinchilla mothers and 44 bucks was Szilvia's own contribution to the investment. The Wanger Kft company, which deals with the breeding of chinchillas and the production of tools and distribution of furs in Hungary, provided the specialised tools, advice and animals needed for the start-up.

Main results

Thanks to the installation of the solar panels, the energy required for the breeding of chinchillas is 100% provided by renewable sources.

The initial colony of 132 mothers and 44 bucks has increased to 192 mothers and 54 bucks - all bred on the farm.

The farm has established two sales channels within the first year of operation.

Key lessons

A professional grant writer helped with the funding application and provided advice throughout the process. Szilvia recommends that potential applicants [in Hungary] consider engaging professional application writers when applying for RDP support.

Peer to peer exchanges between farmers are vital when starting a new farming activity: Szilvia benefited from advice on a daily basis beyond that which could be provided by the company that sold her the equipment. For a niche new activity (such as chinchilla breeding) the establishment of a relationship with a recognised expert/practitioner is also important.

Additional sources of information

n/a