

## POLAND

# Green futures

### Location

Budachów

### Programming period

2014 – 2020

### Priority

P4 – Ecosystems  
management

### Measure

M11 – Organic farming

### Funding (EUR)

Total budget 103 700

EAFRD 6 200

National/Regional 5 500

Private/own funds 66 000

Other 26 000

### Project duration

2014 – ongoing

### Project promoter

Ekologiczne gospodarstwo  
rolne Anielskie Ogrody  
Kamila Kasperska

### Contact

[eko@anielskieogrody.pl](mailto:eko@anielskieogrody.pl)

### Website

[www.anielskieogrody.pl](http://www.anielskieogrody.pl)

Angelic Gardens (Anielskie Ogrody) is a forward-looking project that aims to create oases of biodiversity in farms and gardens. It shows that a small productive garden on a family farm can, with little effort, be beautiful and provide high quality bio food. Angelic Gardens leads the way in the times of pandemic and climate change with high quality 'step by step' educational materials and easy internet communication.

## Summary

The project helps to create – from scratch - small ecological family farms and support/assist them in producing organic vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers. It involves education through hands-on workshops as well as online guidance, bringing it up to a national scale. It also inspires local and national communities to cooperate with small productive gardens for schoolchildren and the elderly.



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## Results

Unique knowledge of organic productive garden cultivation and crop processing has been preserved and can be passed on to future generations. The Academy of Angelic Gardens "workshops in the garden" have had 450 participants.

Local inhabitants became involved in environmental education. Seven community gardens were created, 80 trees planted and 15 people started to implement pro-environmental measures in their gardens and farms.

The 'energy-saving raised borders' project was implemented and in December 2020, patents for implementing these new organic farming methods were issued.

There are communication tools to quickly scale-up and implement the idea of Angelic Gardens across Poland. 170 people take part in the Internet Academy.

The initiative can be transferred to other farms and educational activities. Flowery borders in a social educational garden for children were used in gardens in Bytnica and Jaczów.

## Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ An ecological farm with a productive garden can start a farm from scratch, in a small village, on relatively poor soil, in a short time. The farm provides the highest quality food for a family of four in a pro-environmental way, with excess food made available for sale.
- ❑ Cooperation helps raise awareness of the benefits of the project. Local government, schools, kindergartens, companies and research centres have been active participants in workshops, activities and developing the project.
- ❑ Communication has been integral, inspiring specific actions. Educational films and press and internet publications have highlighted the benefits of the project. Beyond the Internet Academy, the Facebook page is followed by 12 000 people.
- ❑ Despite the pandemic, the Angelic Gardens project continues to develop. 2021 should see 52 courses on the organic cultivation of vegetables, fruits and herbs as well as agroforestry, no-till crops and a spherical garden for cultivating thermophilic plants.

## Context

As in many other villages in Poland, enormous change has taken place over the last 50 years. Life-giving fields, meadows and gardens from previous generations have disappeared. Vegetable gardens have been turned into lawns, while fruit trees have been replaced with conifers. Old trees are cut down, but not enough new ones are being planted. More soil is covered in concrete. Some parents can be biophobic, leading to fear of insects and animals by their children.

Many garden owners have no knowledge of many plants and animals yet consider them a threat. Biodiversity is disappearing. Other species are becoming endangered, especially insects and birds.

Small farms with gardens and a few animals are disappearing. In villages, it is almost impossible to buy local organic food directly from the farmer. People from the countryside go to supermarkets in towns. Most of the organic food available in Poland comes from other countries and is not locally produced.

Air, water and soil pollution in Poland is considerable. Microbiomes in the ground are dying through the use of pesticides and other agents.

Many people are interested in ecology and a healthy lifestyle. Unfortunately, families have lost the knowledge of how to cultivate gardens, fields, meadows and raise animals. Knowledge of horticulture and agriculture is not passed down from generation to generation. People do not understand the connection between themselves and their environment.

## Objectives

The Internet Academy helps people from all over Poland to benefit from the experience of Angelic Gardens, build their own eco-gardens and grow their own healthy food. The mission is to inspire and support green gardeners, farmers, cooks and environmental educators.

## Activities

Angelic Gardens set up an organic farm with a garden to demonstrate that two adults and their family, without agricultural education, can start a farm from scratch in a small village, on poor soil, on a short timescale. The farm seeks to provide the highest quality food for a family of four in an environmentally friendly way.

In December 2014, Angelic Gardens bought a plot of 2.3 ha. and created an organic farm in Budachowo, a small

village. At the same time, the family owning the organic farm created CAMY - an ecological design studio to develop the basic assumptions for the farm. The project applied to the Regional Agricultural Advisory Centre (for Lubuskie) for support and was looked after by an agri-environmental advisor, also signing an agreement with the organic certification body Biocert Małopolska.



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An agri-environmental plan was created and implemented. Later, a Natura 2000 meadow and other agricultural plots for agroforestry and wild herb cultivation were added. The farm now covers 8.5 ha.

The main element is a home garden of 0.5 ha, designed with permaculture so it provides organic vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers for a family of four and generates income through selling any excess.

Ecology in the garden is based on very high biodiversity, with over 600 species of plants.

Since 2017, CAMY has been organising garden shows and workshops on the farm. The workshops are very popular and contributed to recognition through the certificate 'Lubuskie Pearl of Tourism 2018' from the Lubuskie Tourist Organisation LOTUR.

In 2017, the project started cooperating with scientific and research centres: Lubuskie Center for Agrotechnical Innovation and Implementation in Kalsk and the Centre for Renewable Energy in Sulechów. 'Innovation Voucher' funds supported a first project on the family farm 'Energy-saving raised borders', which received the 'Lubuska Innovation Award' for an innovative start-up.

This recognition has had a positive impact on relations with the local government and rural residents. A Parish Ecological Team has subsequently been set up and obtained funds to establish seven community gardens in each village in the local district. In the largest garden, there are regular activities for school children and adults.

In December 2020, the Internet Academy of Angelic Gardens was launched. These multimedia courses teach organic garden cultivation and crop processing, from grain to table and show other aspects of ecology in life, the home and business.

### Main results

The Anielskie Ogrody farm is an organic touristic and educational project that has turned a few hectares of fallow land into a life-giving and ecologically rich area. Unique knowledge of organic garden cultivation and crop processing has been preserved and can be passed on to future generations. The Academy of Angelic Gardens workshops in the garden have had 450 participants. 170 people take part regularly in the Internet Academy.

The local community saw the possibility of implementing an ecologically advanced project even in a small place, like Budachowo. The inhabitants became involved in environmental education. Seven community gardens were created, 80 trees planted, and 15 people started to implement pro-environmental measures in their gardens and farms.

The 'Energy-saving raised borders' project was implemented by the farm with research partners and the Organisation of Employers in the Lubuskie Region. In December 2020, patents for implementing these new organic farming methods were issued.

In 2017 (three years since establishment), the project won first place in Poland for the 'The best organic farm 2017' in the ecology-environment category. The competition was organised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Agricultural Advisory Centre in Brwinów, Radom Branch Office. Angelic Gardens came 2nd in Poland in the WWF competition for the 'Baltic Sea Farmer of the Year 2018'.

The Angelic Gardens project has received funds from the Regional Operational Program - Lubuskie 2020. The 'Energy-saving raised borders' project was implemented under the Research and Innovation Policy.



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### Key lessons

Cooperation helps to raise awareness on the benefits of the project and is encouraged to be undertaken with a wide range of stakeholders: local government, municipalities, schools, kindergartens, companies, research centres, organisations and the media.

Communication has been integral to the project, inspiring specific actions. Six educational films were shown on television, with dozens of press and internet publications. Beyond the Internet Academy, the Facebook page is followed by 12 000 people.

Despite the pandemic, the Angelic Gardens project continues to develop. 2021 should see 52 courses on the organic cultivation of vegetables, fruits and herbs as well as agroforestry and no-till crops.

The project has made an application for the next 'Innovation Voucher' with a new product - a spherical garden for cultivating thermophilic plants.

The initiative may be transferred to other farms and educational activities. Flowery borders in a social educational garden for children were used in gardens in Bytnica and Jaczów.

According to the project holder: *the ecological garden is not only my pantry, pharmacy, drugstore and place of rest, but also an oasis and an ark for wild plants and animals. To establish Angelic Gardens is to believe in the future and people. 'You have been entrusted with an earth like a garden, rule it with wisdom.' St. Francis of Assisi'.*

### Additional sources of information

[www.facebook.com/anielskieogrody](https://www.facebook.com/anielskieogrody)  
[https://youtu.be/i61GS\\_s\\_v3Q](https://youtu.be/i61GS_s_v3Q)

\* This project has been categorised under 'Green futures' by the nominating National Rural Network