

LATVIA

Farm's performance, restructuring & modernisation

Location

Dzeniši, Bēnes pagasts

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P2 – Competitiveness

Measure

M4 – Investments in physical assets

Funding (EUR)

RDP support 15 000

Project duration

2017 – 2021

Project promoter

SIA "Positive Foods"

Contact

ilva.kavicka@inbox.lv

Website

www.facebook.com/kalnup.pulveri/

RDP support enabled a home-based business that sells quality vegetarian food products to increase its production capacity and reach out to an international market.

Summary

Ilva Kavicka is a home-based producer of quality vegetarian food products. After purchasing initial equipment at her own cost to set up her business, she applied for RDP support in order to acquire additional equipment and plant her own blackcurrant crop. The new investment aimed to help Ilva scale up production and eventually reach the international market.



Results

1 full-time job created.

The investment increased the volume of production, which in 2018 exceeded one tonne of food products, much of which was sold via cooperation partnerships with companies such as Rimi Klētis, Stockmann, svaigi.lv, etc.

Work has begun to establish a business unit that will further increase production, create another job and export to the international market from 2020 onwards.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Since Ilva had very little experience, both in agriculture and project implementation, she had to learn a lot (about the soil's agro-chemistry, treatment, improvement of composition, planting care, etc.) For this, she consulted several other farms who had implemented similar projects and who provided valuable support and advice.
- ❑ Surprisingly, people, institutions and businesses are very happy to share their experiences - both positive and negative. Don't refuse help and always show willingness to cooperate.
- ❑ Project holders should carefully consider which implements and equipment are necessary and invest in options that are economic and safe to use.

Context

Ms Ilva Kavicka is the owner of ‘SIA Positive Foods’, a company which she operates out of her home in the Auce municipality in Bēnes parish. Ilva produces healthy food products from plants.

Ilva purchased all of the necessary home production equipment at her own expense, including a dryer / dehydrator, a shredder, dishes, scales, boxes and a freezer. In addition, the spaces that she uses for the company’s operations have been recently renovated in order to meet all legal requirements.

The raw materials (leaves from blackcurrant bushes and sea buckthorn shrubs) are mainly grown on her own farm land, while some it is bought from other farms. So far, she grows berries and some vegetables, but as the land is not used in full, there is still the possibility of increasing production.

In the summer of 2016, the company produced the first product samples and developed its technology for drying, milling, packing and retailing its products.

Objectives

Following these developments a project was planned in order to:

- In the short-term, purchase additional equipment to increase production volumes and improve access to the market.
- In the long-term, produce more raw materials (especially blackcurrants) in order to expand the range of products.

Activities

The project activities included:

Purchase seedlings and plant a new blackcurrant crop in order to increase the volume of raw material available for processing;

Purchase a new, larger and more powerful drying cabinet, since the existing one was very small. This equipment is very important as the correct drying of the raw material is a vital part of the production process;

Purchase equipment to turn vegetable mix into shapes. This work was previously done by hand, which required a lot of time and created the risk of delayed orders.

Purchase ground cutters and mowers for land management. The cutters are used to prepare the soil for planting and growing vegetables. The mower will be used to mow the grass between the rows of the plants.



Main results

1 full-time position was created;

The investment increased the volume of production. Some areas of production are outsourced to other businesses and then sold under the company’s own private label. Also, the number of outlets where the products are sold has increased. The biggest cooperation partners include the companies Rimi Klētis, Stockmann, svaigi.lv, etc. and in 2018, production exceeded one tonne of food products.

The company participates in local food industry exhibitions, including Riga Food, Zemgale business days, etc.

Work has begun to establish a business unit that will further increase production, create another job and eventually export to the international market from 2020 onwards.

In 2019, Ilva’s company plans to change its status from home producer to manufacturer, by registering a business unit.

Additional sources of information

www.facebook.com/PositiveFoodsLV