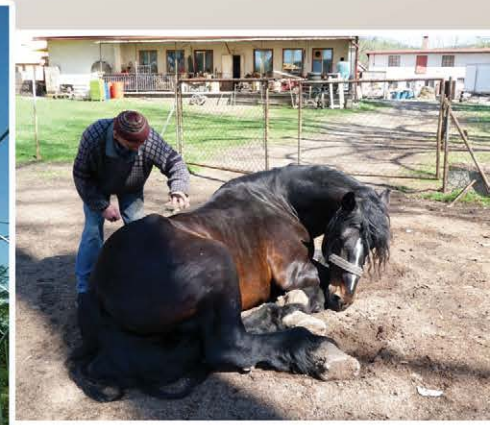


# Social Farming Best Practice Collection in Visegrad Countries





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Partners:

Szent István University in Gödöllő (Hungary)  
University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (Czech Republic)  
Agricultural Advisory Centre in Brwinów, Branch in Kraków (Poland)  
Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra (Slovakia)

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Authors: Veronika Čurná, Tomáš Chovanec, Beatrix Csapó, Aranka Kléger,  
Elżbieta Kmita-Dziasek, Józefina Król, Magdaléna Lacko-Bartošová, Jan Moudrý, Apolka Ujj

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# Recommendation

## Social farms in Visegrad countries - new opportunities for rural enterprises

Across Europe, from Finland to the Faroes, from Lofoten in Norway to Greece, the growth of Social Care Farming offers new opportunities for rural enterprises to create value and new employment in rural areas. This occurs in the face of increased agricultural industrialization and intensification which is only suitable for a limited proportion of the land in rural Europe. If we are to keep rural areas vital there is a need to support new activities on the land unsuitable for industrial agriculture, and the development of social care farming is one recent response to these opportunities.

Yet, Europe is a heterogeneous collection of differing environments, political and historic situations, and differing economies. Indeed, careful study shows that each national social care farming milieu differs from its neighbours in the level, orientation, type and institutional situation of the field. It is vital, therefore, to understand both the overall conditions that drive demand for such services, and the individual situations within a country where those demands will be expressed. Eastern and Central Europe, in particular, feature quite different conditions along a number of factors and influences, and any development of social care farming in these states much necessarily reflect local conditions and local opportunities.

This study of Good Practices in the Visegrad countries is, therefore, very important and timely, as those who actually wish to deliver the services in this growing sector must understand their local conditions in order to build successful enterprises. Good Practices in new and emergent fields allow us to learn from the pioneers – those who are actually doing it, now. Learning how they innovate and how that innovation is situated within the local milieu is important across a number of axes. It helps new entries in the sector assure that they are developing appropriately; it helps those who will regulate and support the sector to understand what exactly it contains; and it helps

the wider international community who may be exposed to ideas or formations they had not already considered.

Further, a gathering of Good Practice Cases such as this will contribute to the establishment of quality standards which will support not only the creation of vital enterprises in the sector, but also, it will help regulators and practitioners create a sector which is diverse, of high quality, and which delivers its positive benefits not only to the practitioners and the rural areas in which they are situated, but also, and most importantly, it will help deliver more high quality social and wellbeing services to those in the population who need them most – the clients who directly benefit from participation in social care farming.

I highly recommend this collection of key Cases from the Visegrad countries. It is an exciting time for Social Care Farming in these countries – one of innovation and growth – and the evidence presented in this volume demonstrates this amply.

**Dr Rhys Evans, Associate Professor of Rural Development, Hogskulen for landbruk og bygdeutvikling, Norway**

## Is there a real need to justify the value of Social Farming?

When studying the examples of sophisticated societies we can easily understand the social and ecological vitality of Social Farming, for any country.

In Holland for instance, the Social Farming movement has been recognised by the government since the 90s but it has been practiced informally ever since the 80s with clearly evidenced positive results.

And why? We don't need to be financial experts to understand how much this movement can develop individuals and communities, for instance:

For the individual farmers, it represents a connection to the outside world (as farmers tend to be isolated in their time-absorbing tasks) and a way of contribution to society by extending farming activities to vulnerable individuals; for the (vulnerable) individuals who are given the chance to engage in farming activities, it represents a dignified way of connecting with essential values by doing something meaningful, such as working the land to obtain top quality products; and for the communities, as a consequence of the two previous points, it naturally creates conditions for local expansion, that can be sustained throughout time with minimum investments.

And let us not forget of course, the therapeutic value of this work, particularly for marginalised individuals that for many different reasons find it hard to (re)connect to society.

For the Visegrad countries particularly, the investment in this robust movement can surely enhance the potential of sustainable farming, as well as efficiently address the deep needs of complex social issues. All these aspects can ultimately influence political decision-makers when looking at ways of

strengthening the cooperation between these four countries, as well as their active role on the wider European context.

In order to facilitate this process, the Visegrad partnerships must focus on collecting examples of existing practices that bring innovation to Social Farming, which can also act as way to prove its effectiveness in the various international settings.

In this sense, you will hopefully agree that the manual you are about to read is useful representation of this intention.

**Ricardo Pereira, Practical Skills Therapeutic Educator, Ruskin Mill Trust, England**

# Introduction for the social farms in Visegrad countries

The social integration of disadvantaged groups presents a complex challenge at the national and international level across Europe, and globally. In Visegrad countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia) there exists a pressing need for the advancement of knowledge about social farming as it relates to a complex re-framing of agriculture and rural areas to provide socially and environmentally sustainable models, in comparison to what is resultant within the dominant agribusiness model. Farms can serve as appropriate sites and centres for land-based social activities, which are desirable for a wide range of participants who can benefit from both the farming work and social interaction.

## Why V4?

The background and history of social farm development in Western and Northern European countries differs from country to country, nevertheless there are certain similarities that can be recognized with regard to best-practices. When observing the social farm initiatives of Western and/or Northern European countries, a common trend observed is that they were established much earlier than similar initiatives in countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The timing of the establishment and propagation of social farming initiatives can be related to a specific country's culture, the application of different health and social services, or various operational forms in their agricultural and social sectors. In Visegrad countries (V4), the social farming movement is still in its infancy, and although studies have documented in detail the operating principles, objectives, target audience, benefits, and good practices which can be adapted from western and northern countries, V4 countries still face common difficulties and challenges related to common history and relatively recent launch of social farming programs. For example, a notable legal restriction which inhibits the establishment of social farms in V4 countries includes the fact that fully detailed and concrete legal regulations of social farm programs are still missing, and national

governments only recently began to recognize the potential benefits of social farms. In addition to such legal challenges, there is no comprehensive local or national strategy related to social farms; and additionally bureaucratic obstacles are still remain.

## Why best-practice collection in V4?

The overall objective of this collection is to present best-practices from V4 countries in relation to social farming while acknowledging common historical developments of agriculture in the region and the overall impact on the trajectory of social farms. The passages were created taking into account a number of key factors including: comparable agricultural position in Europe in relation to geography and market factors, common structural conditions for achieving successful social farm systems-operation, and similar difficulties and challenges stemming from pre-regime change practices (the V4 countries' agricultural sector was managed along the same principles, characterized mainly by collectivization, large-state-owned agricultural cooperatives, fertilizer-based crop production intensification, etc.) and post-transition privatisation and market development strategies. In addition to mapping out the contemporary social farm situation for V4 countries with assistance from published detailed studies (E.g.: Creating Social farms in Hungary – guide and development proposals; Czech Social Farming - document of prepared in the framework of the Working Committee for Social Farming in the Ministry of Agriculture), the document will also concentrate on presenting local best-practices in V4 countries which to date have not been documented in detail. This best-practice collection differs from western and northern European examples - such as Camphill communities, care farms - as the gathered V4 examples showcased operate and must operate under national V4 circumstances. Although certain elements transferred from western and northern countries are surely recognizable in V4 best-practices, the country-specific features predominate.

Assembling a collection of V4 best-practices permits a constructive comparison and contrast study with the well-documented western and northern patterns, and will assist in outlining the successful future operation of social farms under the legal framework of the Central and Eastern European Visegrad countries, where social pillars can be integrated into farming policy at the local, national, and international level.

### **Structure of the best-practice collection**

While compiling the elements of the V4 best-practice collection, we aimed for simplicity and practicality. Accordingly, after each V4 country specific description related to social farming, best practices are presented following the same set of parameters (practical details, financial aspects, results of activity, future prospects, etc.) in order to make comparison more efficient. However, not only social farms, but care farm projects, and farm networks are also presented as in certain countries (specifically in Poland) the development of social farming is in such a stage that these initiatives are worth mentioning.

### **Who is this collection created for?**

We believe that the V4 best-practice collection could be disseminated as learning material for farmers and agriculturalists who wish to convert the plots they manage into social farms, while at the same time serving as a useful resource for training and educational outreach programming intended to support the establishment and long-term sustainability of social farms.

We wish you happy reading, and the best of luck in your endeavours!

Apolka Ujj  
editor



*Photo: Apolka Ujj*



# Social Farming in the Czech Republic

Social farming is both a historical and modern concept in the Czech Republic. Although it has been classified by this name only in recent years, from the historical perspective of agriculture, it has always fulfilled a social function. Significant changes took place during the twentieth century when agriculture in the Czech Republic was the subject of targeted development, with fulfilment of some of its non-production functions being moved to the background during this process. The intensification of agricultural production in combination with technological development and the transition to large-scale farming resulted in a significant reduction in the need for direct human labour and a reduction of space for inclusion of persons who have more difficulties finding opportunities in the labour market. In addition to the elimination of opportunities for a number of target groups of contemporary social agriculture from agricultural work, intensification and automatization are additional factors which encouraged an outflow of inhabitants of the countryside. Subsequent changes took place in the 1990s with a positive impact on the potential of social agriculture, with alternative farming methods beginning to emerge again, along with the return of portions of agricultural land to original owners along with the restoration of the tradition of family farms which emphasised non-production based components.

Thus, in its present form, social farming is emerging as a reaction to rural transition. In practice, social farming in the Czech Republic has been in existence for many years, although only outlined by its formal definition in recent years. Historically, the concept of social farming has been fulfilled in the past centuries. In the absence or limited scope of other options for the inclusion and provision of people who have more difficulties applying in the labour market, agriculture, as the most widespread anthropogenic activity with a variable range of activities, created one of the largest areas in which these people could find employment either directly within the family, or within the community around the agricultural economy. Thus, the farm was also a place of refuge for those whose, for example, age, health or mental disabilities, did not allow normal work. Together with the intensification of agriculture, however, most of the space for less efficient activities disappeared, and part of the social function of agriculture, consisting in the inclusion of

people having more difficulties applying in the labour market, and offering activity to disadvantaged and marginalized people, was largely suppressed and transferred from agriculture to other sectors. Only with the development of alternative agricultural systems aimed at expanding agricultural management and its sustainability pillars towards the end of the twentieth century, did this component of the social function of agriculture began to emerge again.

After partial practical activities and theoretical projects between 1990 and 2010, the current wave of characterising, defining and conceptual development of social farming started in 2013. The concept of social farming in its current form arrived to the Czech Republic through participation in international projects; a number of farms and persons involved identified with practises observed fairly quickly, and initiated further promotion. In 2014, the Ministry of Agriculture established an interdepartmental Working Committee on Social Agriculture consisting of representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, representatives of the academic, profit and non-profit sector. The Working Committee deals with the concept at several levels. Educational activities (such as the inclusion of the subject Social Farming for the field of Multifunctional Farming) are emerging and social farming has become the thematic subject area of implemented projects and is presented at a number of conferences and both national and international meetings. As more entities join the social farming activities in practice, a well-defined conceptual approach is an essential component of the overall development of social farming in the Czech Republic. In 2017, the National Social Agriculture Association was established, as a platform for the connection and cooperation of its agents.

There are currently dozens of organizations involved in social farming in the Czech Republic. From the point of view of the agricultural component of social farming, there is a clear distinction between entities that were originally agricultural and only later included the offer of social activities, and entities, where the opposite procedure was the case, i.e. agricultural activities complemented the portfolio of social services and educational programs.

This is reflected especially in the structure of agricultural activities and their scope. A more common model of past practice is to merge agricultural activities with social and educational - agricultural activities as a form of therapy, a means of pedagogical development or as a tool for social business. Agriculture then serves as a complementary activity whose economic outcome is usually secondary. Some of the organizations carrying out social farming have begun to develop the agricultural and social sphere at the same time, so their economic distribution of income is more balanced. The opposite approach, i.e. in the beginning, starting with an agricultural enterprise that developed also into the social sphere, occurred in the minority of cases, which is to a certain extent caused by the overall orientation of agriculture on the intensive fulfilment of the production function and inhibition of other possible functions. The original focus of the entity is to a certain extent evident also from the acreage of farmed land where the sites originally functioning as agricultural farms usually require significantly larger areas to ensure economic sustainability. With entities that were first involved in agriculture, in some cases hundreds to thousands of hectares are required, while in the case of organizations primarily focused on social activities, the acreage of agricultural land is in most cases up to tens of hectares.

The scale of agricultural land plays a small role in the system of social farming, or more precisely, it helps define the main focus and sources of the entity's income. Large businesses feed mainly on agriculture, and social activities are a complementary activity for them, and are usually implemented only in some segments of the operation. With entities primarily focused on the social sphere, on the contrary, the agricultural part is usually smaller in scale, complementary in terms of income, and entirely or almost entirely subordinate and adjusted to clients and their needs.

Even in terms of the structure of agricultural production, the original focus of the entity is evident. As far as plant production is concerned, in cases where agriculture is the main activity and source of income, the emphasis on standard field production with the inclusion of large-scale crops and generally larger

acreage of arable land as well as permanent grasslands is evident. Within these types of agricultural operations the potential for involvement of social farming clients is rather marginal – as the limiting element remains e.g. the need for mechanization for field production and thus the limitation of the possibilities of involvement of clients. On the contrary to large-scale mechanised operations, social farming clients have proved to apply themselves very well in the cultivation of fruit, vegetables, herbs and other crops, especially where this activity is carried out on smaller areas and requires manual labour, and it is possible to involve them in the whole cycle of growing crops.

In the observed sample, especially with entities where the agricultural activities are a complementary activity, an attempt to adjust the selection of cultivated crops to the needs and capacities of clients and the possibility to consume harvested production on-site, is evident, while its development further towards market-oriented production is still rarely realized. However, many organizations include marketing and food processing in their future goals. In addition to food production, the cultivation of feed crops is also common, in connection with livestock production.

Also, the structure and extent of livestock production are, as with crop production, influenced by the original focus of the entity. Large-scale production capacity has been observed only in the enterprises originally involved with agricultural activity. From the point of view of involvement of social farming clients, breeding of small animals (sheep, goats, rabbits, poultry) or bee keeping appears to be optimal. However, their involvement is also possible in the breeding of cattle, pigs or horses. When working with animals, the therapeutic effect is noticeable. Areas of permanent grassland (meadows and pastures) are usually linked to livestock production.

From the point of view of social farming, the processing of products grown on-site is a very important component, and is in most cases carried out for personal consumption. Milk, vegetables, fruits, and in some cases honey or meat are the most common products.

The processing of products and the production of e.g. cheese, dried apples, ciders, etc. are very important also from the point of view of the motivation of clients, for whom it is beneficial to see the finished product of their activity. Some clients are involved in the direct sale of products in farm shops or in the farmers' markets. The majority of farms implementing social farming also focus on other non-productive activities linked to agricultural activity and the farm, in particular landscape care, agrotourism and cultural and social events (e.g. harvest festivals, programs for families with children, etc.).

Within the agricultural component of social farming, clients are involved in almost all activities, but always depending on specific factors (e.g. target group of clients, extent and expertise of agricultural activity).

The limiting factors of the development of social farming in the Czech Republic are at present, for example, inefficient system of financing activities, their short-term duration, and the uncertainty of financial resources. Thus, in this area, social farming entities indicate the same problems as other providers of social services in the Czech Republic. Another problematic area is the deficiency or insufficient expertise of workers to carry out agricultural activities (e.g. breeding, cultivation, product processing, etc.). There is an absence of skilled employees who could manage agricultural activities through their own expertise while, at the same time, having personal prerequisites for direct work with persons from target groups of respondents. Particularly in the case of organizations primarily oriented to the social component, there is less awareness of agricultural subsidies and other subsidies that are provided to farmers for their routine activities which could serve to wider development of social farming even for entities that do not have agriculture set as their primary activity.

Another limiting factor is the lack of available land (for growing crops on arable land or as permanent grassland), which in some cases appears to be a key limitation for further development. Since it is very rare to manage to buy or lease land from agricultural business entities, the first, and often challenge step for some organizations looking to pursue social farming activities was the acquisition of land for the realization of their agricultural activities right

from the outset, i.e. when they were set up. Options to assist with such efforts have gradually emerged, which include the establishment of cooperation with significant landowners in acquiring land or usage rights, often municipalities or churches. These type of owners seem to be an appropriate partners for creating lease negotiations which fit the needs of organizations active in social farming, and who, in some cases even on a long-term basis, lease agricultural land. In a sense, they are the owners for whom economic profitability may not always be the only criterion for renting; on the contrary, the human and community benefits of social farming are also important values to them.

Generally, the limiting factors can be divided into three groups:

- Lack of finances, and at the same time forms of subsidies and support, which are not always clear in the coexistence of agriculture and social activities and often also do not correspond to the actual needs of the organization.
- Lack of land and sometimes also properties and infrastructure, which prevents greater development of agricultural activities.
- Insufficient staffing, especially in cases when the entity is oriented towards social work, therapy or educational activities.

The development of social farming within individual organizations is planned in all areas consistent with the mission of organizations, i.e. integration employment, social services and therapies and educational activities and, last but not least, in the agricultural sector without which other services would not be feasible. In some cases, it is also planned to convert to an organic farming system (obtaining an official organic certification), or to process and improve agricultural products. Another often mentioned plan of social farming implementers is the purchase or lease of other lots, in cooperation with towns and villages or rural church parishes, and the increase in the offering of jobs, especially the employment of more people with a special handicap or otherwise (socially) disadvantaged.

The development of the concept of social farming in the Czech Republic will be influenced by a number of both internal and external factors. In addition to the ongoing determination of the definition and the legislative framework, education, promotion and support will likely be key areas. Partial steps in terms of the development of social farming in the Czech Republic are likely to mirror the situation in countries where the concept of social farming has already been developed. In the framework of education, it will be necessary to create a professional base for the training of workers of the social business sector in the basics of agricultural activities and especially agricultural experts in basic concept of social farming and work with its clients. The cooperation of such skilled workers will enable the creation of optimal conditions for the implementation of social farming in practice.

In terms of the conceptual development of social farming in the Czech Republic, the need for professional counselling arises. The area of socio-agricultural business and related skills and knowledge are among the areas that need to be covered within the framework of education and individual counselling of social farming agents. Another option considered is the creation of protected jobs in agriculture. Both examples relate to financial support for target groups and organizations which is provided by the Labour Office, various European Structural and Investment Funds projects (ESIF) or even through direct support from the special programs of the Ministry of Agriculture. The activity itself in terms of social farming will obviously still need to be supported. An essential part of the successful development of social farming in the Czech Republic will also be its promotion, or informing the public about the meaning and the rules of this concept.

The concept of social farming should allow a degree of economic self-sufficiency in the future, when in addition to the therapeutic, educational function, etc., the production function will also be developed. Thus, from the long-term point of view, it will be necessary to increase the transparency of social farming, and the development of certification, labelling and, consequently, certain forms of inspection can also be expected. Inspection and certification in terms of agriculture are already provided by a number of institutions, and the

basic form of inspection and certification could largely be based on, for example, similar activities for organic agriculture. Using already existing tools in this direction, it would likely be possible only to extend the spectrum of already inspected activities and to allow the interested parties the certification and subsequent labelling of social farming products according to clearly defined, transparent rules.

A similar system is very closely linked to sufficient informing of the public, which must understand the significance of the differentiated labelling of social farming products and their added value. Based on the above mentioned factors, it will be necessary to continue to evaluate the structure and development of social farming in the Czech Republic, with an important aspect being the impact of the dual nature of social farms, or significant differences between agriculture farms that, in terms of common agriculture business, provide space even for target groups of social farming, and organizations for which the primary activity is working with disadvantaged persons on the labour market and otherwise disadvantaged persons and the agricultural activity is only a complementary activity, aiming especially at therapy, rather than creating an economic self-sufficiency of the entity. From this perspective, even the division of social farming into two directions within the concept, for which different rules and different forms of support may exist, should be considered in the future.



## The Pomoc Týn nad Vltavou Association

### Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:  
 POMOC Týn nad Vltavou, r.a. (CZ)  
 POMOC Týn nad Vltavou Association (EN)  
 address: Čihovice 30, 375 01 Týn nad Vltavou, Czech Republic  
 email: info@pomoc-tyn.cz  
 website: www.pomoc-tyn.cz



### Short description of the farm:

The POMOC Týn nad Vltavou association was established in 1996, and has been managing sites in practice since 1997. Originally created as a union, now an association, the organisation originated as a group of people who want to help people with disabilities within a family farm setting, live together with them and thus, enabling the cared for to participate in meaningful work. In the framework of the newly established institute in 1998, the so-called sheltered workshop, a limited liability company (a forerunner of today's social business) was established. At present, there are about 140 employees, of which about 100 clients have a limited or changed working ability. At the same time, about 16 clients attend the stationary and social therapeutic workshops. In terms of cooperation with local farms, about 20 people are employed in agricultural operations. Other additional clients work in a ceramic, gardening, or carpentry workshops.

Connection to agriculture and generally to the countryside is one of the cornerstones of the work of POMOC Týn nad Vltavou, r.a. The joint project with the French mutual insurance company MSA (Mutualité sociale agricole) was a great impulse which provided support to form the organization. They undertook this project in cooperation with the Agrarian Chamber of the Czech Republic and the Ministry of Agriculture. The association is a long-term methodological workplace of the Ministry of Agriculture and the University of South Bohemia - originally for the inclusion of people with disabilities in terms of agricultural farms and now, according to the EU vision for sustainable development and "GREEN CARE", also in social agriculture.

The POMOC association has been cooperating on a long-term basis with the agricultural farm Dvůr Čihovice. The farm focuses primarily on plant and livestock production. The farm produces fresh cow milk with a reference fat content of 3.55 %, which is sold to the general public in a milk vending machine installed directly on the premises of the farm. It restores pastures for sheep and goats, ensures horse breeding and also fish breeding in a two-hectare pond. The farm cooperates with the POMOC association in carrying out work rehabilitation of people with disabilities, participates in the operation of hippo therapy centre and uses the services of protected workshops, especially the maintenance workshop. The Čihovice farm manages 320 hectares of fields, meadows and pastures and a herd of cattle counting 80 cows.

The POMOC association cooperates with the Organic Farm in Temelín, which manages about 22 hectares of fruit orchards. In December 2014, five people with different types of disability were employed in terms of a joint protected workshop. In cooperation with other workshops, activities such as fence building, the restoration of orchards, and planting of new resistant trees were carried out.

### Some key words to describe the farm:

- Social business
- Physically disabled
- Sheltered workshops
- Organic Agriculture

## Practical details of the social farm:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Main target group:                                | People with disabilities   |
| Purpose:  | Working rehabilitation of people with disabilities   |
| What activities are involved?                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• operation of the centre of hippo therapy and ergo therapy</li> <li>• operation of sheltered workshops (woodworking, assistants, orchardmen, technical services)</li> <li>• operation of contact point for the employment of physically disadvantaged people and persons over 50 years of age</li> </ul> <p>Agricultural activities are oriented towards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plant and livestock production</li> <li>• production of cow milk</li> <li>• restoration of grazing areas for sheep and goats,</li> <li>• horse breeding</li> <li>• fish breeding</li> </ul> |
| Who started the activity?                         | Jiří Netík senior, Chairman of the Association and of the Council of the Association   |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?           | POMOC Týn nad Vltavou, r.a. association was established in 1996 and its main goal was to create a voluntary community of people who have expressed a sincere interest in the construction and realization of social, charity and medical facilities that will serve and have served people in need regardless of their education, nationality, race and faith.   |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice</li> <li>• Ministry of Agriculture</li> <li>• various volunteer programs</li> </ul>   |
| When the initiative started?                      | 1996   |
| Working hours in average for each client per day: | The length of working hours depends on the current situation and the health condition of the clients. Working hours are usually from 5 to 8 hours several times a week. A smaller proportion of employees are employed on a full-time basis.   |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

The Čihovice farm cultivates 320 hectares of fields, meadows and pastures; the cattle herd counts 80 cows, and there are fish in the two-hectare pond in Čihovice. The organic farm in Temelín manages approximately 22 hectares of fruit orchards.

## Financial aspects of the activity:

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| What are the main sources of funding? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• selling farm-grown products</li> <li>• European Social Funds (ESF) projects</li> <li>• Supporting and Guarantee Agricultural and Forestry Fund (SGAFF)</li> <li>• Ministry of Agriculture</li> <li>• Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA)</li> <li>• Labour Office</li> </ul> |
|---------------------------------------|--|

## Other important aspects of the activity:

- The Čihovice farm consists of two accommodation buildings.
- The farm includes fields and pastures with typical farm fauna: cows, sheep, horses, dogs, and cats. The Čihovice farm also has its own chapel of St. Agnes near the pond, which is of interest because its architectural design reminiscent of Noah's Ark.
- Next to the farm, there is the Home of St. Agnes, whose services are oriented towards people with mild mental disabilities, and assists with integration into everyday life, especially in the agricultural operation of the farm.
- In the Home of St. Agnes, there are also ceramic, weaving and carpentry sheltered workshops whose products are characterized by originality and quality.

## Results of the farm activity:

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Direct Results: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• convenient farm position</li> <li>• healthy environment</li> <li>• farmer's expertise and experience</li> <li>• farm familiarity in a wider area</li> <li>• good-quality animal welfare</li> <li>• good cooperation with foreign countries</li> </ul>  |
| Strength:       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a variety of organic products</li> <li>• diversified agricultural production</li> <li>• possibility of employing entire families</li> <li>• constant investments in farm development</li> </ul>  |
| Weaknesses:     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low demand for more expensive organic products</li> <li>• high cost demand that cannot be reduced under current technology processes (considerable energy demand)</li> </ul>   |
| Wider benefits: | <p>On the farm, the main emphasis is placed on the employment of people with disabilities who come through their own initiative. If possible, such a person is employed, even if no specific position is created for him/her. In a number of cases, these people remain in permanent employment, sometimes there is even reorganization of the workplace.</p> |

## Future prospects and sustainability:

The organisation aims for continuing development of farm activities, both in technology and in products themselves. It is an aim to continue to focus on product quality and distribution, especially in our region. Success in submission of various projects to support staff employment and technology investments is also key to the organisation. Attention will also be focused on the development of cooperation with similarly oriented organizations in the Czech Republic and neighbouring countries.

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

For the sake of its preservation and maintaining good relations, the organization supports cooperation with the local microregion's self-government, labour office and other local agents. From the very beginning, it was involve in the first community plan and became one of the founding members of the LAG (Local Action Group). It considers it important that the local government is involved in such activities, even if it does not have an immediate benefit. The town of Týn nad Vltavou is a member of both the Supervisory Board and the Board of Directors of the organization and has an influence on organisation activities.

## Bemagro Malonty Organic Farm

### Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:  
 BEMAGRO JSC (CZ)  
 BEMAGRO Malonty Organic Farm (EN)  
 address: Malonty 101, 382 91, Český  
 Krumlov district, Czech Republic  
 email: [bemagro@quick.cz](mailto:bemagro@quick.cz)  
 website: <http://www.bemagro.cz/>



### Short description of the farm:

Bemagro Malonty is a joint-stock company established in 1994 from former state farms. It currently manages an area of more than 2,000 hectares, most of which consists of meadows and pastures, and roughly 500 hectares of land is ploughed. The farm is certified and included in the organic farming and biodynamic farming system; from the production point of view, it focuses mainly on dairy cattle breeding, cattle breeding without market milk production, and in terms of the Selský dvůr, also on backyard breeding of pigs, sheep and poultry. In crop production, apart from classical field production, the purpose of which is to provide feed for bred animals and market crops (rye, wheat, oats, spelt, buckwheat, potatoes), space is dedicated to a vegetable garden that produces a wide variety of regional vegetables and herbs. Within the processing activities, a new biodynamic dairy processing facility was built on the farm.

Given that agriculture is primary and in terms of income also the main activity of the organization, the activities included in the concept of social farming were added later, rather as a natural complement to the effort to improve the conditions in the microregion. Since 2006, there has been cooperation in education, and since 2008 the company has been involved in social activities. It is one of the largest employers in the region (about 50 permanent employees, another 20 seasonally), while also providing space for disadvantaged people in the labour market.



Photos: Apolka Ujj

### Some key words to describe the farm:

- Organic farm
- Livestock breeding
- Milk production
- Crop cultivation
- Disadvantaged persons within the labour market



## Practical details of the social farm:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Main target group:                                | There are no specific target groups of clients defined, people who are disadvantaged in the labour market, from the area in which Bemagro Malonty operates, are included in the work process. At present, both mentally and physically disabled, unemployed, people of retirement and pre-retirement age, people in a difficult social situation (indebtedness, chronic unemployment, etc.) are employed. |
| Purpose:  | An agricultural enterprise oriented to the development of a microregion - persons disadvantaged in the labour market are employed as needed – those who require help and do not threaten the operation of the enterprise.   |
| What activities are involved?                     | Persons disadvantaged in the labour market are incorporated into classical agricultural activities with regard to their specific capabilities in terms of crop and livestock production, landscape maintenance, etc. (Cultivation of vegetables, herbs, backyard breeding of pigs, sheep and poultry, cattle breeding assistance, maintenance of landscape elements, etc.)                                |
| Who started the activity?                         | Ing. Miloslav Knížek  |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?           | “Understanding and in balance with the world, take care of the entrusted landscape and the living entities in it and provide food for the saturation of body and soul.”   |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice</li> <li>• Ministry of Agriculture</li> </ul>  |
| When the initiative started?                      | 1994 (agriculture), 2006 (education), 2008 (social activities)  |
| Working hours in average for each client per day: | Clients are employed in form of both Contract for work and Contract of services, seasonally and year-round (long-term). Daily working hours vary depending on the type of contract and the capabilities of given person.  |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- The farm manages an area of about 2,000 hectares, most of which consists of meadows and pastures; arable land accounts for almost a quarter - 470 hectares. On arable land, apart from feed crops, additionally rye, wheat, spelt, oats, buckwheat and potatoes are grown as market crops. On a smaller area, seasonal vegetables (carrots, onions, parsley, cabbage, lettuce, spinach, beetroot, broccoli, garlic, beans, pumpkin, etc.) and herbs are grown.
- Sowing techniques are designed with the emphasis on preventive plant protection and the preservation of a nutrient balance.
- In livestock production, the main activity is dairy cow breeding (over 300 cows), cattle breeding without market milk production and backyard breeding of sheep, pigs and poultry.
- Bemagro JSC has its own mechanization centre, biodynamic dairy, and accommodation capacities.

## Financial aspects of the activity:

|                                       |                            |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| What are the main sources of funding? | farm agricultural activity |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|

## Other important aspects of the activity:

In addition to its own agricultural production, great emphasis is also put on landscape care, its maintenance and reconstruction - restoration of boundaries, building of biocorridors, windbreaks, alleys and other landscape elements (removal of damages incurred during the second half of the twentieth century). The operation of Bemagro JSC is oriented towards comprehensive care of the microregion, thus, besides the production function, the agricultural enterprise also positively fulfils a wide range of non-production functions (cultural, social, aesthetic, environmental). Bemagro JSC supplies the inhabitants of the microregion with fresh agricultural products, supports cultural life (e.g. organizing balls) and ensures employment for people disadvantaged in the labour market. Their activity is organized in such a way that it is not an economic burden for the enterprise; specific activities compliment the main agricultural activity and are designed in such a way that the incomes from them at least cover the costs of the operation and the employee income. In this way, Bemagro JSC contributes to offering a livelihood for people in the countryside.

## Results of the farm activity:

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Direct Results: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sustainable farming within the region</li> <li>• employment of disadvantaged people in the labour market</li> <li>• very good relations with local residents also beyond Bemagro JSC (facilitating the sale of production)</li> <li>• retaining people in the countryside</li> </ul>  |
| Strength:       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• economic self-sufficiency</li> <li>• sustainability</li> <li>• on-farm processing capacities</li> <li>• diversified production</li> <li>• support of local people</li> </ul>  |
| Weaknesses:     | The direct therapeutic component is not included   |
| Wider benefits: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persons disadvantaged in the labour market continue to live in “their” environment, have jobs, are integrated into society.</li> <li>• Bemagro JSC is also active in non-agricultural activities, such as landscape maintenance, organizing social events, etc.</li> <li>• The operation of the entire farm is certified in terms of organic and biodynamic agriculture</li> <li>• Good relations with local residents allow the realisation of the sale of part of the production in the place.</li> <li>• The farm represents a comprehensive approach that does not prefer only one (agricultural, social, etc.) component.</li> </ul> |

## Future prospects and sustainability:

Extending the diversity of cultivated crops in terms of the production of vegetables (also according to the interest of customers), building a relaxation zone with ornamental flowers, trees and bushes, with an arbour and a playground for mothers with children, building slaughterhouses with meat production, new administrative buildings with a kitchen and canteen, a shop and a hall for people to meet each other, root waste water treatment plants, new stables for expanding livestock breeding and, last but not least, the solution of ecological energy sources. The farm directs all its activities to sustainability, both economic and environmental.

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

Although social agriculture is often seen as an activity suitable for smaller farms, it can be successfully implemented in large agricultural operations. Their economic stability and structure allow greater diversification of activities suitable for persons disadvantaged in the labour market, while at the same time, being less dependent on external support. It is important to use a comprehensive approach and to understand the interconnections between the individual components of the entire microregion system.

# Sananim r.i. – Karlov Therapeutic Community

Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:  
 SANANIM r.i. (CZ)  
 SANANIM Karlov Therapeutic Community (EN)  
 address: Karlov 3, 398 04, Smetanova Lhota,  
 Písek district, Czech Republic  
 email: karlov@sananim.cz  
 website: <http://www.sananim.cz>



## Short description of the farm:

SANANIM is a non-governmental non-profit organization that, since its establishment in 1990, has been active in the field of drug addiction treatment. Karlov Therapeutic Community was founded in 1998 and enabled the treatment of juveniles, and since 2000 also has supported mothers with children (it is still represents the only organisation in the Czech Republic for these target groups). The integration of agricultural activity into the therapeutic community includes a variable spectrum of activities in plant and livestock production. The farm includes seven hectares of meadows and pastures, roughly additionally one hectare is reserved for growing vegetables and an orchard. Within livestock production, a wide range of species and breeds of animals is kept, e.g. goats, sheep, pigs, turkey, hens, geese and ducks. Cattle breeding (Jersey) is planned, which should, with the acquisition of additional areas of meadows and pastures, continue to be expanded. Plant production is limited to growing vegetables and herbs and small orchards, where produced vegetables are consumed within the facility. Similarly, livestock production so far covers the needs of clients and employees of the facility. However, in connection with newly built dairy room and dairy shop and the expansion of livestock production by cattle breeding, it will likely be possible to include part of the dairy products in the market in the future.



Photos: Apolka Ujj



## Some key words to describe the farm:

- Drug addiction rehabilitation
- Mothers with children
- Livestock breeding
- Milk production
- Cultivation of crops and herbs

## Practical details of the social farm:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Main target group:                                | The Karlov Therapeutic Community is intended for two target groups of clients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a group of juveniles and young adults (i.e. 16-25 years)</li> <li>• a group of addicted mothers and their children</li> </ul>                  |
| Purpose:  | The main purpose is to provide the community's clients with space and opportunities to acquire working habits and skills by employing them in individual operations of agricultural nature.  |
| What activities are involved?                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work therapies</li> <li>• group, individual psychotherapy</li> </ul>  |
| Who started the activity?                         | Martina Těmínová   |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• safe employment of clients</li> <li>• self-sufficiency of the community in terms of the production of meat, vegetables, herbs</li> </ul>  |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?          | The KTC project is implemented with the financial support of the Government Council for the Coordination of Drug Policy of the Czech Republic, Prague City Hall, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the South Bohemian Region and the Česká spořitelna Foundation. |
| When the initiative started?                      | 1998   |
| Working hours in average for each client per day: | Clients work 3 hours in terms of psychotherapy and 4 hours in terms of work therapy.   |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

Each client undergoes 3 phases of treatment. In phase 1 and 2, the client works in the community with a work therapist. During this time, they perform various works in the garden, on the goat farm, take care of the poultry, and learn to cook. In the 3rd phase, the client works as an employee in surrounding businesses or on a goat farm.

## Financial aspects of the activity:

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| What are the main sources of funding? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• grants</li> <li>• subsidies</li> <li>• sponsorship donations</li> </ul> |
|---------------------------------------|--|



## Other important aspects of the activity:

Agricultural activities are organized by a professional employee working directly with clients in terms of these activities. The target group is drug addicts, with the therapeutic community focusing on juveniles and mothers with children. Clients engage in all agricultural activities, including production processing, by means of work therapies. It is this working therapy in agricultural activities that is perceived here as a service offered to clients, which forms the first stage in acquiring their working habits and skills.

## Results of the farm activity:

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Direct Results: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• financial source from the sale of milk</li> <li>• total savings in community finance</li> <li>• options to further develop products and existing therapies</li> <li>• initiate social business activities (cheese production)</li> </ul>  |
| Strength:       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acquiring work habits, skills</li> <li>• the opportunity to get work recommendations</li> <li>• the link to the local community and the possibility to get work in it for clients</li> </ul>  |
| Weaknesses:     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of finance allows only short-term employment of clients</li> <li>• limited opportunities to gain additional land around the community</li> <li>• the need for funding from start-up subsidies (the risk of non-allocation)</li> </ul>  |
| Wider benefits: | <p>Currently, there is a model where some clients are occasionally employed by neighbouring farmers, especially during seasonal works. At some workplaces, clients are sent with a worker of the facility who tracks the bilateral collaboration in each activity and continually evaluates the benefits for both parties. This is the experience that clients can apply even after termination of treatment (5 clients continue to work in agriculture with other employers in various places of the Czech Republic) as well as in terms of after-treatment facilities for drug addicts in the Czech Republic where agricultural activities are carried out. Clients can then gain further experience in terms of supported employment provided by their parent organization.</p> |

## Future prospects and sustainability:

For the future, social business is planned in cheese processing field, which will create good conditions for the next level of employment, which will be one of the forms of part-time work (Contract for work / Contract of services). The business area itself is closely related to the further expansion of breeding and the associated production processing.

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

On the long-term basis, it is a goal not to process our products only in our kitchen and other communities, but to sell them to anyone who is interested in them. Selling products will allow us to further develop the activities and means of production that will serve clients in their treatment and support the overall development of the community.

# Neratov Civic Association

## Contact details of the farm:

Name of the farm:  
 Neratov z.s. (CZ)  
 Neratov Association, r.a. (EN)  
 address: Bartošovice in Orlické hory  
 84, 517 61, Czech Republic  
 email: sdruzeni@neratov.cz  
 website: www.neratov.cz



## Short description of the farm and the project:

The Neratov Association was founded in 1992 in order to restore the displaced Neratov village and offers home and work to people with disabilities or otherwise socially disadvantaged people who would also actively participate in the development of Neratov. People with disabilities can apply themselves mainly in gardening activities, traditional folk crafts and services for other inhabitants of Neratov and the region, as well as for tourists from all over the Czech Republic and abroad. At present there are about 180 employees, out of which 150 are people with disabilities. About 30 of the staff who receive support also live in Neratov. Children with combined disabilities also seek help there, 15 of them attend local special needs school.

Employee-clients manage orchards based which aim to preserve indigenous plant varieties, take care of two garden areas; and also offer landscaping services such as cutting grass in difficult mountain terrain, to those in the area who are interested. Seedlings, fruits, vegetables, flowers and herbs are cultivated without chemical spraying, and traditional folk practices are used for protection against pests. The products of the two garden areas (one in Neratov and one in nearby Žamberk) are designed for sale as well as for processing in the local canteen and pub. Recently, the association has also been working on setting up a small farm with farm animals typical of the Czech countryside.

The aim of the Neratov association is to offer employment to every physically disadvantaged person who is interested in gainful employment. Therefore, besides the physically demanding activities in gardening, there are also supervised service jobs (cooking, selling in the shop, serving in pubs, etc.), opportunities in folk crafts (ceramics, basketry, weaving, sewing, wooling, etc.) and also in administration.

## Some key words to describe the farm:

- Community life
- Employment and integration of people with disabilities
- Development of the displaced village and the border region
- Environmentally friendly gardening
- Orchard of the original local gene pool tree varieties
- Development of cultural heritage, including traditional folk crafts



Photo: Jan Nechvíle



Photo: Jan Nechvíle

## Practical details of the social farm:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Main target group:                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• people with disabilities</li> <li>• socially disadvantaged people</li> </ul>   |
| Purpose:  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment of people with disabilities</li> <li>• developing the skills of people with disabilities</li> <li>• restoration of the marginalised region</li> <li>• development of tourism and the network of services</li> <li>• support of community life</li> </ul>  |
| What activities are involved?                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• operation of protected housing for persons with mental disabilities</li> <li>• operation of various protected workplaces</li> <li>• establishment of a special school for children with combined disabilities</li> <li>• the restoration of the pilgrimage church and buildings in the displaced village</li> <li>• maintenance of greenery and care of outdoor areas in Neratov</li> <li>• production of vegetables, fruits, flowers, seedlings</li> <li>• craft production according to traditional folk practices</li> <li>• development of a network of services in the border areas</li> <li>• restoration of disconnected relationship with Polish neighbours and descendants of the displaced German inhabitants of the region</li> </ul>                 |
| Who started the activity?                         | <p>Mons. Josef Suchár, pastor, current administrator of the Roman Catholic parish of Neratov and the president of the Diocesan charity of Hradec Králové</p> <p>The Malík family, the Němec family and other founders and the first new inhabitants of the displaced Neratov after 1989</p>   |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?           | <p>At the beginning of the project, there was the idea of Mons. Josef Suchár to restore the destroyed pilgrimage church in Neratov and with it also the entire displaced and slowly disappearing village and to create the necessary facilities there for those who need it. For this idea, he succeeded in cooperating with two young families, and with them he repaired the first building in Neratov into which the families then moved in. Apart from their own children, both founding families took other children into foster care; homeless people, former prisoners, or addicts were coming to Neratov. Gradually, with regard to children in foster families, people with disabilities seemed to be the most suitable target group and thus nowadays, Neratov Association focuses on them.</p> |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic</li> <li>• Charity of the Czech Republic</li> <li>• Labour Office of the Czech Republic</li> <li>• volunteers</li> <li>• other organizations implementing social farming in the Czech Republic</li> <li>• a number of non-profit organizations and foundations and foundation funds in the Czech Republic</li> </ul>   |
| When the initiative started?                      | 1992  |
| Working hours in average for each client per day: | People with disabilities mostly work part-time, 4-8 hours a day, depending on their ability and the degree or type of their disability.   |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- Human resources: The Neratov Association currently has more than 10 people with disabilities working in the gardening facilities, and generally, 150 people with disabilities work for the association. They are partly residents of protected housing for persons with mental disabilities, which the association also operates, partly those who commute to work from nearby villages and towns.
- Land: The association manages two garden areas and takes care of two fruit orchards. It cuts grass for a number of residents in Neratov and its surroundings.
- Machinery: The Neratov Association, thanks to the support of various companies and foundations or foundation funds, owns good technical facilities for gardening activities, including rotavator and verticutter, motor mowers of lawn-tractor type, brush cutters and other tools.
- Cultivated crops: The Neratov Association's Garden Areas produce vegetables, herbs, fruits, flowers and seedlings for sale. In winter season, the gardening staff also participate in small handicraft production (advent wreaths, Easter floral decorations, etc.).

## Financial aspects of the activity:

What are the main sources of funding?

- Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic
- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic
- Labour Office of the Czech Republic
- sales of products and services
- European Social Funds (ESF) projects
- foundations and foundation funds
- small donors
- Supporting and Guarantee Agricultural and Forestry Fund SGAFF

## Other important aspects of the activity:

People with disabilities engage in their normal lives in Neratov beyond their job responsibilities. They help organize cultural and social events, play theatre, and participate in charity projects. Restoration of Neratov is also reflected at the regional level - the association is the largest employer in the region, and as a result of this and growing tourism in the region, the initially very sparse public transport network has gradually spread. For example, the number of bus lines serving the area has increased. The Neratov Association also disseminates its know-how in the area - it has opened sheltered workplaces for disabled people in surrounding towns (Králíky, Žamberk) and shares its experience with other organizations in the Czech Republic and abroad, for example, by offering internships for employees of other organizations.

The Neratov Association is based on the transparency of its activities and the quality of its products. That is why the services and products of all its workshops are certified with the "Work of the Disabled" brand, which demonstrates their quality and competitiveness, as well as good working environment for people with disabilities. Craft products then are identifiable with the labelled classification "Orlické hory - original product", guaranteeing the use of original local practices and predominantly regional raw materials. Craft workshops are also holders of the "No Barriers" certificate, which proves their accessibility and friendliness to people with physical disabilities. In 2017, the Neratov association was awarded the "Employer without barriers 2017" award in the NGO category.

## Results of the farm activity:

Direct Results:

- Thanks to the activities of the Neratov Association, the displaced village was revived and dozens of permanent residents arrived, a network of services for residents and tourists and a public transport network have been also developed.
- The association offers a wide range of employment opportunities for people with disabilities, who, besides employment, also find support, stable social bonds and integration into society in a non-violent way there.
- The orchard in Neratov was planted from the rescued original local gene pool and helps maintain traditional, nowadays uncommon, tree species in the landscape.
- Craft protected workshops of the Neratov Association are involved in maintaining and developing the traditional folk crafts of this region, that are presented to the public, for example, via didactic programs for schools.



|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Strength:</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the strong points is the long tradition of the Neratov Association (25 years of activity) and good reputation, network of supporters, visitors and customers.</li> <li>• A wide network of activities that offer people with disabilities a variety of application is an advantage.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Weaknesses:</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further development of the association is limited by the location (periphery - border) with impaired transport accessibility and also by the restrictions in the area of PLA (building closure, lack of facilities for further growth directly in Neratov, etc.).</li> <li>• The poor condition of communications in Neratov and in the surroundings is also a negative aspect, however, this problem is being solved on a long-term basis.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Wider benefits:</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The association seeks to help people with disabilities not only from Neratov, but also from the wider region, so another workplace opens in the surrounding bigger cities. These jobs are for people who, due to their disability, cannot commute to work in Neratov.</li> <li>• The activity of Neratov Association has a positive impact not only on people with disabilities from the region who find their home and work there, but also on families or school classes, including people with disabilities - such groups use the positive understanding atmosphere of Neratov and services considerate to the handicapped and come to Neratov for a vacation, a school in nature or for a weekend stay.</li> <li>• Thanks to the Neratov Association, a special school for handicapped children has also been set up in the village in the building of previously abolished municipal school.</li> <li>• The positive impacts of the association's activities also include the development of cultural events in the region which are organized by the association and people with disabilities from Neratov.</li> <li>• The growth of tourism goes hand in hand with a growing network of services and public transport.</li> </ul> |

## Future prospects and sustainability:

The long-term goals aiming in particular at ensuring financial self-sufficiency and broadening the range of services for people with disabilities include:

- opening a local mini-brewery additional follow-up jobs for people with disabilities
- establishment of a small organic farm with livestock breeding with employment opportunities for handicapped people
- reconstruction of some of the buildings in Neratov
- establishment of a day care centre and social therapeutic workshops as a complement to services for people with disabilities.

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

The Neratov Association offers an inspirational example of how people with disabilities can be involved in a meaningful project and contribute themselves to the development of a locality or activity which is aimed to assist them. The marginalised village of Neratov has been restored only thanks to the participants, who found their home and work there and who contribute to the flowering of the whole village through their efforts. The comprehensive approach of the Neratov Association includes both the operation of protected housing and various workplaces, and the maintenance of a network of services, the support of culture and tourism, the maintenance of intangible wealth (e.g. crafts) and restoration of the relationships with the original German inhabitants and Polish neighbours that were disrupted during the Communist era. The basis of the whole project, that has been functioning for a quarter of a century, is that people with disabilities are not only recipients of services and benefits, but also active creators and providers, making the project more sustainable on the long-term basis and having a strong motivational and self-realizing effect on its participants (people with disabilities).

## Freedom Farm on the Confluence, Public Service Company

### Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:

Svobodný statek na soutoku, obecně prospěšná společnost (CZ)

Freedom Farm on the Confluence, Public Service Company (EN)

address: České Kopisty 5, 41201, Terezín, Czech Republic

email: [info@svobodny-statek.cz](mailto:info@svobodny-statek.cz)

website: [www.svobodny-statek.cz](http://www.svobodny-statek.cz)



### Short description of the farm:

The Freedom Farm on the Confluence was founded in 2013. The intension came from the team of people who were living in Camphill České Kopisty, where agricultural and social care activities were practiced together since 2004. However, the agriculture part started to be successful as supplier of organic vegetable of the capital city region and Saxony, that is why it became necessary to make agricultural production registered subject. Despite the division, Svobodný statek na soutoku also come from camphill movement founded by Karl König after the 2nd World War. The primary intension is to work and live with people with mental or social disabilities. They work in agriculture and handicraft workshops which produce commodities reacting on the needs of the world. They do not want to rely on subsidies and for that it is necessary to have functional concept and marketing.

They believe that a lifestyle immersed in the rhythm of the year, which ensues from agriculture work and being in touch with nature has a healing influence on the human soul. The residents of Camphill na soutoku, assist a few days per week at the field and garden and their level of participation is based on their own abilities. The participants are integrated into the agriculture team and begin to feel themselves as a part of the greater community.

Nowadays they cultivate an area of 11 hectares, and maintain an old state monument farm building which is gradually being reconstructed. From the view of cultivation, they focus on organic vegetables, herbs, flowers and fruit production. Svobodný statek na soutoku is one of the biggest organic vegetable farms in the Czech Republic, cultivating over 50 types of vegetables. They focus on creating an agriculture organism based on bio-dynamic principles.



*Photos provided by Freedom Farm on the Confluence, Public Service Company*

Aims of the company are:

1. Aiding in the recovery of the landscape, society and the position of the farmer in them
2. Formation of a self-managed farm following the principles of bio-dynamic agriculture
3. Creating a space for working, learning and social encounters on the farm
4. Action and shape with a sense of beauty and truthfulness
5. Model its efforts based on the teachings and work of Rudolf Steiner and Karl König, and on the agricultural foundations of Eugen Kraus

As a public service company they operate these generally beneficial services:

1. Promotion and practical creation of a platform for bio-dynamic agriculture, development of healthy landscape and promotion of ecological and other alternative ways of agriculture
2. Support for the Camphill community by providing vegetables, social entrepreneurship and other support for disadvantaged groups of citizens within České Kopisty
3. Creation of an open space for interaction for all, with bio-dynamic farming system, and alternative ways of thinking by organizing seminars, training sessions for children and youth, traineeships, volunteering, international cooperation in the field of biodynamic agriculture and ecological activities, meetings in the field of adult education, young people and children, and the healthy shaping of the image of agriculture and the position of the farmer in society
4. Supporting the development of craft and artistic skills
5. Organic farming with an emphasis on organic vegetable production; grazing of grasslands; conscious soil care that promotes water retention in the countryside; respecting and developing the ethical and friendly care of by acknowledging their natural needs
6. Retail and wholesale in the spirit of sustainable development, environmentally friendly access to the Earth and humanistic cooperation not only on a commercial basis, including logistics promoting bio-cultivation and gentle handling of soil(joint distribution of bio-products with other growers)

### Some key words to describe the farm:

- Organic farming
- Social farming
- People with special needs
- Working and living together in a community

### Practical details of the social farm:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Main target group:                                | Local citizens, people from varying backgrounds   |
| Purpose:  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enlightenment</li> <li>• agriculture</li> <li>• society</li> </ul>   |
| What activities are involved?                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enlightenment</li> <li>• education</li> <li>• developing retail and wholesale market for bio (organic) label</li> <li>• fair marketing</li> <li>• business and agriculture cooperation</li> <li>• cultivation of plants and keeping animals</li> </ul> |
| Who started the activity?                         | Group of people from Camphill České Kopisty (founding and sister organization) who were carrying out agricultural activities  |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?           | The Earth and its beauty which was overlooked   |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camphill na soutoku, z.s</li> <li>• Ministry of agriculture</li> </ul>   |
| When the initiative started?                      | 2012  |
| Working hours in average for each client per day: | 2-12 hours per day  |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- 6 to 8 employees, of which 2-3 performs duties in the office, the remaining personnel perform agricultural and educational activities
- Rented land: we have around 9 hectares of fertile land, and 2 hectares of pastures with roads. The field and storage space are borrowed from the Camphill na soutoku, z.s.
- Machinery: we have one large tractor for tillage, one small tractor for cultivation and one even smaller for the transport tools, water, harvested vegetable, etc. We have two transport vehicles for delivering vegetables, one personal car for 9 people, which also serve for delivering vegetables
- One greenhouse (80m<sup>2</sup>), polytunnel house (180m<sup>2</sup>), homestead (living space, basement, stables)

## Financial aspects of the activity:

What are the main sources of funding?

The project strives for financial independence. Most of its sources are from the sale of its own vegetables or products (90%).

## Other important aspects of the activity:

- They provide vegetables for the Camphill community
- Developing of Community Supported Agriculture, establishing a direct relationship with the end customer
- Cooperation with Waldorf schools
- The effort to create an artistic landscape and space

## Results of the farm activity:

Direct Results:

- 100 volunteers per year
- 6 full-time employees
- beginning of landscaping
- 260 members in CSA (Community Supported Agriculture)
- developed marketing outlet, domestic and international (Saxony)
- the long-term healthy agricultural organism, which shows signs of evolving connections

Strength:

- established healthy organization
- good marketing
- self-managed logistics and mechanization
- several years of experience
- voluntary work and personal enthusiasm
- cooperation with founding organization Camphill na soutoku, z.s. (mutual help)
- diversified crops: 50 types of vegetable, over 200 cultivars

Weaknesses:

- fragile social-personal situation
- higher stress for management
- intense physical work throughout the year
- unclear relationships with Camphill na soutoku, z.s.
- effort to maintain non-hierarchical company (problematic decisions)
- fields and building in flood zone

Wider benefits:

- working with schools
- cooperation with biodynamic farmers
- platform and outlet organic vegetables
- the awareness of farmers and farming activity
- demonstration innovative example for local farmers and agriculture in general, how it is possible to do it differently
- biodynamic principles



## Future prospects and sustainability

- Finish reconstruction and further development of the farm
- Finish the setting orchard
- Begin to market flowers
- Invest in cooling systems in transport vehicles and vegetable storage facilities
- To build a manufacture plant for processing vegetables (especially cabbage)
- Develop art in the landscape
- Focus more on education

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

Social farming exists as mechanism for understanding the landscape and life flowing in it. Nowadays this remains a challenge in taking into consideration today's exploitative modern agriculture model. It is one of the few models of production directly linked to and for the benefit of nature. Social farming strives to develop the culture of man working in union with nature.

They believe that artistic pursuits including dancing and singing are important for the formation of a living community. Festivals are a strategic activity in their operations performed with the intention to reintroduce festivals of harvest and celebration into everyday life.



*Photos provided by Freedom Farm on the Confluence, Public Service Company*



## Vrchní Orlice Farm

### Contact details of the farm:

Name of the farm:  
 Farma Vrchní Orlice, Ekologická a sociální farma (CZ)  
 Vrchní Orlice Farm, Ltd. (EN)  
 postal address: Bartošovice in Orlické hory 89,  
 517 61  
 farm seat: Vrchní Orlice (part of Bartošovice village  
 in Orlické hory)  
 email: farmavrchniorlice@gmail.com  
 website: farmavrchniorlice.cz



### Short description of the farm:

Vrchní Orlice Farm is a social farm where people with disabilities participate in the care of bred animals and in the friendly maintenance of the landscape in the protected landscape area of Orlické hory. The farm is located in the now defunct village of Vrchní Orlice - a village on the territory of the former Sudetenland in the Czech-Polish border area, whose original German inhabitants were displaced in 1946. Only a fraction of the cottages (used today for weekend recreation) and one smaller farm complex have survived in Vrchní Orlice. In 1997, it was this complex that was chosen by the Neratov Association, a non-profit organization, as the seat of a future social farm that would offer employment



*Photo: Šárka Šimková*

to people with disabilities, and at the same time, offer healthy work environment and a non-violent form of integration into society by providing them the opportunity to be in contact with animals and nature. Vrchní Orlice Farm was officially founded in 2002 by the Neratov Association, and in 2016 it underwent legal transformation into the form of an Ltd.

The farm carries out livestock breeding (cattle, sheep, pigs) in an environmentally conscious manner, performing friendly maintenance of the mountain landscape and technical work, and occasionally also focuses on the production of firewood. All the activities on the farm are performed by people with disabilities who are employed there. At present, there are 5 employees with disabilities who, together with two additional employees, take care of a one-hundred-head herd of cattle, 70 heads of sheep and 20 pigs by following organic practices. Meat from animals bred on the farm is offered for sale several times a year is popular with customers across the country. In total, the farm manages 150 hectares of permanent grassland in the form of pastures and meadows. The meadows are maintained in a sensitive manner by the farm in cooperation with the local protected landscape area management of Orlické hory (The Landscape Protection Program of the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, implemented by the Nature and Landscape Protection Agency of the Czech Republic).

The farm is constantly striving to expand the range of its technical equipment and to continually modernize it so that its employees have the opportunity to learn about the use of modern tools for landscape maintenance and livestock breeding in order to increase their skills and competitiveness in the labour market.

### Some key words to describe the farm:

- Employment of people with disabilities
- Breeding of animals following ecologically sensitive practices
- Local meat production
- Considerate landscape maintenance
- Protected landscape area

## Practical details of the social farm:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Main target group:                                | people with disabilities  |
| Purpose:  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment of people with disabilities</li> <li>• developing the skills of people with disabilities</li> <li>• contribution to maintenance and protection of landscape</li> <li>• ecological livestock breeding</li> </ul>   |
| What activities are involved?                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment of people with disabilities</li> <li>• breeding cattle, sheep and pigs</li> <li>• sale of meat</li> <li>• maintenance of mountain meadows</li> </ul>  |
| Who started the activity?                         | The founder of the farm was a non-profit organization Neratov Association.  |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?           | The intention to found a farm appeared de facto at the same time as the establishment of the Neratov Association, which, in the early 1990s, began to restore the neighbouring displaced village of Neratov and offered help to people with disabilities there. To give people with disabilities the opportunity to work, the first several animals were brought to Neratov. (However, in Neratov, there were not suitable conditions for larger breeding, mainly the necessary farm buildings were lacking. At the end of the 1990s, the possibility of renting such facilities in the neighbouring displaced village of Vrchní Orlice appeared. In 2002, the farm was officially established and began to be managed as a separate entity.) |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protected Landscape Areas Orlické hory and the Nature and Landscape Protection Agency</li> <li>• Labour Office of the Czech Republic</li> </ul>  |
| When the initiative started?                      | 2002 (Establishment of the Farm as a PSC)<br>2016 (transformation into Ltd.)  |
| Working hours in average for each client per day: | Employees with disabilities work on the farm usually on a part-time basis 6 hours a day, working hours and duties are adjusted to the degree of each worker's individual capacities.  |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- Human resources: There are currently 7 people working on the farm, including 5 people with disabilities (their number is expected to increase in the future).
- Land: The farm manages 150 hectares of permanent grassland. A part consists of meadows, a part consists of pastures, where the farm breeds 100 heads of cattle, 70 heads of sheep and 20 pigs.
- Machinery: For its activities, the farm uses its standard equipment for landscape maintenance, livestock breeding by following organic practices and meat sales.

## Financial aspects of the activity:

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| What are the main sources of funding? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic</li> <li>• Labour Office of the Czech Republic</li> <li>• Sales of products and services</li> </ul> |
|---------------------------------------|--|

## Other important aspects of the activity:

- The farm produces local meat from animals bred according to ecological standards
- The farm uses an abandoned area in a displaced village for its work, helping to develop the displaced region and to maintain awareness of its history
- The farm offers employment also to the residents of local protected housing



## Results of the farm activity:

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Direct Results: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with disabilities find employment on the farm, which naturally integrates them into society and supports their self-sufficiency and independence.</li> <li>• The farm is involved in friendly maintenance of the landscape, on which it collaborates with the local PLA management.</li> <li>• The activities of the farm spread awareness amongst its customers about the benefits of environmental mode of livestock breeding and the importance of supporting local food production.</li> </ul>   |
| Strength:       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The farm has been pursuing its activities for 15 years and thus, it has the necessary know-how both in the field of farm management and in the field of working with people with disabilities.</li> <li>• It was also managed here to establish a stable and friendly cooperation with the local PLA (Protected Landscape Areas) management.</li> </ul>   |
| Weaknesses:     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Like other social businesses, this farm is also struggling with lack of resources to buy new equipment.</li> <li>• There is also a negative impact of the remoteness of the farm seat - the Czech-Polish border is difficult to access by public transport and that discourages some potential employees.</li> <li>• However, the biggest constraint for the farm is the fact that the surrounding land belongs to a number of other entities - the impossibility to buy or lease other farm land is holding back further development.</li> </ul> |
| Wider benefits: | <p>The model, according to which the farm works, is well transferable and thus becomes an inspiration for other emerging farmers, not only in the Czech Republic - there were excursion visits, for example, from Slovakia, the United Kingdom and Estonia on the farm.</p>  |

## Future prospects and sustainability:

Plans of the farm for the future focus on activities that would provide more comfort to its employees and would help to expand the range and quantity of bred animals so that the farm can finance its management even more from its own resources resulting in its activity being more sustainable in the long-term basis. Its plans mainly include:

- improving the facilities for the employees (reconstruction of buildings, renovation of changing rooms)
- extension of livestock breeding capacities (increase of the capacity of barns and their modernisation, purchase or lease of additional lands)
- extension of facilities for meat production (construction of cutting room)
- extension of the spectrum of bred animals (e.g. poultry)
- increasing the number of jobs for people with disabilities
- inclusion of the production of firewood into the farm's permanent offerings

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

The farm is a good example of social farming that combines the integration of people with disabilities into society with organic farming, with respect to animal well-being and friendliness to the local landscape. The operation of the farm offers people with disabilities not only earnings in the form of permanent salary, but also the opportunity to meet in an understanding environment with other people and to establish long-term social contacts. Farm management does not disturb or threaten the local biologically valuable landscape, on the contrary, thanks to cooperation with the local Protected Landscape Area management, the farm assists with friendly maintenance of mountain meadows. Animals are bred on the farm by means of grazing with enough free movement and with the possibility of creating natural relationships and hierarchies in the herd, which contributes to their well-being (and, among other things, to the quality of the produced meat).



# Social Farming in Hungary

In Hungary the first social farms started to appear after 2000. In 2003, a government program was initiated to support the establishment of farms which provided support to autistic patients and their families, which resulted the formation of about 15 manors with autism-specific services and employment programs. As the financial resources diminished, the growth and development of such autistic manors stagnated.

Between 2005 and 2015, several social farm initiatives were launched independently from each other with various focus target communities including: community farm development programs for unemployed Roma people, farm pedagogy programs for schoolchildren, and social farms for disabled people with agricultural production, processing and eco-tourism activities.

In 2015 a 300-page comprehensive study was published which presented the defining characteristics and significance of social farming initiatives internationally and in Hungary. The document was compiled by economists, social scientists, healthcare, farming and rural development professionals. The study outlined the necessary steps required to acknowledge the legal status of social farms.

In 2016, the Alliance of Social Farms was founded by 21 organizations, and since then the number of participating members has increased steadily. The aim of the alliance is to foster the legal and institutional recognition of social farms in Hungary as a new agricultural model with social, health, employment and education functions, and also to serve as a knowledge base with the collection and distribution of information about good practices, research and education.

The Hungarian government has only recently recognized the potential of social farms. At the present no comprehensive development strategy related to social farms has been envisioned. Administrative obstacles still remain, and the absence of official professional training programs and/or curriculum dealing with social farming which could prepare future farmers for working with disadvantaged groups remains a challenge. In order to promote the social function of agriculture and at the same time the independence of disadvantaged people, Hungarian legislation needs to be finalised. Currently the legislative definition of social farming is missing and the

social service provided by social farms is not yet recognized. Furthermore the small producers' community of rehabilitation farms as legal entity has not yet been recognised, and the land use of rehabilitation farm communities is not yet defined.

In 2016 the Ministry of Agriculture established a Social Farm Workgroup in the framework of the Inter-ministerial Committee for Disability. It is envisaged that in the following years the legislative environment of social farming will be favourably regularized.

Concerning funding, there is a possibility for social farms to receive support within the framework of the Economic Development and Innovation Operational Programme (GINOP), Encouraging Social Enterprises sub-programme. Another source of financing is the Solidarity Agriculture Program that promotes the cooperation of farms and social organizations within the framework of the Hungarian Rural Development Strategy 2014-2020.

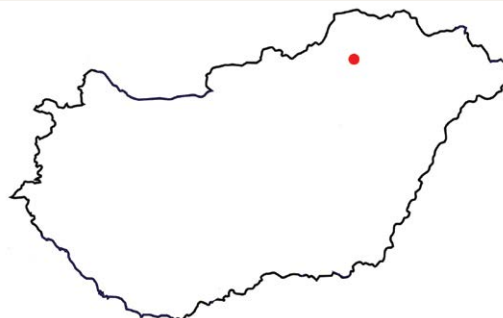
## *Recommended reading:*

*Kajner, P. – L. Jakubinyi (eds.) 2015. Establishment of social farms in Hungary. Manual and development proposal. Symbiosis Foundation. Szociális farmok létrehozása Magyarországon. Kézikönyv és fejlesztési javaslatok. Szimbiózis Alapítvány.*  
*<http://szocialisfarm.hu/tudastar/magyar-nyelven> (in Hungarian)*  
*<http://szocialisfarm.hu/tudastar/idegen-nyelven> (collection of useful links and presentations in English)*

## Baráthegy Social Farm

Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:  
 Baráthegyi Majorság (HU)  
 Baráthegy Social Farm (EN)  
 address: 3535 Miskolc, Ibolya u. 41.  
 Hungary  
 email: majorsag@barathegy.com  
 website: <http://www.barathegy.com/>



### Short description of the farm:

The Baráthegy Social Farm (5 hectares) was built on the north slope of the Barát-hill in Miskolc as a rehabilitation grange of the Symbiosis Foundation (established in 1999). Half of the land is natural, undisturbed forest, and 0.5 hectares are used for intense farming (180sqm glasshouse, 90sqm polytunnel), with the farming and related activities providing job opportunities for local young people with disabilities and the residential home on site also and provides employment opportunities for people with reduced working capacity. On the farm they practice small-scale animal husbandry including the keeping of goats (35), hens (30), pigs (5), and 2 alpacas, 1 horse and 1 donkey as therapy animals. Residents are responsible for tending to the animals, including feeding, milking, and gathering eggs. They use goat's milk for producing cheese in their own dairy processing facility which they sell from their own produce stand in the local market. The staff of the dairy processing facility includes: 1 worker with reduced working capacity, two disadvantaged employees and 1 disabled employee. In the kitchen, each day they prepare meals for 400 people with a staff of 8 employees, of which 3 are without disabilities. From the 400 servings prepared per day, 250 are social meals and 150 for business purposes which are served in the „Batyú Téka”, social restaurant managed by the farm. 150-200 of the social meals are delivered to individual homes or care centres. Disabled persons are involved in the entire process, from the on farm activities, to food preparation, delivery and distribution services. The meals are prepared with produce grown on the farm, creating a localised network of food production and consumption.



Photo: Aranka Kléger



Photo: Apolka Ujj

### Some key words to describe the farm:

- Social therapy
- Employment/training
- Animal husbandry
- Plant growing
- Ecotourism
- Keeping/maintaining traditions
- Wood-processing (alternative energy)
- Food production
- Shaping attitude

## Practical details of the social farm:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Main target group:                                | Disabled, mostly mentally disabled, those with autism  |
| Purpose:  | Sustainable community life, disabled people are part of the human diversity. It is possible to create a community where everyone has an opportunity to contribute.   |
| What activities are involved?                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social therapy</li> <li>• employment-training (disabled people, atonement program, people with reduced health)</li> <li>• animal husbandry (therapy, backyard-yard, milk-egg-meal)</li> <li>• growing vegetables (gardening, fruits, mushroom)</li> <li>• ecotourism (“Castle of Diósgyőr” – a nearby castle reduced in size, forest school, integration, creating common value)</li> <li>• keeping traditions (yurt construction, programs with the aim of keeping traditions)</li> <li>• wood-processing, alternative energy (converting waste wood into briquettes, heating with briquettes created on site instead of gas)</li> <li>• food production (open-air ovens, cheese making, restaurant activities, kitchen usage, lunch delivery)</li> <li>• shaping attitudes</li> </ul> |
| Who started the activity?                         | Jakubinyi László, leader of the Symbiosis Foundation, head of the Baráthegy Social Farm  |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?           | Personal motivation: at the age of 15 in Transylvania – where he lived - he got in touch with a group of young people with disabilities, and this greatly influenced his future path life. From that time his work - but many times his private life as well - has been oriented to provide assistance to disabled persons. Social motivation for the disabled people, job creation, and it means livelihood/secure not just for these people but for their entire family.   |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They work together with Auchan (supermarket) and Erste Bank who provide recommendations for funding application tenders which the initiative may be eligible for.</li> <li>• They do not receive direct financial contributions from the companies but receive useful suggestions and the possibility cooperate during the tender application process.</li> </ul>   |
| When the initiative started?                      | 1999   |
| Working hours in average for each client per day: | 6 hours per day  |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- Farming: 5 hectare rehabilitation grange, half of the land is used as forest, 0.5 hectares are used as intense farming (180sqm glasshouse, 90sqm polytunnel)
- Animal husbandry: small scale animal husbandry with goat keeping (35), hens (30), pigs (5), and 2 alpacas, 1 horse and 1 donkey as therapy animals
- Catering: they have their own dairy processing facility and a kitchen where 400 meals per day are prepared (250 as social meals and 150 for business purposes)



## Financial aspects of the activity:

What are the main sources of funding?

- state support funding 40%
- tenders 40%
- personal resources 20%
- 98 people with supported employment

## Other important aspects of the activity:

Establishment of the Social Farm Association, continuous lobbying and outreach.

## Results of the farm activity:

Direct Results:

1.3 billion HUF resources received from the Rural Development Programme, Social Farm trademark completed application (under evaluation)

Strength:

- open communication
- wide network of partners

Weaknesses:

social farm concept not yet widely known, new strategy for social enterprise

Wider benefits:

- Society is sensitive to the issue of finding employment for disabled individuals, and such initiatives receive support when they gain notice through their activities.
- Marginalised persons can find gainful employment, pursue economic independence while also gaining satisfaction of contribution to society through work and registration as official taxpayers as well.

## Future prospects and sustainability:



Photo: Apolka Ujj

Support tender opportunities will likely decrease from 2018 onward, which suggest that the growth of Barátheagy Social Farm will slow down in coming years. In 2017, they will aim to complete the „Barátheagy Pension and Adventure Park” with 10 guest rooms (20 beds) and wellness facilities. After the completion of this project, they do not plan additional expansion, but will rather focus on the continuous pursuit to maintain and operate their existing activities in an economically sound manner.

### In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

For social farming enterprises, a balanced but diverse financial model and the reliance on numerous activities for generating income and support is often required. In addition to state funds, attention must be paid to bringing stability to profit-generating activities, otherwise the farms will not be able to maintain self-sufficiency. It is important to establish and maintain a good relationship with socially sensitive, and local-oriented multinational and larger scale companies who may potentially support the activities of the social farms, and to take every opportunity to apply for additional funding sources, while being able to share the various management tasks associated with the operation. A leadership team with a diverse skillset, and a willingness to

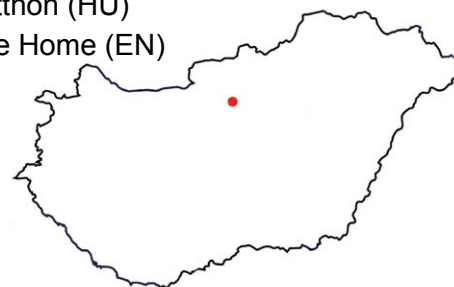
remain open to multiple forms of organization, cooperation and business management will support the long term stability of the organization throughout its difficult first few years and evolution.



## Pearl Shell Association of the Mentally Ill

### Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:  
 Értelmi Sérültek Gyöngyház Egyesülete/Szederfa otthon (HU)  
 Pearl Shell Association of Mentally Ill / Mulberry Tree Home (EN)  
 address: 2181 Iklad Szabadság út 75.  
 Pest megye. Hungary  
 email: szederfa@szederfa.hu  
 webpage: <http://szederfa.hu/>



### Short description of the farm:

The Pearl Shell Association of Mentally Ill people was established in 1995. The founders were a group of dedicated professionals and private individuals who have worked with or have personal connections to disabled individuals. Advocacy and support of such individuals is work performed through their own will and motivation. The aim of the association is to establish homely, family-style communities, and to support existing ones where people with disabilities can find their place. Through agricultural activity, they seek to forge a healing connection with nature while also providing healthy foods for the community. Since 2005, the Pearl Shell Association has provided housing for 10 persons, and since 2006 daily care for an additional 10 individuals in Pest county, in Iklad. In December 2011 the number of inhabitants increased to 13, with 15 individuals receiving daily care. In 2008-2009 it provided work rehabilitation programming and social employment for 10 persons, and later in 2010-2011 employment opportunities for 15 youth and adults diagnosed with mental illnesses, autism or cumulative damage. Since January 2013 they have maintained the capacity as an accredited employer to provide work possibilities for 20 job-seekers with limited working capacity annually. The association established their therapy garden next to the care centre in 2010, and from 2014 has been carrying out additional farming activity on two hectares in the Domony village, located next to Iklad.



Photos: Marek Hruska

### Some key words to describe the farm:

- Internal, self-guided construction, development and stabilization
- Integrated partnerships
- Partnership-building and organizational development with the playback theatre method
- Ecological farming and permaculture
- Eco-psychology in practice

## Practical details of social farm:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Main target group:                                | mentally disabled and autistic adults   |
| Purpose:  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide healthy food for the community</li> <li>• to carry out productive work</li> <li>• to develop by working with nature as a therapy</li> </ul>  |
| What activities are involved?                     | <p>Ecological farming methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vegetable growing on the field, under polytunnels, and on raised beds</li> <li>• spice and herb growing</li> <li>• fruit production</li> <li>• small animal husbandry: goats, hens</li> <li>• food processing: spice and herb drying, pesto, vegetable spreads, seitan, production</li> </ul> |
| Who started the activity?                         | A small community of those employed in the social services field created the association, the home and additional services and furthermore the garden and farm in addition.   |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?           | To find a healing relationship through closer interaction with nature.  |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sponsoring partner organizations provide financial and in-kind support as their CSR activities.</li> <li>• They received professional support and consultancy from Matthew Hayes - a teacher from the local Szent István University - during the process of developing the garden.</li> </ul>                                    |
| When the initiative started?                      | The association was established in 1995, the homestead started to operate from 2005, from 2008 they began dealing with work rehabilitation, in 2010 they launched farm activities and from 2013 they have been registered as accredited employers.  |
| Working hours in average for each client per day: | They work 4 hours per day, the work also includes elements of community activity, such as joint processing of workday events.   |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

In the garden of the homecare centre they grow vegetables in raised beds and polytunnels, and in the neighbouring area keep animals: including 30 hens and 3 goats.

In the vicinity (Domony Village, 1,5 km far from Iklad) they farming two hectares using ecological farming methods, and more precisely, following permacultural methods. They produce vegetables, herbs and spices and fruits. At the Domony location they also perform processing as well, drying of the herbs and spices and make additional preserved items from fruits and vegetables.

Activities in Domony began with 4-5 people in 2015, and in 2017 the staff has increased to a point where 10-12 persons are working at the site each day. The area is utilized through an agreement with the Domony Horse Sport Centre.

## Financial aspects of the activity:

What are the main sources of funding?

- The association is an accredited employer, so wages are provided by state subsidies.
- In addition, they have income from the sale of products produced on site.
- They also apply for funding resources, mainly for infrastructure development.
- There are corporate supporters who - as part of their CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) activities - support their operations with volunteer work, or with donations

## Other important aspects of the activity:

The Mulberry tree Home was created to provide support to individuals with disabilities, but it is fundamentally different from many existing forms of social care, as the disabled individuals and assistants who live and work at the location consider themselves part a community, rather than an institution.

The job is considered as a joyful activity in which people's well-being is primary and wellbeing not subordinate to production constraints. Their work involves a conscious consideration of personal development and change.

## Results of the farm activity:

Direct Results:

- garden produce and processed products
- increase in staff employed on the farm - currently 10-12 people
- more and more independent employees on the farm
- direct sales of products

Strength:

- production of quality food
- value-based operation
- quality relationships, togetherness
- the well-being of people is not subordinate to production constraints

Weaknesses:

- coordination of professional and community operation is in need of development
- awareness of community members needs to be increased

Wider benefits:

- farming contributes to strengthening the community
- the community is moving towards self-sufficiency

## Future prospects and sustainability:

In the community's vision physical, mental and spiritual well-being are paramount, as is the quest to feel positive about themselves in the work that they do.

Their short-term goal is to strengthen the horticultural team in professional development, while in the medium term concentrate on the development of the farm, and in long-term cultivation of their own plot (by purchasing additional land). For the latter step they are pursuing opportunities to find partners to collaborate with in the operation of the farm.

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

The physical, mental and spiritual well-being of the community is a priority, and this has a positive effect on the financial state of the organization.

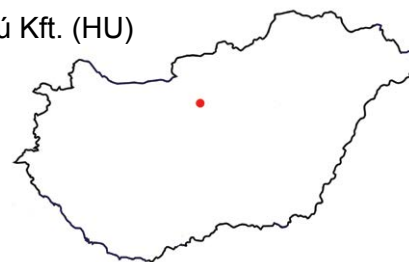
It is important for them to maintain a working environment with an abundance of points of view, and approaches to the work at hand, and they are proud to acknowledge the resources at their capacity.

It is important for the organisation to maintain a clear vision and mission while reflecting on both continuously.

## Equal Chances Non-Profit Cooperative Ltd.

### Contact details of the farm:

Name of the organization that operates organic farm:  
 Összefogás az Egyenlő Esélyekért Nonprofit Közhasznú Kft. (HU)  
 Equal Chances Non-Profit Cooperative Ltd. (EN)  
 address: 2141 Csömör, Ibolya u. 13-19. Hungary  
 email: [info@egyenloeselyekert.hu](mailto:info@egyenloeselyekert.hu)  
 website: [www.osszefogasrehab.hu](http://www.osszefogasrehab.hu)



### Short description of the farm:

The result of 30 years of work is that the Equal Chances Ltd. currently operates as a sheltered workplace employing disabled persons.

At the headquarters in Csömör and at 12 other places – in Celldömölk, Mohács (2), Bakonykút, Bátor-terenyé, Ózd, Serényfalva, Csorvás, Pusztaföldvár, Gödöllő, Albertirsa, Kunszentmiklós – the organization employs 560 people with reduced working capacity.

Activities performed by persons with reduced capacity at the organization include the following:

- agricultural activities (e.g.: sheep and goat keeping, fodder crop production)
- organic farming
- wage work (e.g.: assembling and sorting products, packaging, etc.)
- production of creative hand-craft products (e.g.: ceramic ornaments and decorative objects, textile goods, puppets, ornamental candles, carpet mats, etc.)
- office administration
- informatics
- cleaning
- maintenance
- reception
- painting

The organization is constantly pursuing opportunities to assist people with disabilities by providing them work possibilities. Work has a complex and positive impact on the persons involved and their family. Work is a source of income, fulfilment, time management, human relationships, expectations, development opportunities, social integration, gaining valuable experience for the employee, and additionally, it also has a positive effect on the family, as the work of people with disabilities affects the lives of their active-age parents and family members as well. Family members and care takers gain the opportunity to work during the time the disabled family member is working.

For many employees, this organization is their first job. The organization has many success stories. Highlighting only one of them: one of their young disabled employees, who was state-cared with serious integration and socialization problems and with no work experience, has been educated for self-care and accurate work. Today he is already caring for and providing for his own family!

The organization operates on the basis of normalization and integration. They consider it important to provide job opportunities for their employees based on their existing capabilities. They do not rely on what he or she cannot deliver, but rather on what he or she is capable of performing, along with other skills learned through the process. It is important for the organization that their employees can choose from as many types of job opportunities as possible.

### Some key words to describe the farm:

- Rehabilitation employment
- Organic farming
- Strengthening social inclusion
- Normalization and integration principles



## Practical details of the social farm:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Main target group:                                | People with disabilities (heterogeneous group that consists of people with reduced working capacity based on their health status, qualifications, work experience, and work ability. There are some people who have been disabled since birth, and people who have been ill-treated as a result of an illness or accident. Rehabilitation employment aims at maintaining the remaining skills, improving them as much as possible, and improving work ability)   |
| Purpose:  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>target group members can also be present in the labour market (open, sheltered)</li> <li>the right to work can be exercised if the person concerned wants to work</li> </ul>  |
| What activities are involved?                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>individual social case work</li> <li>life-coaching</li> <li>health services</li> <li>labour market information</li> <li>mentoring support</li> <li>organizing leisure and community programs</li> <li>teaching training (teaching a given workflow)</li> </ul>  |
| Who started the activity?                         | Tiborné Szekeres   |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?           | <p>Tiborné Szekeres is a concerned parent who was faced with the fact in the 1970s, as a single mother there were many difficulties in educating a child with multiple disabilities. Challenges included: finding a suitable form of care, the impact on parents' lives when caring for a disabled child, and the self-benefit for a disabled person in knowing that can contribute meaningfully within a community.</p> <p>On the other hand, those who have become disabled persons due to illness or accident may be able to work properly according to their individual condition while not being left out of the labour market, helping maintain their working ability.</p> |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organization receives a support for the rehabilitation employment (they need to apply for it by preparing a tender regularly)</li> <li>They try to supplement the above mentioned support with other projects</li> </ul>  |
| When the initiative started?                      | Equal Chances Non-Profit Cooperative Ltd. was established in 2011, from 2013 it operates as an accredited sheltered workplace.   |
| Working hours in average for each client per day: | The organization employs workers with reduced working capacity in 4-5-6-7-8 hour shifts with contract of indefinite period. The daily working hours depends on the employee's health state.  |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- Human resources (based on the data of May 2017) are as follows:  
 Number of staff with reduced working capacity (number of employees): 566 persons  
 Assitants: 13 persons  
 Management contributors: 43 persons
- Organic farm in Csömör: 19 people work in the gardening group. The leader of the group is an agricultural engineer who has a hearing disability.  
 Area of the cultivated land: half a hectare of land with an additional half a hectare ornamental garden  
 The cultivated plants, vegetables and fruits include the following (non-exhaustive list): zucchini, radish, onion, pumpkin, pepper, tomato, green pea, green bean and herbs (e.g.: rosemary, sage, basil), lettuce, arugula, spinach, sorrel, strawberry, apple, apricot, sour cherries, cherries, etc.

- Technical equipment: irrigation system, hand tools
- Farm in Bakonykút: There are 2 people with reduced working capacity, 1 person who cares after the animals, 1 farm manager (social worker), 1 volunteer (agricultural engineer).
- The main activity is sheep breeding for sale (about 100-130 sheep) and fodder crop production. Technical equipment: barns, pens, farm buildings (office, community room, showers, toilets, dressing rooms), hand tools, tractor.

### Financial aspects of the activity:

What are the main sources of funding?

- state aid for the employment of accredited employers for rehabilitation (by tender)
- personal sources
- other projects

### Other important aspects of the activity:

- Vegetables, fruits and herbs produced in the organic garden are used in the kitchen that is also operated by the organization.
- The employment of people with reduced working capacity has a complex impact on the workers concerned (maintaining and development of working ability, income, time structure, social integration, social relationship, socialization processes at the workplace, work experience) and it has also social impacts (e.g.: taxation, self-care, active-inactive rate, labour market processes, etc.)

### Results of the farm activity:

Direct Results:

- employment of persons with reduced working capacity
- ensuring the development of the employees (working ability, work experience)
- strengthening the importance of work
- the result of the work is “tangible”

Strength:

- They provide jobs for workers who could not find jobs on the open labour market because of their condition (e.g.: lack of adequate qualifications, lack of work experience, having special health condition that make them incapable for higher physical or psychological „strain”)
- The workplace also means community, time schedule and requirement. It increases the adaptability, self-care and the ability to improve skills (e.g. using transport, dressing)
- Work has a complex impact on the lives of (employees) and their families
- Real tasks (as there are real orders from the organization’s partners) strengthen the employee’s sense of usefulness and give him/her confidence

Weaknesses:

- lack of financial resources for development (e.g.: for mechanization, polytunnel construction, greenhouses, new tractor)

Wider benefits:

- social impacts (income - tax, strengthening self-care, strengthening social inclusion, increasing the proportion of active people in the labour market)
- impact on the family of the disabled person (income of the family; parents of the disabled person can find time for individual employment)
- local, municipal level: e.g.: If people with reduced working ability can supplement their state-aid with wages, their purchasing power improves, which also affects local businesses (they buy products in the local grocery store/local market)
- workers temporarily employed in rehabilitation do not lose their ability to work, which facilitates their return to the open labour market

## Future prospects and sustainability:

- an increasing emphasis is placed on healthy nutrition, that is why small-scaled chemical free vegetable and fruit production has an important role
- the employment of persons with reduced working capacity is also a state objective

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

The group of people with disabilities is very heterogeneous, that is why the work is customized for each of client. The organization employs people who have disabilities since their birth, such as mentally disabled people, who have never had a real job opportunity in their life. In their case, they should not be taught exclusively for the achievement of a particular work process, but also how to behave in a workplace. Employing people with reduced work ability can be successful in the case of easy-to-learn, hand-work demanding tasks, if the following conditions are provided:

- professionally qualified and personally adequate team leaders
- providing breaks during the work
- providing assistance services (e.g.: mentoring, individual case work, etc.)
- assistance in determining efficient work that is customized for the individual based on his/her mental and physical state and his/her needs (e.g.: template that helps calculating, the use of sign language or written communication for deaf people)
- breaking up the workflow into individual steps
- taking into account the individual's abilities during work organization
- understandable communication

In addition to organic gardening and animal husbandry, the organization carries out wage work for its partners. In this kind of work (e.g.: curtain clip assembling, mop head sewing, work clothes sewing, product sorting and wrapping, gift bag gluing, pump testing or cutting, ceramic production of Misija designed figures, etc.) deadlines must be kept and quality must be maintained, regardless of human resources. In addition to the wage work, people working in creative workshops (e.g.: weaving, ceramic workshops) are also doing excellent work, resulting in high-quality handicrafts or souvenirs.

In summary, people with reduced work ability can perform useful and meaningful work, but it is important to emphasize that those work activities should be offered that can be accomplished successfully by disabled people, and at the same time enjoyable for them.



Photos: Zoltán Czippó



Photos provided by Equal Chances Non-Profit Cooperative Ltd.



## Filadelfia Evangelical Church - Filadelfia Crown Social Cooperative

### Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:

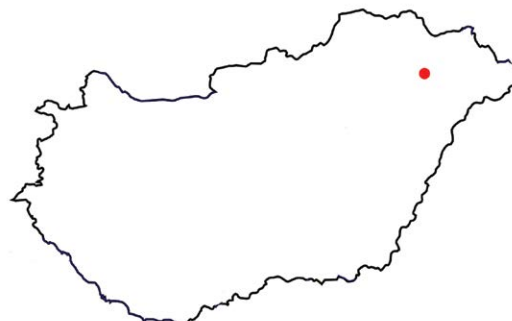
Filadelfia Korona Szociális Szövetkezet (HU)

Filadelfia Crown Social Cooperative (EN)

address: Nyírtelek 4461 Tokaji u. 52. Hungary

email:gyorfim@gmail.com

website (website of the church) <http://filadelfia.lutheran.hu/>



### Short description of the farm:

At the time of the founding of the Filadelfia Evangelical Church in 1992, the ecclesia was composed of 5-6 persons, since the population of the town was largely Catholic. Based on a self-determined strategy with the assistance of enthusiastic volunteers, the group aimed to support Roma families (called Roma mission), and care after addicts and people with disabilities within the local community. In time it became clear that in addition to pastoral care, there was need for new employment opportunities, thus job creation and offering trainings became prioritized. With this in mind, the Filadelfia Evangelical Parish has supplemented its voluntary work with normative support within the framework of the provision of basic social services (1/2000 (I./7) Hungarian Government Decree).



Photo: Apolka Ujj

In 2010, they established and started to operate the Safe Start Child House with volunteers, recognizing that early child development is an indispensable part of a long-term strategy. In the same year, in 2010, the Social Land Program was launched, with the aim of employing 23 new public workers from a pool of applicants experiencing chronic unemployment, and with little work experience. Those enrolled in the work program received payments on a weekly or monthly basis, as required for their participation. Regular participation in agricultural work has brought many positive results: regularity, reliability in uprising in the morning, teamwork, etc. The greatest achievement of regular work is that workers who had previously lived with social aid started to appreciate the compensation they earned for their physical effort, while the money they had previously received as social aid did not produce the same level of satisfaction.

In 2014, the Filadelfia Evangelical Parish created a social cooperative under the name Filadelfia Crown Social Cooperative and initiated agricultural activities on the land they rented from the local government. In Görögszállás, the village that belongs administratively

to Nyírtelek and where the 70-80 % of the population belongs to the Roma minority, the Social Land Program was launched, for which 2 land owners offered 6000 m<sup>2</sup> of land. On this area they built the Alternative Center that serves as a place for community events and worship. Behind the Center, in the garden there is a 3-year old 60 m<sup>2</sup> greenhouse (which was donated to the project) and a 1000 m<sup>2</sup> polytunnel built in 2013. (In 2017 due to the extreme wind, and harsh weather in spring the polytunnel was unfortunately damaged to a state which it became unusable.)

In addition to their own area, they rent 10 hectares of land for arable vegetable, fruit and arable crop production. The most significant field crops are millet, corn and sunflower. They strive to cultivate their entire territory following ecological farming principles, and currently have a larger area of organic land, while a smaller part is registered under conversion. The inspection and certification is carried out by Biokontroll Hungária Kft (Hungarian Organic Controlling Organization).



## Some key words to describe the farm:

- Social cooperative
- Organic farming
- Roma mission coupled with agricultural employment
- Community building



Photo: Viktória Oláh

## Practical details of the social farm:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Main target group:                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• members of the Roma minority</li> <li>• addicts</li> </ul>  |
| Purpose:  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pastoral care</li> <li>• early child development in roma families</li> <li>• training</li> <li>• job creation</li> </ul>  |
| What activities are involved?                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provision of basic social services (community care for addicts)</li> <li>• support service (for people with disabilities)</li> <li>• home care (for people in need in their own home environment)</li> <li>• provision of farmwarden service /village warden service</li> <li>• Child protection and social reintegration (Safe Start Child House)</li> </ul> <p>Agricultural activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• polytunnel vegetable growing and on arable land</li> <li>• arable crop production</li> <li>• fruit production</li> <li>• sales in the wholesale market, organic shops, direct sale within the community</li> <li>• mentor programme (At present, they support 5 family households in gardening with professional mentoring, but they also help in investments )</li> </ul> |
| Who started the activity?                         | Mihály Györfi, pastor of the Nyírtelek Filadelfia Evangelical Church   |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?           | Supporting the members of the church in need by providing employment opportunities. Families of these members can reach a secure livelihood.   |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• volunteers</li> <li>• Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)</li> <li>• Biokontroll Hungária Ltd.</li> <li>• Ministry of Human Capacities</li> </ul>   |
| When the initiative started?                      | 2010   |
| Working hours in average for each client per day: | 8 hours per day. Regularly, they are also engaged in additional activities, such as cleaning of ruderal areas, bag preparation and cloths upcycling from second-hand clothes, etc.   |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- Human resources: 15 to 20 public employees, of which 4 persons are responsible for social services, 4 persons work in the office and 10 to 12 persons perform agriculture activities.
- Rented land: They pay the renting cost from the SAPS (single area payment scheme) and the payment received after the eco-qualified land area.
- Machinery: They have one small tractor used for irrigation and transport, they apply custom farming for soil cultivation as an external resource. (The revenues from the sale of the produced goods cover the cost of soil cultivation work.)

## Financial aspects of the activity:

What are the main sources of funding?

- SAPS
- Rural development aid for organic farming
- Civil organizations are not supported in the Land Programme but can apply for individual support. From 2016 they have applied for this type of support.

## Other important aspects of the activity:

- They provide local school with organic food ingredients
- The workers are accustomed to regular work
- They provide skill-developing day-care for children

## Results of the farm activity:

Direct Results:

- Strengthened family households by motivating families for the re-cultivation of their small-scale gardens (the church gave seeds and seedlings, taught gardening, etc.)
- Workers benefit by receiving fresh produce for free from the crops produced in bigger quantity
- Workers also can buy at a discounted price from all the crops produced
- Workers are likely to be able to return to the labor market
- Workers and their families get to know and get used to healthy foods

Strength:

Everyone has a special role in the community (e.g. an electrician can assist in electrical installation, a dressmaker in sewing). The community provide the force and motivation, while serving as the engine of action

Weaknesses:

- According to the Land Law, land use for social activities is not a priority, there is no rent option.
- Social cooperatives cannot acquire land ownership and it is not possible to use local government land based on a lending agreement.
- Capital shortage. They depend on the “kindness” of the State Secretariat responsible for Social Affairs and Social Integration while applying for individual support.
- Difficulties in marketing products: this area is not conscious of organic production benefits, population of this area cannot afford the organic certified premium price of goods.
- They lack processing capacity of fresh goods, because they are not ‘primary producers’ and cannot guarantee the high standard process circumstances that are compulsory for manufactories.
- Civil organizations cannot be supported by municipalities from 2016.

Wider benefits:

In addition to finding the inner spiritual path, the complex activities, that the Filadelfia church offers, also enables professional development of many individuals. This has been observed in many of their members. The organic farm manager, who is now the leader of the other public workers, acquires theoretical and practical knowledge of organic farming and expands his agricultural knowledge regularly by participating in trainings, was one of the former addicts who received assistance from the Filadelfia church.

## Future prospects and sustainability:

- Direct sales in restaurants and in organic shop
- Investments: bigger tractor, in self-sufficiently perform at least the cultivation between rows
- Replacement of the damaged polytunnel

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

In projects of this nature, new challenges may arise, an invested and supported community can identify new solutions. However, it is important to have professional vision, not to blindly enter into new ambitious projects because a likelihood of disappointment and failure remains. For Filadelfia Evangelical Church, for example, the initiator – pastor Mihály Györfi- had experience in crop production, as he studied agriculture in secondary school. He also has experience in experimenting how to succeed with projects with multiple stakeholders as previously he has successfully managed a manufacturing facility with 100 employees. We may say that he arrived with extensive knowledge and experience to the pastoral position, but he also participated in a project manager training course for further development. In his own words “It is a must to have experience, because a pastor who has only studied theology will certainly need help,” he says. The strength of the church community is the most important, but also a good apparatus (office manager, administrative staff) is essential without whom the machine would not function.



*Photos provided by Filadelfia Crown Social Cooperative*



*Photo: Viktória Oláh*



*Photo: Apolka Ujj*



## Sentinel Farm

### Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:  
 Strázsa Tanya Közhasznú Szociális Szövetkezet (HU)  
 Sentinel Farm Public Social Co-operative (EN)  
 address: 6080 Szabadszállás, Alsószőlők  
 2702/2 hrsz. Hungary  
 email: strazsa.szoc.szov@gmail.com  
 website: www.strazsatanya.com



### Short description of the farm:

Sentinel Farm is situated on the Great Hungarian Plain, within Kiskunság, Szabadszállás village. In 2007 a family bought the farm and started their activities as private hosts. They established a social cooperative in 2010 with the aim of helping disadvantaged people in the region, especially for those with disabilities. Since 2011, they have managed an eight room guesthouse, which includes three barrier-free rooms with included washrooms, as well as additional accessible community spaces. The guesthouse receives families and informal training programs for preschool, primary school and high school groups. Within the “Farm Classroom” programming series, participants have the opportunity to become acquainted with traditional on-farm activities and the flora and fauna of the neighbouring Kiskunság National Park. The workshops are designed to be inclusive of children and participants both with and without special needs. In 2012, they launched an additional training program for young people with mental disabilities, aiming to develop independent living and working skills, including agricultural tasks.

The site has served as accredited employer since 2016, and in 2017 provided job opportunities for 9 people with altered or limited working ability in the fields of animal care, forestry, landscape management and hospitality. Currently they are active on six acres of land.



*Photos provided by Sentinel Farm Public Social Co-operative*

### Some key words to describe the farm:

- Social enterprise
- Hospitality
- Informal education programs in the field of environmental education and the preservation of traditions
- Training and employment of people with disabilities
- Community building, social integration



## Practical details of social farm:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Main target group:                                | mild to moderately mentally disabled young adults   |
| Purpose:  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• long-term employment of the target group</li> <li>• established and operate subsidized housing</li> <li>• expand entrepreneurship</li> <li>• to promote integration and social inclusion</li> <li>• informal training in environmental education and preservation of traditions</li> </ul>   |
| What activities are involved?                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• non-formal education of primary and high school students, environmental education</li> <li>• hospitality of families, communities, friends, people with disabilities</li> <li>• care of pets, forestry</li> <li>• organizing community and cultural programs while “sensitizing”</li> <li>• training to help people with mental disabilities to become more independent</li> <li>• provide employment opportunities for people with mental disabilities and people with other disabilities</li> <li>• providing a “model” supported housing project</li> </ul> |
| Who started the activity?                         | Németné Horváth Beáta<br>Német Csaba  |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?           | A mentally disabled girl was involved in a riding camp program on site years ago, which at that point were mostly oriented towards hosting “healthy” children. The acceptance of the disabled child by others was almost immediate. This inspired the idea of arranging more programs on the farm which were designed to be inclusive of disabled individuals. As a result of their positive impact and confirmatory feedback they decided to develop additional programs for supporting people with disabilities.  |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hungarian Federation of Associations and Foundations Serving People with Mental Handicap</li> <li>• AGA-PÉ Sharing Love Foundation</li> <li>• Ministry of Human Capacities</li> <li>• Equal Opportunities for Disabled People Non-profit Ltd.</li> <li>• MAVIR Ltd.</li> <li>• E.ON Energy provider Ltd.</li> <li>• Oops!</li> <li>• Auchan’s Foundation for Youth, Spar, DM, ChocoMe, Tesco</li> </ul>  |
| When the initiative started?                      | The co-operative was established in 2010 and has been actively operating since 2014.  |
| Working hours in average for each client per day: | The members of the target group work with helpers four hours a day and they spend the rest of the day as they require personally, under supervision and care.   |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

### Resources:

- committed staff, volunteers
- infrastructure background: farm, animals, forest, guest house
- professional knowledge, experience, proven training, programs
- widespread popularity in the clientele: families, kindergartens, schools, disability organizations

### Structure:

The farm occupies an area of six hectares, mainly forests, while hosting various animals such as common pets, horses, ponies, goats, sheep, rabbits and poultry all found on the Sentinel farm.

The guesthouse is run by a management staff, and workers with reduced working capacity participate in the operation of the house and in the maintenance of the farm's area.

### Financial aspects of the activity:

What are the main sources of funding?

- income from hospitality business
- income from education programs
- subsidies
- successful tenders

### Other important aspects of the activity:

Starting with basic care, they provide additional services in a step by step process:

- Working together with parents, to give them more confidence in allowing more autonomy for their children with mental disabilities
- Organizing family days
- Organization of camps for one or two weeks long with the aim of helping encourage independent life and work (Sentinel-trial camp) with four-day repeat weekends
- Integration into the local community
- Operation of a home-house which serves as a model of supported housing

In the meantime, the continuous strengthening and expansion of the entrepreneurial hospitality activity provides for the financial security of the social enterprise.

### Results of the farm activity:

Direct Results:

- stable operation - increased number of guest nights
- the training of the Sentinel-trial was approved by Hungarian Vocational and Adult Education Office in 1995 as "A Way to Independent Life" (accredited)
- becoming an accredited employer (2015)
- „Best Community Development Social Entrepreneurship" Award (2016)
- successful tenders - construction of Sentinel ParaPark (2016-2018)
- organizing of the Sentinel-trial in Finish project

Strength:

- stable basics of the business
- extensive networking
- developing a step by step process of working with young people of the target group

Weaknesses:

- Incomplete utilization of the winter season
- low staff numbers - difficulties in finding reliable employee
- difficult access to the farm by public transport

Wider benefits:

- a wide range of activities thanks to the farm's facilities
- - national recognition
- - national competence

## Future prospects and sustainability:

Long term sustainability is ensured that they operate as hosts of the Erzsébet program and offer informal education programs to a wide range of educational institutions. (See more about the Erzsébet programme in: <http://erzsebetprogram.eu/en/>)

In 2017, a "ParaPark" will be created from a tender source, which is a barrier-free, integrated playground suitable for guided activities. This park is based on a similar design to the previously existing Ability Park located in Budapest.

They plan to broaden their business scope and to expand their rehabilitation employment.

## In conclusion –lessons to pass on:

Creating a social enterprise is very complex, and requires much patience and perseverance. Fast success can certainly not be expected, and the pathway to long term success is taken step by step. It is important to formulate long-term goals and keep them in mind to achieve smaller, more immediate goals. However, the necessity to be open to reacting and responding quickly to challenges, and adapt to new opportunities remains a core trait of a successful operation. A focus on quality work should be always maintained.

It is also important to dedicate much time to communication. Problems and their possible solutions need to be discussed with those concerned, and no decisions should be taken without all involved parties.

In the course of the work, it is needed to be always open and empathic to the members of the community. Exclusion, and prejudice can only be avoided if a genuine effort is made to prove that all are valuable members of the community. Of course, the creation of the material goods, and maintaining the business side of a social farm is also a daunting challenge. In particular, profit-making services must be effectively managed, expanded at a sensible rate to sustain the operation, and if required to support additional activities, increased year by year. With such development goals in mind, more and more jobs can be created and thus contribute to reducing unemployment in the region.

Project applications exist as additional important tools for acquiring financial resources. Effective applications contribute to notoriety of social enterprises. Familiarity with financial resources also greatly contributes to successful operations.



*Photos provided by Sentinel Farm  
Public Social Co-operative*



# Social farming in Poland

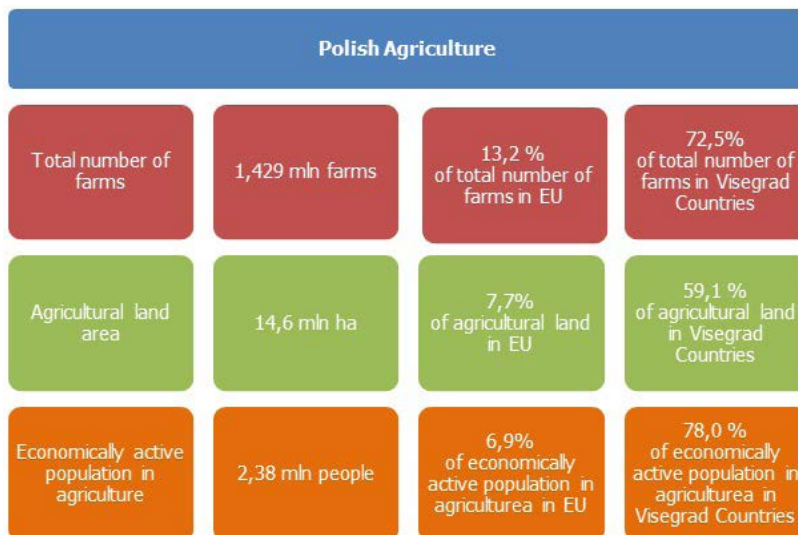
The idea of social farming has been developing in Poland in recent years. Social farming includes a broad range of different practices that combine agriculture with professional social services. This includes initiatives of private entities or charities, church or non-governmental organizations, in addition to agriculturalists. Following the European Economic and Social Committee opinion for defining social agriculture, four types of social farms can be identified depending on the target group and diversified purposes:

- care farms providing care services,
- therapy farms undertaking therapeutic and re-educational activities,
- inclusive/social farms concerned about social and employment inclusion,
- educational/didactic farms undertaking pedagogical activities.

Summary information on particular types of social farms is extended in case studies descriptions, where the selected experiences and implementations of social farming are presented. This introduction shows the potential for social farming concerning the demographic situation and actual social care system whilst presenting the agricultural sector and trends in rural entrepreneurship development.

## Agricultural sector characteristic related to social farming

Important data about the Polish agriculture is presented in Figure 1. Polish agriculture is characterized by a large differentiation in the regional configuration, determined by a number of factors, both agri-climatic and socio-economic. Therefore, in Poland there are specialized farms with large scale production and high efficiency, along with a high number of small and medium size farms. For the latter group social farming represents a potential opportunity for new sources of income.



Source: *Statistical Yearbook of Agriculture 2016, Central Statistical Office, Warsaw 2016.*

## Rural Development Policy

Rural areas, apart from their traditional roles as food producers, have gained recognition as important areas for business operations not related to agriculture. Poland has for years been pursuing a policy of sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas, according to the principles specified in EU programmes.

The Rural Development Programme for the years 2014-2020 is based on six priorities that includes “promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.”

This priority uses the bottom-up approach through Local Development Strategies drawn up by the 322 Local Action Groups (LAGs). The operation and investments are aimed at improving access to public services and the inclusion of populations living in disadvantaged areas, and improving the availability of public services, in particular care services. Thus, the model of social farms is one of the ways to realize the policy goals.



## Trends in rural entrepreneurship development

Contemporary transformations in rural areas are characterised by an increase in social and economic activity of the inhabitants. The growing number of non-agricultural enterprises is one of the most significant trends and the importance of non-agricultural operations in rural holdings income has increased. In 2014, more than 97% of national business entities conducting business activities in rural areas belonged to the private sector.

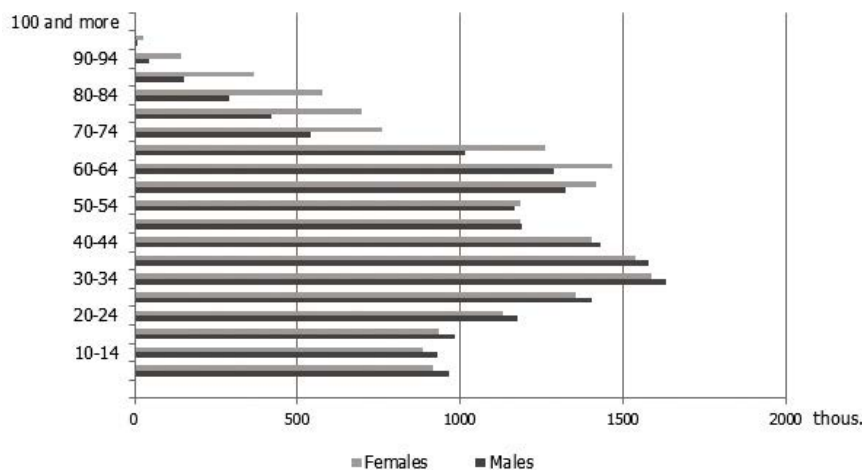
There is slow, but visible popularization of the multifunctional farm model, especially in the group of small holdings. Non-agricultural businesses directly related to the holding were conducted by 3.2% of holdings producing mainly for the market and 2.3% – mainly for the needs of the household (including only 1.7% – only for own needs). Holdings producing mainly for their own needs mostly conduct activities such as: agritourism, handicraft production, food processing and agricultural contract works while aquaculture, production of renewable energy and direct marketing were more popular among commodity holdings.

Among different kinds of non-agricultural activities undertaken by the inhabitants of rural areas, tourist services are the most popular. It is a form of activity which capitalises on values associated with the specific social, cultural and environmental character of the countryside and contributes to the development of entrepreneurship, competitiveness, as well as to economic stimulation of rural areas.

An innovative approach integrating social services into the trend of multifunctional agriculture is “social farming”, also known as “green care” or “farming for health”. Small farms with their unique attitudes, technical potential and high likelihood of available social capital gain a new chance to fulfil functions complementing global educational, social or health care systems.

## Demography situation

One of the most important challenges in Poland is the unfavourable demographic trend, indicated by the significant increase in the proportion of elderly people in society. Currently in Poland there are almost 9 million people over 60, in 2020 the number of seniors will approach 10 million (25% of the population).



*Chart 1. The population age pyramid (2016)  
Source: Population Size and Structure and Vital  
Statistic in Poland by Territorial Division in 2016 As  
of December 31, Central Statistical Office, Warsaw  
2017*

The growing challenge of population aging confirms that new actions and initiatives for the elderly should be undertaken. There are several complex issues related to this requirement. Firstly, the group of older people is very uneven. Among seniors there are not only active and healthy people, but also chronically ill, dependent or marginalized people. Therefore, the range of activities should be tailored to include all these needs.

Secondly, social stratification is manifested by unequal access to social services. The system of these services is still underdeveloped. Therefore, there is a justified need for the development of services provided in the local environment (the need for deinstitutionalisation of care services).

As a consequence, on one hand, the elderly will exist as underutilised human potential in rural areas, with the potential for activation and innovative proposals for self-realization. On the other hand, seniors in rural areas may also be passive recipients of health and social care, requiring multi-faceted support, including for basic life needs.

## Social care system

The social care system in Poland consists of units of central and local administration in cooperation with social service organisations such as NGO-s. The concept and strategy of social policy as well as legal regulation and defining standards for services provided by social assistance are created by the Minister of Family, Labour and Social Policy. The local administration is as follow.

The assisted and supported group include: homeless, unemployed, disabled and dependent people, the poor, elderly, families and children, and victims of natural and ecological disasters. Social assistance programs prioritise social integration, social inclusion, greater activity and independence. The assistance and support is offered in various forms such as cash benefits (permanent, periodical and purpose benefit) and non-financial assistance (e.g. social work, care services, specialist counselling)

### Social farming concept and experiences overview

As far as social farming is concerned, the role of the state farm advisory system should be emphasized. In particular, the promoter of activities aimed at promoting the agricultural function of the agricultural sector is Agricultural Advisory Centre (AAC) of the Brwinow Branch in Cracow, which co-operates with all regional advisory centres in Poland. The initiative of the educational farm network has been developed whilst the creation of a network of care farms dedicated primarily to the elderly people is in progress. The concept of care farm in Poland assumes that the social care and services are provided on the basis of the farm infrastructure and they are connected with agricultural activities (the farm should have animals and agricultural crops). Care farm are required to be established according to existing law rules.



Chart 2. Agricultural advisory system in Poland

Improving the availability of social services is one of the objectives in the Polish Strategy for Responsible Development (SOR). The strategy assumes that the services will be provided by local society as an innovative approach combining multifunctional agriculture and social care or health care at the local level (the possibility of diversifying farmer incomes combined with social offers for rural areas) and rural areas.

# Care Farms - building the co-operation network

## Contact details:

name of the project:  
 Care Farms - building the co-operation network  
 Project provider:  
 Agricultural Advisory Centre (AAC) in Brwinow,  
 Branch in Cracow (EN)  
 address: Meiselsa 1, 31-063 Kraków, Poland  
 telephone: +48 12 4240500  
 email: [krakow@cdr.gov.pl](mailto:krakow@cdr.gov.pl)  
 website: [www.cdr.gov.pl](http://www.cdr.gov.pl)  
[www.gospodarstwa-opiekuncze.pl](http://www.gospodarstwa-opiekuncze.pl)



## Short description of the project:

Care farming is understood in Poland as a type of social farming. The idea of establishing care farms in Poland is still a relatively new concept in its primary stages. Consequently, the project “Care Farms - building the co-operation network” was carried out, which aimed to spread the idea of care farming among Polish agricultural advisors and farmers. Over the course of the project numerous trainings and meetings for those interested in care farming were organized. Furthermore, a summary leaflet and brochure were published to spread information about the concept of care farms in Poland.



## Some key words to describe the project:

- Care farm in Poland
- Care farming
- Social farm
- Senior policy
- Care policy
- Rural development
- Rural entrepreneurship

Photo by AAC Cracow

## Practical details of the project:

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Main target group:            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural advisors (1st stage of the project)</li> <li>• Farmers and their family members who are interested in care farms (2nd stage of the project)</li> </ul>  |
| Purpose:                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dissemination and promotion of care farming among agricultural advisors, Polish farmers and their family members</li> <li>• creation of a network for care farming development in rural areas</li> </ul>   |
| What activities are involved? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing and outlining the concept of care farming in Poland</li> <li>• Training for agricultural advisors</li> <li>• Information and training meetings for farmers and their family members</li> <li>• Publication of a summary leaflet informing about the concept of care farming in Poland</li> <li>• Research and compiled reports about interest in care farming among farmers and their family members</li> </ul> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Who started the activity?                | Agricultural Advisory Centre (AAC) in Brwinow Branch in Cracow   |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading the idea of social and care farming in Europe –good practises from different countries in Western Europe.</li> <li>• The problem of ageing populations – according to the prediction, 35% of rural population in Poland in 2050 are going to be over 65. In consequence there is an increasing need for the deinstitutionalization of care systems.</li> <li>• Searching for new possibilities for reusing farm resources (free housing space and human resources in Polish farms). It could also result in new possibilities for entrepreneurship in rural areas.</li> </ul> |
| Does anyone else support the initiative? | Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development<br>16 Regional Agricultural Advisory Centre in Poland  |
| When the initiative started?             | 2016   |
| What is the current status?              | Finished project   |
| Geographical coverage                    | National   |

### Details of the conducted research in the project:

The broad survey was conducted with a sample group of 988 Polish farmers and their family members. The majority of the group surveyed were women (75%). The average age range was 35-55. The respondents represented mostly small (1-10 ha) and medium (11-52 ha) farms. Additional non-agricultural activities are performed in more than half of the farms.

The results of the research survey are as follow.

- It was found that 45% of farms had available human resources which could be used to provide care activities.
- According to the respondents, the demand for care services in rural areas is increasing.
- The research shows that the typical person interested in care farming activities in Poland are farmers between the ages of 45-64. The farmer group identified typically operates farms managing plant production. Furthermore, the farms are typically multifunctional.
- A small percentage of respondents (9%) were not interested in building the network for care farming development in rural areas. The overwhelming majority think that the co-operation network would be very helpful and believe it should be created.

### Financial aspects of the project:

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| What are the main sources of funding? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development</li> <li>• Rural Development Program 2014-2020 Polish EIP-AGRI</li> </ul> |
|---------------------------------------|--|

### Other important aspects of the project:

As a result of the conducted research, it was possible to reach and document a group of individuals who were interested in care farming and plan to become involved in care farming. Almost one respondent in five stated that he/she wanted to conduct care activities on his/her farm. Furthermore, 270 people left their contact details for the purposes of building the cooperation network for care farming.



## Results of the project:

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Direct Results: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• outline the preliminary concept of care farming in Poland</li> <li>• training in care farming for 40 Polish agricultural advisors</li> <li>• information training in care farming for 988 Polish farmers and their family members</li> <li>• identification of group of farmers interested in setting up care farms</li> </ul> |
| Strength:       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nationally reaching project</li> <li>• diverse participants - project involved not only advisors but also farmers and their family members</li> <li>• conducted research which shows that there is a group of farmers and their family members who are greatly interested in running a care farm</li> </ul>                    |
| Weaknesses:     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the project did not provide financial support for establishing care farms</li> <li>• there are no legal designations for care farms in Poland</li> </ul>   |
| Wider benefits: | <p>increasing the chance for establishing care farms in Poland as a way of providing care services in rural areas. In consequence, it could create new work places in rural areas, more entrepreneurial initiative and new sources for farmers' income.</p>   |

## Future prospects and sustainability:

As a result of the project, the idea of care farming has spread among advisors, farmers and rural inhabitants. It can be stated that there is great potential and opportunities for the development of care farms and the network in Poland.

The sustainability of care farms can be ensured only through the creation of a self-financing entity that will operate in accordance with applicable law.

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

Care farming in Poland is in its initial stage of development. A crucial step in the development of care farming in the region will be to help interested practitioners by providing professional advisory.



Photo: [www.miasto.limanowa.pl](http://www.miasto.limanowa.pl)



Photo: [www.sandomierz.caritas.pl](http://www.sandomierz.caritas.pl)

## Enchanted Hill

### Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:  
 „Zaczarowane Wzgórze” (PL)  
 “Enchanted Hill” (EN)  
 address: Czasław 233, 32-415 Raciechowice, Poland  
 e-mail: [wzgorze@poczta.onet.pl](mailto:wzgorze@poczta.onet.pl)  
 website: [www.wzgorze.eco.pl](http://www.wzgorze.eco.pl)



### Short description of the farm:

The “Enchanted Hill” is a 6 hectare agritourism farm located in the ecological commune of Malopolska Province. The view from the farm is beautiful thanks to the Island Beskid Mountain’s green meadows. The proximity of the mountains offers amazing views on horseback. The farm holds 30 friendly horses of different breeds and sizes, e.g. Shetland ponies, felines, Polish horses, Malopolska breeds, and tinkers. There is also the “mini-zoo” which hosts a number of pets including colourful domestic birds, laying hens, geese who are perfect guardians, rabbits and guinea pigs, frisky goats, smitten sheep and pigs who keep watch at the trough.

The farm specializes in horseback riding and rally organization, both for beginners and advanced riders. Horse riding takes place under the guidance of experienced instructors. New activities in the farm include trainings on personal and professional development using horses by Horse Assisted Education method (Open by Horses). This is a method in which we experience ourselves in the space of the horse. During workshops horses help participants experience their emotions fully, develop confidence and realize their interconnection through their actions. Horse Assisted Education workshops are offered as a separate comprehensive training or as part of a wider program of stay on the farm. They usually last 8 – 16 hours. Exercises are performed individually, in pairs or in small groups and are tailored for the individual needs of the participants. Participants can be both adults and children.

The “Enchanted Hill” is a member of the Polish National Educational Farms Network.



Photo: [www.wzgorze.eco.pl](http://www.wzgorze.eco.pl)

### Some key words to describe the farm:

- Social farming
- Green therapy
- Animal assisted therapy
- Open by Horses (Horse assisted education)
- Educational farm

## Practical details of the social farm:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Main target group:                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children and youth</li> <li>• parents with children to better understand each other</li> <li>• trainers and teachers</li> <li>• management and managerial staff</li> <li>• teams of employees</li> <li>• anyone who wants to get to know themselves better, discover potential and new opportunities</li> </ul>  |
| Purpose:   | The space was created for people who love to stay in nature with friendly animals and want to spend their free time in traditional and active ways.   |
| What activities are involved?                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• summer and winter camps and semi-colonies</li> <li>• green and white schools</li> <li>• one-day educational programs and nature trips</li> <li>• horse riding lessons, horse riding camps</li> <li>• personal and professional development workshops with horses (Open by Horses)</li> <li>• corporate integration events</li> <li>• family picnics</li> </ul> |
| Who started the activity?                              | There is a private initiative of two families linked together by love of horses.  |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?                | The initiative was inspired by dreams and love for animals and nature. At the beginning it was as a place where the owners could hold their horses and spend time with their families. Over time, the initiative evolved and opened up to additional community members.   |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The farm benefits from the promotion of the Małopolska Tourism Organization</li> <li>• National Educational Farms Network</li> <li>• and local self-governments</li> </ul>   |
| When the initiative started?                           | The farm was set up at the end of the 20th century. The education services began in 2008 and Open by Horse therapy just three years ago.  |
| Working/care hours in average for each client per day: | Working time depends on the programme type, from a few hours to a few days  |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- The farm offers accommodation in a new guest house in 3, 4 and 5 person rooms with private bathrooms. There is a large playground with a barbecue grill with bread oven and focal point, large dining and multimedia room, trampoline, mini zoo, nature trail, educational tables and models, and a collection of old appliances and agricultural machinery which is constantly increasing.
- Workshops with horses focusing on riding skills are held in a stable and on a sand rider or in a round-penround pen. Land of the farm is plentiful, safe, away from the road.

## Financial aspects of the activity:

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| What are the main sources of funding? | To date, the initiative has developed without support from external funds. |
|---------------------------------------|--|



## Other important aspects of the project/activity:

Programs run on the farm have a clear dimension of green therapy. Guests stay surrounded by nature and the proximity of animals and are provided rest from the hustle and bustle of civilization. It is an added value to all programs. Teaching horse riding at the same time build up a partnership between human and animals based on mutual understanding of needs and behavioursbehaviors. Horse riding lessons include horse saddling, cleaning and feeding, theoretical and practical training in the field of psychology, horse reading, communication and communication with horses and the control of one's own body, types of riding and exercise of natural techniques of relaxation massage, training for the client's own bodies. Workshops "Open by Horse" do not require participants to have any previous experience with horses. All exercises during the workshop are performed from the ground.

## Results of the farm activity:

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Direct Results: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The "Enchanted Hill" is a prosperous business with a clear social profile.</li> <li>• Interest in the offerings is large.</li> <li>• The visits require reservations long in advance.</li> </ul>  |
| Strength:       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owners' involvement and their passion for horses, nature and openness to sharing their passion with others.</li> <li>• Diligence and inventiveness of the hosts.</li> <li>• Picturesque location and an affordable distance from city Cracow.</li> </ul>                        |
| Weaknesses:     | "Days are too short to carry out all the ideas."   |
| Wider benefits: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The farm cooperates with local farms and companies in terms of supply in local food products as well as of employment of the staff.</li> <li>• The farm also provides employment to a qualified staff of pedagogues, naturalists, animators, and riding instructors.</li> </ul> |

## Future prospects and sustainability:

The farm has submitted an application to the Local Action Group for co-financing of the project on building an indoor horse riding hall. The application was accepted in May 2017 and the grant was awarded from the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, sub-action "Support for implementation of local development strategies managed by the community". The operation favors comprehensive year-round activities and using the potential of the place to start a hippotherapy initiative, and to further develop innovative workshops on Horse Assisted Education.

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

Horse Assisted Education is an innovative educational concept in which horses support the development of personal and professional competencies. It is a relatively new idea in Poland with a growth perspective. It changes the approach to the notion of therapy that goes beyond work only with people with disabilities as well as give a new insights into the potential of horses in therapy.

Horses are herd animals with a very well developed communication system expressed in body language. They are characterized by an unusual sensitivity to the signals coming from the environment and the speed of response. During the workshop horses perform the role of co-trainers giving direct feedback on the emotions, attitudes, efficiency of communication and the effectiveness of the participant's actions in the workshops. Being in contact with horses helps to get to the depths of one's own psyche, to levels which are not reached every day.



# The Settlement of Dun Teddy Bear

## Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:  
 “Osada Burego Misia” (PL)  
 “The Settlement of Dun Teddy Bear” (EN)  
 address: Wętfie 1, Nowy Klincz, 83-400  
 Kościerzyna, Poland  
 website: [www.buremisie.org.pl](http://www.buremisie.org.pl)



## Short description of the farm:

“The Settlement of Dun Teddy Bear” is a farm and a home for disabled adults (referred to locally as ‘dun teddy bears’) whose parents have passed away or have difficulty caring for them, along with their caretakers (called dun bears). There are usually 45 people living in the settlement, including 26 ‘dun teddy bears’. The organisation is a charity initiative managed by the catholic community created and directed by the priest Czesław Marchewicz from the Resurrectionist Congregation. The community manages the almost 40 hectare farm where they grow cereals and vegetables, breed cattle and small livestock. They process the milk in their own cheese manufactory for their own supply and for marketing. They also host agrotourism activities. All of the work required is performed by the community members and it is an important part of their life. They share responsibilities according to their individual skills and abilities. “Every new element of the farm is born in a dialogue, sometimes non-verbal, between the Dun Bear and the Dun Teddy Bear who are looking for something, seeking to look deeper into it, and soon afterwards become breeders, producers and specialists - hosts of their own common little world.” Farming helps revalidate and restore the natural riches of human life.



## Some key words to describe the farm:

- Social farming
- Social inclusion
- Disability
- Charity

*Photo: [www.buremisie.org.pl](http://www.buremisie.org.pl)*

## Practical details of the social farm:

### Main target group:

Adults with intellectual or motor disabilities, mainly people with autism, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome.

### Purpose:

Providing shelter, care, rehabilitation and recreation to people with intellectual and motor disabilities, including the creation and maintenance of a material base for this purpose.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>What activities are involved?</p>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily household chores according to the schedule of duties. - Work on the farm which provides the rhythm of everyday life. <i>“Some are pushing big carts with cow feed, others use small buckets to carry cereals for hens, others feed small calves with buckets full of milk or deliver the whey from the cheese processing facility to pigs. Everyone knows where and how to move.”</i></li> <li>• Food processing baking bread, fruit drying, juice making, tomato and ketchup cooking, herbs drying, celery and parsley freezing, pickling of vegetables.</li> <li>• Work at the cheese manufactory “Dun Teddy Bears are very serious and responsive to the tasks they perform in the cheese factory. They know that it depends on them whether the cheese will of good quality. This work gives them a great deal of satisfaction, joy and independence because they know that they are contributing to the fact that cheeses are delicious, healthy and representing friendship.”</li> <li>• A holiday camp, when additional guest ‘dun teddy bears’ with arrive from different parts of Poland with their families for common holidays.</li> <li>• Touristic excursions, sometimes abroad using the money earned from the sale of crops and services.</li> </ul> |
| <p>Who started the activity?</p>                              | <p>priest Czesław Marchewicz</p>   |
| <p>What was the inspiration or motivation?</p>                | <p>Religious vocation and Christian charity mission in association with individual experience of contact with disability, prior involvement in scouting, the need to provide home to disabled friends when they become alone.</p>  |
| <p>Does anyone else support the initiative?</p>               | <p>The community enjoys many institutional friends and private sponsoring businesses.</p>  |
| <p>When the initiative started?</p>                           | <p>1989</p>  |
| <p>Working/care hours in average for each client per day:</p> | <p>24 hour care</p>  |

### Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- Crop production and animal husbandry: The settlement is a well-organized farm that maintains itself from through processing and sale of agricultural crops. The settlement holds 20 Jersey and Simental dairy cattle. Cows produce 200 liters of milk daily. The farm processes the daily milk production in a cheese manufactory. Various types of cheeses are produced. This process produces 180 liters of whey. It goes to several sows in the green paddocks and pigs. Pork is processed and sold as locally produced cold cut meat.
- Buildings: The inhabitants of the settlement live in four different buildings, eat together and spend their free time in four living rooms. The community is divided into small groups run by one caregiver (dun bear). These small families are included in the draft of duties, which concern the preparation of meals, cleaning their rooms and the common space of life. Small groups decide on their own leisure time, planning to go to the cinema, cafes or shopping.

### Financial aspects of the activity:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>What are the main sources of funding?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The initiative is provided by the Foundation of the Community of Dun Teddy Bear.</li> <li>• The main source of subsistence is farming, food processing and agro-tourism services.</li> <li>• The Foundation, as a public interest entity, is entitled to a deduction of 1% of income tax and public collection.</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

## Other important aspects of the activity:

Only those, who come from the communities of disabled people and their families, run by the Resurrectionist Congregation in Poland and who have participated in holiday camps in the settlement are invited to stay there after they have become alone. This allows for clients to acquaint themselves with the site well, accept it, and feel like at home here.

## Results of the farm activity:

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Direct Results: | Lifelong care for disabled adults and their social inclusion through community structure and farming activities.   |
| Strength:       | The initiative is based on a friendly sharing of everyday life with people with disabilities. "It was always supposed to be a home where our disable friend finds warmth and love - he will feel important and unique after having suffered the loss of loved ones."   |
| Weaknesses:     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited possibilities to accommodate all those in need</li> <li>• Constant shortage of money</li> </ul>   |
| Wider benefits: | The creators of the settlement, intuitively, without any previous knowledge of green care, use agriculture and farm activities in the rehabilitation and therapy of people with intellectual disabilities in the manner of a pattern. Their work confirms the extraordinary value of the farm's potential to fulfil its social mission and demonstrates a model of commitment of agriculture to the process of social inclusion of people with disabilities. |

## Future prospects and sustainability:

With acknowledging the growing demand for care, the Community wants to open the door to the next inhabitants without losing the home character of the enterprise. That is why the construction of a new settlement has begun, where more people seeking community and care could be accommodated.

The cheese business is growing as well. There are 10 types of cheese in category of cottage, rennet, smoked and ripened produced in the cheese manufactory. Cheeses are available for sale on the spot, at fixed points of sale in major cities in the region and through internet sale. Some varieties of cheese have won awards.

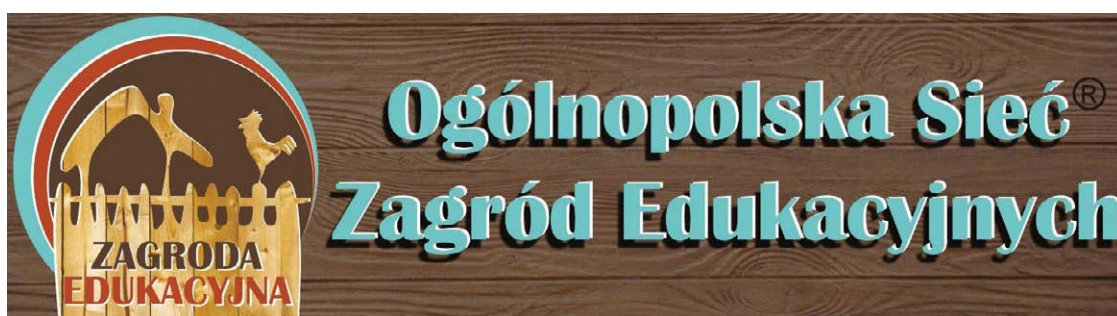
## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

The essence of the initiative is the conviction that people should create small communities that give them identity and affiliation and thus relationships in a large community, social inclusion.

# Polish National Educational Farms Network

## Contact details:

name of the initiative:  
 Polish National Educational Farms Network  
 network operator:  
 Agricultural Advisory Centre (AAC) in Brwinow,  
 Branch in Cracow (EN)  
 Centrum Doradztwa Rolniczego w Brwinowie,  
 Oddział w Krakowie (PL)  
 address: Meiselsa 1, 31-063 Kraków, Poland  
 email: drow.krakow@cdr.gov.pl  
 website: www.zagrodaedukacyjna.pl



## Short description of the network:

The Polish National Educational Farms Network is a pioneer social farming undertaking in Poland. The concept of an educational farm and its market identification under the name of 'Zagroda Edukacyjna' (educational farm) was defined as a result of a national project in 2011. An educational farm is defined as a facility located in a rural area which provide educational activities based on agricultural and rural potential, especially in crop production, animal production, food processing, ecological and consumer awareness, rural culture heritage, traditional professions, handicrafts and folk arts. The facility should have farm animals or crop plantations for presentation to groups of children and youth who visit the farm as part of their school curriculum or as part of their extracurricular activities, or the animals or plantations should be shown as a tourist attraction to families with children or to individual adult travellers.

## Some key words to describe the network:

- Rural development
- Social farming
- Educational farm
- Origin of food
- Learning by doing
- Rural entrepreneurship



Photo: [www.zagrodaedukacyjna.pl](http://www.zagrodaedukacyjna.pl)



## Practical details of the network:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Main target group:                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children and youth visited the farm as part of their school curriculum or as part of their extracurricular activities</li> <li>• families with children</li> <li>• individual adult travellers</li> </ul>   |
| Purpose:                                 | <p>The establishment of the network was based on the assumption that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it is necessary to familiarise people with the farm work and the origin of food</li> <li>• the farm has the right potential for attractive educational activities</li> <li>• educational services provide farmers with an opportunity to earn extra income, motivate them to continue the farming activity and to maintain the viability of rural areas</li> </ul>  |
| What activities are involved?            | <p>Each educational farm provides at least two of subjects described below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Educational programmes in crop production help participants to discover, feel and experience the biodiversity of the world of plants, learn about traditional and modern cultivation methods, lifecycles, dependences between farming systems and natural ecosystems. This involves a wide range of discoveries of shapes, forms, colours, smells and tastes as well as lifecycles and metabolisms.</li> <li>2. Education in animal production encompasses learning about the life of animals, sight-seeing tours of farm buildings, learning about appliances and tools, breeding systems, the use of animals and their vital functions. The programme is adjusted to schoolchildren's age. Contact with animals teaches children to be sensitive and selfless, trains them how accept responsibility while stimulating their cognitive needs.</li> <li>3. Education in crop processing encompasses presentations and workshops showing milk, meat, cereals and seasonally, vegetables and fruit and their way from the production and harvesting of the raw material to the final marketable product. The activities teach not only the processing methods, but they also teach respect for the producer's work by experiencing the production effort.</li> <li>4. Education in ecological and consumer awareness provides information about the origin and nutritional value of the farm products. This type of education teaches participants how to distinguish between natural and highly processed industrial products and it develops their consumer habits.</li> <li>5. Education in rural material culture heritage, traditional professions, handicrafts and folk arts is based on the richness of material and spiritual culture of rural areas. It offers attractive activities involving artistic, culinary or even entertainment practice.</li> </ol> <p>The didactic programs take the form of demonstrations, workshops and exercises. The visit on an educational farm can last just a few hours or can be organized as a multi-day stay on a farm with accommodation.</p> |
| Who started the activity?                | Agricultural Advisory Centre in Brwinow, Branch in Cracow  |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?  | <p>Directing attention to education services as a new opportunity for rural resource management to improve its socio-economic situation was the result of years of consistent search, programming and implementation of innovative rural development directions by the Agricultural Advisory Centre (AAC) in Brwinow Branch in Cracow. The experience and social capital gained in this process allowed for a relatively quick implementation of the idea and networking at the national level. The essence was an analysis of the new ways of diversifying the rural economy, increasing the competitiveness of the offer of rural tourism and counteracting globalization of food and health. While working on the concept the experience of foreign countries, in particular France, Austria and Switzerland, as well as the previous didactic activities of Polish farmers and agritourism providers were taking into account.</p>   |
| Does anyone else support the initiative? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an interdisciplinary group of experts cooperating constantly with the network - academics representing various universities and fields of knowledge, representatives of the different institutions and practitioners.</li> <li>• The network is supported institutionally by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.</li> <li>• Since 2015, the Polish National Educational Farms Network is a member of a "Rural Tourism Consortium" led by the Polish Tourist Organization.</li> </ul>  |

|                              |                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| When the initiative started? | 2011            |
| What is the current status?  | Ongoing project |
| Geographical coverage        | National        |

### Details of the network structure:

The Polish National Educational Farms Network operates on three levels: national, regional and local.

- At the national level, the National Educational Farms Network is coordinated by the Agricultural Advisory Centre, Krakow Branch. The ACC qualifies and admits new members to the Network and runs a database of educational farms on the Network website, provides members with knowledge and methodological materials, organizes periodic trainings and promotes the educational farm offer at promotional events, fairs and by mass-media. The AAC manages the "Zagroda Edukacyjna" brand and takes care of consistent visualization (according to the decision of the Patent Office of the Republic of Poland, since 2014 the wordmark 'EDUCATIONAL FARM' and its logo have been protected by law).
- At the regional level, the Voivodship Agricultural Advisory Centres in all of the 16 Polish voivodships are partners of the AAC in managing of the National Educational Farms Network. In each centre there is at least one qualified advisor, who acts as a voivodship coordinator. The coordinator's task is to verify and recommend farms to the Network. Coordinators advise how to adapt the farm for educational services, help farmers to develop programmes and fill in an application form to the Network. They participate in promotional and training actions in the voivodship.
- At the local level, the farms which start to provide educational services according to the assumptions of the National Educational Farms Network submit an application with a description of offered educational programmes. Membership in the Network is voluntary and free of charge. The Network members are obliged to abide by the regulations. The farm admitted to the Network has the right to be identified with the logotype of the Network.

### Financial aspects of the activity:

What are the main sources of funding?

- operation of the Polish National Educational farms Network is financed by a subsidy from the state budget for statutory activity of Agricultural Advisory Centre
- supported by projects, mainly within a framework of Rural Development Programme via National Rural Development Network.
- individual farms carry out self-employment as entrepreneurs. Farm didactic activities are paid, with no subsidies for participants.

### Other important aspects of the activity:

According to research conducted among the National Educational Farms Network members, people engaged in conducting didactic farms guide themselves with a series of motivations of social nature in their work. They see in the Network participation opportunities for personal and professional development.

In the context of the development of the enterprise, the Network creates, in their opinion, better prospects for promotion and marketing for the branded offer and gives direction and dynamics of business development through access to professional knowledge, support and inspiration in the process of exchange of experiences and good practices. With regard to personal development, respondents see the benefits of belonging to a group, improving their competences, and enhancing their self-esteem and motivation for active development.

## Results of the network activity:

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Direct Results: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of educational farms in Poland is steadily rising. There are 232 educational farms registered in the Polish National Educational Farms Network in June 2017.</li> <li>• The members of the network identify themselves well with the brand “Zagroda Edukacyjna” as well as the brand is getting well recognized by customers.</li> <li>• The level of customer interest is also constantly increasing. The network is carrying out intensive promotional activities, taking part in several promotional events every year, where interesting educational classes are presented.</li> </ul>  |
| Strength:       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The concentration of dispersed activities under the common brand name guarantees a transparent image distinguishing educational services;</li> <li>• Member farms on the market, favours better use of resources, orients the qualitative development of educational programs, attracts external funds and increases the efficiency of promotional actions.</li> </ul>   |
| Weaknesses:     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classes on the farm are not included in the school education programs systematically as compulsory activities.</li> <li>• There is no subsidy for a school that organizes a didactic trip to a farm, so its costs, especially transport costs, are an important barrier.</li> </ul>  |
| Wider benefits: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beneficiaries of the Network are both the agricultural and educational sectors. It is important for the agricultural sector to have an opportunity to meet future consumers. It brings a change to the farmer’s daily routine, provides the joy of work with children and teachers, and offers farm families creative development, new employment opportunities and extra income.</li> <li>• The educational sector finds variety and enrichment of the teaching process through guaranteed quality curricula oriented to practical activities, workshop exercises in different subjects, alternative places of education and rural culture experience.</li> </ul> |

## Future prospects and sustainability:

Support for services stimulating the development of non-agricultural functions of agricultural holdings, like tourism, education, health care, etc. has been included in the “Strategy for responsible development until 2030” accepted by the Polish government in February 2017. It creates the new opportunities for the social farming sector development in Poland.

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

Human capital is a key element in the success of the initiative - in particular farmers, who go beyond the schemes of farming and agritourism, taking on new challenges with passion and commitment.



Photo: [www.zagrodaedukacyjna.pl](http://www.zagrodaedukacyjna.pl)

# Social farming in the Slovak Republic

## 1. Current social situation in the Slovak Republic

The Slovak Republic, with 5 426 252 inhabitants (2015 estimate) is the 116th most populous country in the world. The population density is about 111 inhabitants per square kilometre. In 2015, the average number of employed persons in the economy of the Slovak Republic represented 2 363 000 people.

### 1.1 Unemployment Development in the Slovak Republic (2010-2015)

Monitoring of unemployment in the Slovak Republic is based on several approaches:

- On the basis of register of Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (COLSAF).
- On the basis of selective survey of working people by the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (SO SR).

These two methodologies differ, utilising different population data and having different definitions of unemployment. In 2015, more than 350 000 job seekers were registered (2014 – 385 661 job seekers, 2013 – 415 000 job seekers). The national average of unemployment reached 11.50% in 2015, 12.79% in 2014. There are significant regional differences in the rate of registered unemployment in the Slovak Republic. The highest was recorded in the Prešov Region (16.51%) (Eastern Slovakia), followed by Banská Bystrica (16.02%), Košice (15.37%) and Nitra Region (10.50%). The rate of registered unemployment was lower than 10% in remaining four regions (Žilina, Trenčín, Trnava), the lowest was in Bratislava Region (5.85%) (Western Slovakia).

In terms of the age structure in 2015, the largest group of job seekers was 20-24 year old (47 100 persons, 13.29% of all job seekers). Together with the age group of 15-19 year old job seekers, their share represented 16.48%. The second largest group with 44 900 job seekers is the 25-29 year old group (share of 12.67%), followed by a group of people aged 35-39 years (12.20%). Older job seekers (age group 50-54 years) represented 12.00% (Table 1).

The total share of disadvantaged job seekers were as follows:

| Years               | 15-24  | 25-29  | 30-34  | 35-39  | 40-44  | 45-49  | 50-54  | 54-59  | > 60  |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| 354.582 job seekers | 16.48% | 12.67% | 11.45% | 12.20% | 11.25% | 10.49% | 11.42% | 12.00% | 2.05% |

Table 1: Job seekers according to age structure (COLSAF, 2016)

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| School graduates (from high school/ college/university) | 7.19%  |
| Job seekers older than 50 years                         | 24.43% |
| Job seekers over 12 months                              | 54.32% |
| Disabled job seekers                                    | 3.32%  |

The average duration of registered job seekers in 2015 was shorter (16.05 months) as compared with 2014 (17.39 months).

According to Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family the highest share of job vacancies is in operators and installer positions (27.88%), followed by craftsmen (19.58%). Less than 1% of job vacancies is in armed forces (0.09%) and in agriculture, forestry and fishery (0.46%).

### 1.2 Drug Problem in Slovakia

In recent years, the attention has been drawn in Slovakia to drugs such as heroin, pervitin or marijuana. Drug abuse is alarming and has many harmful effects. Alcohol is the number one drug problem in our conditions. Alcohol is also the most spread drug among children and young people. According to WHO statistics, Slovakia is ranked 19th in the global ranking of adult alcohol consumption and 18th in Europe. The highest number of alcoholics is in the Central and Eastern Europe. The number of alcohol addicted persons in Slovakia is 400 000, every year about 6000 alcoholics are diagnosed. Every fifth man in Slovakia dies due to excessive drinking. Alcoholism is one of the most serious mental disorders in Slovakia.

Slovakia's National Anti-Drug Strategy (2013-2020), adopted in 2013, addresses illicit drug problems. Cannabis remains the most common illicit substance used among the adult population in Slovakia, and its use is concentrated among young people aged 15-34 years. The 2015 survey found that slightly less than one third of young people had tried cannabis during their lifetime, but approximately 9.3% (4% women, 13.8% men) had used cannabis during the last year.



## THE DRUG PROBLEM IN SLOVAKIA AT A GLANCE

### Drug use

in young adults (15-34 years)  
in the last year

#### Cannabis

**9.3 %**



4 % 13.8 %

#### Other drugs

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| MDMA         | 1.2 % |
| Amphetamines | 0.8 % |
| Cocaine      | 0.3 % |

#### High-risk opioid users

No data

### Treatment entrants

by primary drug



● Cannabis, 24 %  
● Amphetamines, 45 %  
● Cocaine, 1 %  
● Heroin, 18 %  
● Other, 12 %

### Opioid substitution treatment clients

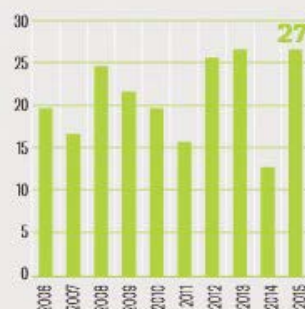
**600**

### Syringes distributed

through specialised programmes

**347 162**

### Overdose deaths



### HIV diagnoses attributed to injecting



Source: ECDC

### Drug law offenders

**969**

#### Top 5 drugs seized

ranked according to quantities measured in kilograms

1. Herbal cannabis
2. Cannabis resin
3. Methamphetamine
4. Heroin
5. Cocaine

### Population

(15-64 years)

**3 834 289**

Source: EUROSTAT  
Extracted on: 26/03/2017

NB: Data presented here are either national estimates (prevalence of use, opioid drug users) or reported numbers through the EMCDDA indicators (treatment clients, syringes, deaths and HIV diagnosis, drug law offences and seizures). Detailed information on methodology and caveats and comments on the limitations in the information set available can be found in the EMCDDA Statistical Bulletin.

MDMA/ecstasy is the main illicit stimulant used among the adult population and is particularly common among 15 to 24-year olds (1.2%). 2 720 patients treated for drug-related problems were reported in 2015 (45% amphetamines, 24% cannabis, and 18% heroin). Less than 1% (0.7%) concerns treatment in prisons. In 2015, 27 deaths caused by direct effects of psychoactive substances were reported. There are at least 19 resocialisation centres which are certified by Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. The number of clients in these resocialisation centres is increasing (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2017).

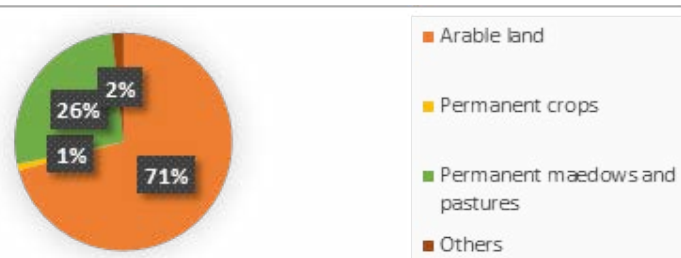
### 1.3 Homeless People in Slovakia

Homelessness is a socio-pathological phenomenon which has an upward trend in Slovakia and most of the time is connected with negative factors such as social isolation and psychological deprivation. The population census in 2011 provided data on the structure of secondary homelessness in Slovakia. Research estimated that 23 480 people are homeless. By 2015 the homelessness topic has not been

systematically reflected as one of the most extreme forms of poverty and social exclusion. As a result of initial research, a census and survey of homeless people in the Bratislava urban area was realized in 2016. According to the census results, at least 2064 homeless people (1780 adults and 284 children) live in Bratislava. There are twice as many homeless men as women. By age, 41.3% of homeless people are 25-49 years old, 29.9% are 50-64 years old and 22.2% are older than 65 years. By location, the majority of persons (478) were found in hostels, 354 in reception centres, 254 in cottages, caravans and garages. The organizers confirmed that the total estimated number of homeless people is 4000 to 5000. For citizens in social need, social services are provided in 60 refuges with a capacity of 1130. There is disparity between the provisions of these services in regions. Many civic associations, non-profit associations (Depaul Slovensko, OZ Proti prídu, etc.) assist people without housing, operate reception centres, provide advisory services, and publish a magazine Nota Bene which is used as a fundraising mechanism through sales in public locations.

## 1.4 Slovak Agriculture and Rural Areas – Facts

Slovakia's territory represents 49 036 square kilometres. Agricultural land covers 1 921 157 hectares out of that 1 359 091 ha is arable land; 510 801 ha are permanent meadows and pastures and 18 807 ha are permanent crops (Graph 1).



Graph 1: Structure of Agricultural Land in the Slovak Republic

The territory of the Slovak Republic is mostly mountainous. 65% of agricultural land are areas facing natural or other specific constraints (ANC), 40% of the territory is forests. Rural and intermediate areas cover 95% of the Slovak territory, where 88% of the population is situated.

A decrease of employment has been evident in the agricultural sector since 1991. The agricultural sector is characterized by dual structure of agricultural holdings – 80% of small holdings with a standards output of 15 000 € and 1 180 large holdings with output more than 250 000 €. Production per hectare of utilized agricultural area (average of 2004-2014) is about 1000 €, the fifth lowest of the EU-28. But the average agricultural output in euro per hectare of agricultural land is the lowest of the EU-28. The development of ownership structure of agricultural cooperatives and business companies has rapidly decreased from 2004 to 2014. There were 118 068 owners of agricultural cooperatives and 13 231 owners business companies in 2004. Nowadays, there are 54 088 owners of agricultural cooperatives and 6278 owners of business-companies.

The organic sector in the Slovak Republic operates on more than 186 000 ha of agricultural land, which represents approximately 9.2% of total agricultural land. The history of organic farming in Slovakia began in 1991, when the first 37 farms on 14 773 ha started to bring new ideas of farming into the post-socialist system.

In 2015, there were 552 registered operators, from which 416 are organic farmers, 4 beekeepers, 83 food processors, 10 feed processors, 6 seed processors, 97 distributors and others. Out of 416 organic

farmers, there are 74 cooperatives, 187 Ltd. companies, 10 stock companies, and 145 private farmers. From the beginning, the average size for each farm was the biggest of all EU member states and represented more than 400 hectares per farm of agricultural land. In 2015, the share of the smallest farms, up to 10 ha was 7%, from 10 – 100 ha it was 25%, from 100 – 500 ha – 37%, from 500 – 1000 ha – 17%, from 1000 – 2000 ha – 11% and farms with more than 2000 ha of agricultural land represented 3%.

Organic farming in the Slovak Republic is more attractive in areas with natural constraints, in central and eastern part of Slovakia. More than 73% of farms manage animal production, therefore 12.7% of cattle are kept on organic farms, 25.7% of sheep, 4.3% of goats, 9.3% of horses, but only 0.03% of poultry and 0.08% of pigs. Regarding plant production types, meadows and pastures prevail (123 855 ha), arable land represented 32.7% (60 890 ha), along with 0.9% of vineyards and 0.1% of orchards .

Organic processors are concentrated in the western part of Slovakia. Increasing interest in organic farming and a subsequent increase of organic area has been driven by subsidy policy, the implementation of the Rural Development Programme after 2004 has enhanced the share of organic farming in the Slovak Republic and provided stabilisation.

In the Slovak Republic, there is a potential of social farming implementation in smaller holdings, within organic production, in locations with a higher need of manual work (animal production, special crop production, etc.).

The main target group strongly depends on the type of provided social services. The most frequented target groups identified, who are involved in social farming, are the followings:

- People in social need: Addicted people (drugs, alcohol), Homeless people
- Young adults who were leaving children's care centres, children from disrupted families
- Disabled people
- Long-term unemployed people, people with primary or vocational education
- Single mothers without stable housing
- Schoolchildren, students

## Farmyard Branovo

### Contact details of the farm:

name of the association that operates Farmyard Branovo:  
 Združenie Agropodnikateľov, Družstvo Dvory Nad Žitavou (Zad) (SK)  
 Association of entrepreneurs in agriculture, cooperative Dvory nad Žitavou (EN)  
 address: Veľká komárňanská 5, 941 31  
 Dvory nad Žitavou, Slovakia  
 email: [gazdovskydvorbranovo@gmail.com](mailto:gazdovskydvorbranovo@gmail.com),  
[riaditel@zaddvory.sk](mailto:riaditel@zaddvory.sk)  
 website: <http://www.gazdovskydvorbranovo.sk/>



### Short description of the farm:

The farmyard Branovo and small village Branovo with more than 500 inhabitants is situated 12 km from the district Nové Zámky and 110 km from the capital of the Slovak Republic, Bratislava. Until 2010, the area of the present farmyard was not utilized or maintained. In 2010, Farmyard Branovo was established by ZAD as one unit of the cooperative “without” legal entity status. The farmyard was opened in 2012 to the public. The farmyard practices crop production and animal keeping in a manner beneficial for the environment and with the aim of sustainable development at the local level. The main goals of the farmyard include:

- food production with high nutritional value
- maintain and enhance long-term soil fertility
- animal keeping systems with high ethical and welfare standards
- support of short food chains, local food production and strengthen the trust between producer and consumers
- to establish new working places for local workers
- Currently, 12 permanent employees work on the farmyard, most of them were disadvantaged job seekers registered at the Offices of labour, social affairs and family of the Slovak Republic. According to EU and National legislation, the ZAD cooperative received financial support.

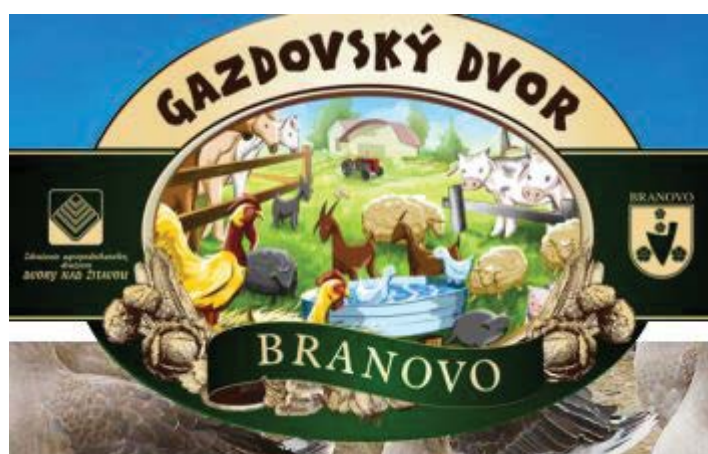


Photo: <http://www.gazdovskydvorbranovo.sk>



Photo: Magdaléna Lacko-Bartošová

### Some key words to describe the farm:

- The initiative of ZAD-cooperative to establish a Pilot project in the Slovak Republic aimed at local food production, employment of local less educated and disadvantaged job seekers, support of the local economy, development of local markets, establishing a place for practice for secondary schools, and a farmyard for children.
- Employment of job seekers, for improvement of working habits and skills.
- Setting an example for others to follow.



## Practical details of the social farming activity:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Main target group:                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local employees</li> <li>• low skilled persons</li> <li>• unemployed job seekers</li> <li>• students of secondary schools, children</li> </ul>  |
| Purpose:                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local food production</li> <li>• short supply chain</li> <li>• low-input crop and animal production</li> <li>• agricultural like home-made products</li> <li>• employment of local people with lower education (primary, vocational)</li> </ul>   |
| What activities are involved?             | <p>Agricultural activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• animal keeping according to the traditional technologies (goats, sheep, ducks, geese, rabbits, pigeons, chickens)</li> <li>• processing of animal products – milk, meat</li> <li>• production of local products</li> <li>• marketing</li> <li>• cooperation with secondary schools – practice for students; activities for children on the farm – children´s corner, environmental education of children</li> </ul> |
| Who started the activity?                 | Owners of ZAD Dvory nad Žitavou  |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?   | The former minister of Agriculture and Rural Development has started the project, with strong commitment to support local food chains, community and economy.  |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?  | -  |
| When the initiative started?              | 2010   |
| In Working/care hours for client per day: | Working time is 8 hours per day  |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- The farmyard area is 8.8 hectares of land, focused mainly on orchards (apricot – 0.5 hectare; demonstration orchard with cherry, sour cherry, pear, plum, walnut tree), grapes and berry fruits.
- Greenhouse vegetable growing was leased.
- The farmyard is rich in different animal breeds of cattle (Slovak spotted), horses (Welsh pony, Friesian horse), sheep (185 Tsigai, dairy/meat type), ducks (300 per year, Moulard hybrid), geese (1000 per year), rabbits (250 per year), goats (Brown alpine), chickens (Kalimero hybrid, meat/egg type), pigeons.
- Processing of dairy products (goats, sheep, cow milk), production of different types of cheese (smoked, traditional, feta), curd, yogurt, milk, butter and others.
- Processing of meat, production of different traditional meat products, home type slaughtering of pigs and product preparation.
- Good conditions for practice for students, out of classroom environment, accommodation in two departments directly on farm.



## Financial aspects of the activity:

What are the main sources of funding?

- sales of agricultural products
- financial support for unemployed people

## Other important aspects of the activity:

There is a strong commitment of the ZAD management for innovations, local development, cooperation with municipality managers, organisation of “National field days” for professional public, exhibition of innovative agricultural technologies.

## Results of the activity:

Direct Results:

- implementation of the project
- employment of the local workers
- strengthening the local food chain

Strength:

- strong commitment of managers
- successful project example
- high interest of consumers and community
- engaged workers

Weaknesses:

- motivation of the other farmers
- financial self-sufficiency and sustainability
- a gap between agricultural and social legislation

Wider benefits:

- building appreciation of consumers to farmer’s work
- connection between local food producers and consumers
- learning and teaching activities for children, students and parents

## Future prospects and sustainability:

Motivation of others to follow and learn from the project and to give opportunity for socially disadvantaged and marginalized people to participate in the social and economic development of the region.

## In conclusion – lessons to pass on:

Within the territory of Slovakia, there are 2752 villages and 138 towns. There are hundreds of dilapidated farmyards arising from collapsed cooperatives, and abandoned animal production. People living in the areas know that production has ceased, and only weeds, ruined buildings are left that disfigure the appearance of the countryside and the consciousness of people. Unfortunately, social exclusion or social marginalization leading in material and spiritual deprivation and poverty is on the rise. Considering that if only 10 people



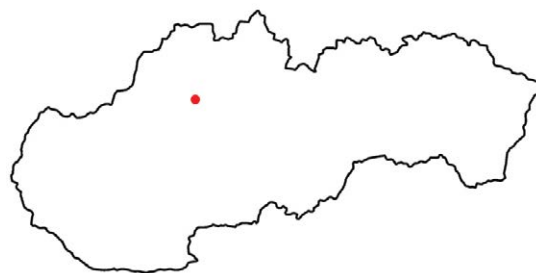
Photos: Magdaléna Lacko-Bartošová

potentially were able to find employment on these abandoned farmyards aiming for social profitability of domestic production, there is the potential to create over 3000 job positions within Slovakia with great opportunity for socially disadvantaged and marginalized population groups, usually fully dependent on state support. Creating opportunities in the agricultural sector could aid the people in social need and at the same time, strengthen domestic production, short supply chains and the local economy.

## Good Shepherd Civic Association

### Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:  
 DOBRÝ PASTIER o.z. (SK)  
 "GOOD SHEPHERD" Civic Association (EN)  
 address: Gymnaziálna 162, 038 43  
 Kláštor pod Znievom, Slovakia  
 email: ozdobrypastier@gmail.com  
 website: <http://ozdobrypastier.eu/>



### Short description of the farm:

Dobry pastier is a civic association established in 2007 by priest Vladimír Maslák. It is situated in the central part of Slovakia, in the village Kláštor pod Znievom, Martin district, 224 km from the capital city Bratislava. The main target group consists of people in social need, people with a complicated past, those on the edge of society, disabled people, and young and old people without families.

This association is divided into five departments: men's department, women's department, senior department, medical-care department and "Domov na polceste" which means temporal home for people who spent their childhood (up to 18 years) in children's houses or resocialisation centres. About 350 clients – 290 men and 60 women, are separated in two villages: men in Kláštor pod Znievom, women in Vrúcko live in Dobry pastier, with participants in the age range of 18-90.

While taking part in work and prayer activities, clients learn to re-establish their working habits and responsibility. The most important rules are: forbidding alcohol consumption, mandatory contribution to work, and each healthy person participates in the work. The work therapy consists of cooking, cleaning, doing laundry, ironing, building jobs, and brick layer's assistance. The major activity is working on the farm and field. Besides working, clients also have time for games, trips and sports. The motto everyone follows is: If you cure your soul, everything else is done easily.



Photos from <http://ozdobrypastier.eu/>

### Some key words to describe the farm:

- Be joyful, if you can
- If the soul is cured, the other things are done easily
- Idea "ora et labora"



## Practical details of the social farm:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Main target group:                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• people in social need, without income or only with social benefits</li> <li>• people aged 18-90 with a complicated past (divorce, loss of family background, alcoholism, poor health, irresponsibility)</li> <li>• people on the edge of society – without ID, with poor mental state, poor health or hygiene habits, old and young people without families</li> </ul>   |
| Purpose:                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to help clients to mobilize their personal strengths so that they can deal with difficult life situations easier; The aim of the work therapy is re-creation of working habits mainly when speaking about long-term unemployed people.</li> <li>• to teach clients to spend their time meaningfully</li> </ul>   |
| What activities are involved?             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities connected to everyday life, such as preparing food, helping old and ill people, working on the farm, building construction jobs, masonry assistants.</li> <li>• Livestock breeding and animal care are working priorities. Clients are present during milking processes, cutting the sheep's wool, cheese making, etc.</li> <li>• They also help with ploughing, sowing, weeding and harvest as regards plant production.</li> <li>• Disabled people are involved in sheltered workshops.</li> </ul>                  |
| Who started the activity?                 | Priest Vladimír Maslák  |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?   | The family of priest Vladimír and his agricultural education.   |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?  | Vladimír's working team (70 members) - social workers, therapists, nurses, co-workers, volunteers from Slovakia and abroad (Eurowaits), students and absolvents of priest seminars. Amateurs and nuns from St. Vincent are also included.   |
| When the initiative started?              | During the year 2007 while working on pastorate in Koš (Prievidza district) Vladimír offered an accommodation for ten men. The numbers of disadvantaged people was still growing and pastorate in Koš became too small for them. After some time, the church offered another, bigger monastery building in Kláštor pod Znievom (Martin district) in order to continue in their social work. The monastery building was in a disastrous state, without water or electricity. The renovation and reconstruction of the building has been carried out by clients themselves. |
| In Working/care hours for client per day: | 8:00 – 12:00 and 13:30 – 16:30 (working therapy; every day except Sunday)   |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

The agricultural land consists of permanent meadows, pastures and 50 hectares of arable land. Pastures are used the most because Dobrý pastier has 500 sheep, 70 goats, 140 cattle and 30 horses. Cutting sheep wool, manual cow, goat and sheep milking, feeding, cleaning the area, depasturing, etc. are activities on which workers participate and learn. They also help with ploughing, sowing, weeding and harvesting when talking about plant production (cultivation of potatoes and vegetables). The reasoning of all these activities is that the products produced on the farm (meat and milk) from animals are processed for the clients' own consumption or are sold.



## Financial aspects of the activity:

What are the main sources of funding?

- gifts-sponsoring
- cooperation with Potravinová banka Slovenska (food bank of the Slovak Republic – civic association)
- cooperation with Žilina region, municipal office Kláštor pod Znievom.
- grown agri-products sale, 2% of tax.

## Other important aspects of the activity:

Dobrý pastier cooperates well with village Kláštor pod Znievom – in cultural heritage protection, historical monument restoration, and local regional development. They organize pilgrimages, spiritual renewals, seminars, and events (such as caroling) for the public annually.

## Results of the activity:

Direct Results:

the person forming their character

Strength:

- long history of Dobrý pastier civic association (established in 2007)
- stabile civic association with large number of staff (70 members)
- cooperation with Žilina region, municipal office Kláštor pod Znievom
- support from Potravinová banka Slovenska (food bank – civic association)
- participation and assistance of volunteers
- sale of agricultural products
- building of straw houses themselves
- clients have a special role in community
- Dobrý pastier is part of public life of the municipality Kláštor pod Znievom

Weaknesses:

- complicated and missing regulation in care system and agriculture
- operators do not own the land
- problems with rented land
- they do not received subsidies, direct payments per ha of agricultural land, etc.
- unknown identity of some clients, without ID
- do not want to talk publicly about funding of civic association and sources of income

Wider benefits:

- support the two pillars on which community stands – prayer and work
- willingness to overcome the problems, high engagement of leaders

## Future prospects and sustainability:

A goal for the future includes building independence and self-sufficiency on their own without manipulation of others, and continuing agricultural activity even without subsidies. They aim to utilize horses in farming activities and to continue in building straw houses. They seek to develop their animal products processing capacity, making straw stocks for feeding during winter, and heating. Additionally, they seek to continue supporting the two pillars on which community stands – prayer and work.

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

The individuals involved in this project build up their self-reflection and self-governance and after some time they are more responsible and reliable human beings. Destiny that is worth fighting for can be seen in every single person. Dobrý pastier is the place where difficult stories such as pain, worries and fears of people cross. Those people found their home in this place, those formerly troubled found understanding, ill found healing, and the lonely found company.



## Institute Of Christ – High Priest Civic Association

### Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:

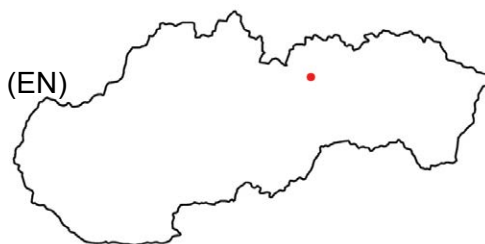
Inštitút Krista Veľkňaza, o.z (SK)

Institute of Christ – High Priest, Civic Association (EN)

address: 059 73 Žakovce 30, Slovakia

email: [ikv@ikv.sk](mailto:ikv@ikv.sk)

website: <http://www.ikv.sk/>



### Short description of the activity:

Inštitút Krista Veľkňaza is a civic association established in 1992. It is situated in the village of Žakovce, in the Kežmarok district, 341 km from the capital of the Slovak Republic, Bratislava. It is a society of priests and ordinary persons. The main aim of this institute is to support the sick, disabled, homeless, those suffering from addiction, children from disrupted families and child care institutions, orphans, elderly, single mothers and other people in need. The institute is divided into six departments. There are 4 departments in Žakovce.



Photo: Magdaléna Lacko-Bartošová

The Refuge and Resocialisation Centre for Men is an individual department for 71 clients in refuge and 10 clients in the resocialisation centre. In May 1991, the territory of the old pastorate in Žakovce, including adjacent buildings, was administered for charitable use. Clients include formerly homeless men, convicted criminals, and young men who have passed through protected or institutional education. Services provided include daily meals, clothing, consultation, administrative help and work therapy. It is a community oriented towards resocialisation and the return of clients to a standard way of life. There are three basic rules for the resocialisation: no consumption of alcohol or addictive substances, precaution and ban of criminal activity, and work therapy. Clients can arrive to the centre at their own will, or after receiving treatment for alcoholism or drugs or with a psychiatrist's recommendation.

The resocialisation centre for women offers complex care for women and girls who have received institutional education in children homes, for those who have been convicted of criminal activity, and also for addicted women. Resocialisation processes have are sensitive and complicated, influenced by each client's handicap and lack of self-management. Clients may arrive to the centre with underdeveloped skills, working habits, and knowledge. The work therapy consists of home care activities, such as cleaning, meal preparation, washing or assistance in other departments with physically disabled people. There is the possibility to obtain working skills as women's tailors with the aim of return to a stable lifestyle.

The Home for the physically disabled department has capacity for 30 clients . Clients are physically disabled men and women. The department has been operating since December, 1999. Provided services include all-day care for the physically disabled, accommodation, meals, washing, individual consultation, spiritual help, administrative assistance and barrier free access to the all rooms in the department.

The Home for mothers with children is the youngest department of the institute, operating since 2001, with the capacity of 6 mothers with children. The main aim of this department is to support abused and battered women without homes. They do not participate in the common department operations, but are involved with cooking, cleaning facilities, washing and taking care for their children under professional supervision.

The Community centre, still in its planning stages, is expected to provide professional services and opportunities for people in social need, and socially disadvantaged and marginalized population groups. The main aim of the centre is to provide social and educational services, programmes for re-employment, community development, while offering assistance in self-governance, interaction with local institutions and providing additional preventive programmes.

## Some key words to describe the activity:

- Help in need for different target groups
- Community work and development
- Resocialisation
- Therapies
- Cooperation with professionals and institutions

## Practical details of the association and the social farm:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>Main target group:</p>                         | <p>The main target groups consist of people in need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the homeless</li> <li>• addicted</li> <li>• sick</li> <li>• physically disabled</li> <li>• children from disrupted families or children's homes</li> <li>• orphans</li> <li>• elderly</li> <li>• single mothers without a home.</li> </ul> <p>Many of clients had negative experiences with alcohol consumption and drug issues in the past, one of the major causes of existing health and social problems.</p>  |
| <p>Purpose:</p>                                   | <p>The purpose of the institute is to help clients to mobilize their personal strengths and competences, return them to standard ways of life, to the families and make them functional members of society.</p>   |
| <p>What activities are involved?</p>              | <p>Work therapy connected to agricultural activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• self-sufficiency in production of potatoes, milk, eggs, meat, partly in vegetable production</li> <li>• on site bakery and food processing</li> <li>• self-sufficiency in bread production, distribution of bakery products</li> </ul> <p>Other activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintenance works</li> <li>• cooking, tidying, washing, caring for children.</li> <li>• in protected workshops wooden toys production, etc.</li> <li>• an important part of work therapy is focused on building construction</li> </ul> <p>In the future, sheltered workshops will be built up to employ people with disabilities separately from others.</p> |
| <p>Who started the activity?</p>                  | <p>Priest Marián Kuffa</p>  |
| <p>What was the inspiration or motivation?</p>    | <p>Ambition to help people in need, Christian love and apostolic activities.</p>  |
| <p>Does anyone else support the initiative?</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catholic church</li> <li>• financial support from different Funds, Operational programmes, Foundations, etc.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>When the initiative started?</p>               | <p>In March 1990, „The Secular Institute of Christ – High Priest“ was established by Bishop Eduard Kojnok. In May 1991, the territory of the old pastorate in Žakovce, in Kežmarok district, was administered for charitable use. In November 1992, the institute was registered as a civic association.</p>  |
| <p>In Working/ care hours for client per day:</p> | <p>Community centre: 10:00-16:00 (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday), 7:00-17:00 (Wednesday), 7:00-13:00 (Friday). Other departments: the whole day, indefinite period of clients life</p>  |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- Farming: 190 hectares of agricultural land, out of that about 50 hectares of arable land.
- Animal husbandry: farm animals-cattle, dairy cows, pigs, horses, and small animals.
- Production: self-sufficiency in production of potatoes, milk, eggs, meat, partly in vegetable production, self-managed bakery and food processing, self-sufficiency in bread production, distribution of bakery products.
- In the future, sheltered workshops will be constructed.

## Financial aspects of the activity:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>What are the main sources of funding?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong effort to finance activities from projects supported by public and private resources. More than 20 projects were successfully implemented, listed on internet page of Institute. Main financial sources of projects: European social fund and its Operational programmes, Financial mechanism of EHP and Norwegian financial mechanism, Ministry of Interior of the SR, Pontis, Carpathian, ČSOB, VUB, Orange, Ekopolis, Hour for Children, Slovak Telekom, Heifer int. Slovakia, Open Society, SPP Foundations, Anti-drug Fund, Office of Slovak government and others.</li> <li>• direct payments per ha of agricultural land</li> <li>• sponsoring-donations</li> <li>• 2% of tax</li> </ul> <p>(Community centre will be funded from the sources of the institute according to the agreement with the Implementation agency for Operational programme employment and social inclusion.)</p> |
|--|---|

## Other important aspects of the activity:

Complex and permanent care and therapy for many target groups, help in need for all interested, provided care for indefinite periods, building family – in relations between clients and staff.

## Results of the farm activity:

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <p>Direct Results:</p>         | <p>Successful pioneer story within the Slovakian conditions, worthy example to follow, expanded activities in the other new Member states of EU.</p>   |
| <p>Strength:</p>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong vision and commitment of Mr. Kuffa and his management</li> <li>• experienced civic association with long history</li> <li>• agricultural land at disposal, processing facilities and skills of clients</li> <li>• long term experiences with therapies, cooperation with self-government and institutions</li> <li>• motivation to help others</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Weaknesses, challenges:</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no regulation connected directly with care farms</li> <li>• no dedicated funds for care farms</li> <li>• system approach at the level of government is missing</li> <li>• a lack of regular financial resources</li> <li>• involvement of public, into activities</li> <li>• cooperation with schools, universities, research projects</li> <li>• practice for students of social work and agriculture therapies</li> </ul> |
| <p>Wider benefits:</p>         | <p>The fundamentals of our resocialisation program is to change a person not only from the outside but inside as well. Basic principle of daily regime is a holy mass and rosary.</p>  |

## Future prospects and sustainability:

The initiative intends to increase cooperation with society, extend activities, to serve as a best practice example in how to help to others in need, continue to motivate clients and staff, encourage cooperation with government in the legislative process leading to improvement in resocialization of our target groups and the creation of conditions for dignified life for those lacking the capacity for self-management.

## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

Love the people as they are. The lower the merits, the deeper love is required. Don't love them according to their merits, but according to their needs (Kuffa, 1992).

*Photos: Magdaléna Lacko-Bartošová*



*Photos from <http://www.ikv.sk/>*



# Company of Friends, Children, Youth and Families Civic Association

Contact details  
of the farm:

name of the farm:  
Spoločnosť Priateľov, Detí, Mládeže a Rodín, o.z. (SK)  
Company of Friends, Children, Youth and Families,  
Civic Association (EN)  
address: Dlhá 505/9, 089 01 Svidník  
email: fekmarek@azet.sk



## Short description of the activity:

The civic association Spoločnosť priateľov, detí, mládeže a rodín was established in 1997 in eastern Slovakia – Svidník town (458 km from capital of Slovakia, Bratislava) by priest Gombita. The main goal of priest Gombita was to establish a civic association and begin with social work, pursuing social agriculture programs were young adults who were leaving children’s houses and had nowhere to go could participate. Clients of the halfway house in Svidník today include: homeless people, children growing up in child care centres, addicted people, people



Photo: Katarína Feková

with criminal backgrounds, and anyone in need. The number of clients is variable, with the highest amount on site during winter time. Nowadays, the youngest client is 23 years old, and the oldest is 62 years old. Each client is required to participate in work – in the kitchen during preparation of meals or outside. Outside activities are connected with the social garden, rented soil and with poultry farming (chicken, turkey). Clients are involved in activities such as: poultry farming which includes harvesting of two bags of nettle per day, field working – sowing crops, hoeing of potatoes, cultivation of herbs, and activation work in Svidník town. Cultivated herbs are used for their own consumption or for sale. The civic association cooperates with a tea company, where dried herbs are sold.

In the future, they would like to rent more agricultural land and expand animal production. According civic association’s employees, it is necessary to prepare rooms and areas for disabled and handicapped people without homes. In the future, they would like to help tortured and abused mothers with children.



## Some key words to describe the farm:

- Herbs
- Poultry
- Halfway house
- Homeless people
- Children from children’s houses



Photos: Katarína Feková

## Practical details of the social farm:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Main target group:                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• homeless people</li> <li>• children growing up in children's houses</li> <li>• addicted people</li> <li>• people who were in prison</li> <li>• anyone in need</li> </ul> <p>The age scale starts from 18 years.</p>  |
| Purpose:                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main purpose to establish this association was to assist young adults who were leaving children's houses and had nowhere to go.</li> <li>• The purpose of social activities is to build and strengthen working habits through daily work therapy.</li> </ul>   |
| What activities are involved?             | <p>Clients are involved in following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• preparation a full-day meal (breakfast, lunch, dinner) for all clients</li> <li>• poultry farming including harvest of two bags of nettle per day</li> <li>• work in the field – sowing crops, hoeing of potatoes, cultivation of herbs</li> <li>• activation work in Svidník town</li> </ul> |
| Who started the activity?                 | <p>Priest Gombita established small garden where vegetables were growing, a farm-yard with horses, sheep, donkeys, ponies in halfway house Svidník and started with social farming (in 1997).</p> <p>Mrs. Katarína Feková, student of Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development at Slovak University in Nitra started with cultivation of herbs in social garden in 2012.</p>           |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?   | <p>The main idea was to find daily meaningful and useful work for a larger group of people.</p>   |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• friends, family</li> <li>• due to Orange project they were able to buy a desiccator for fruits and herbs</li> </ul>  |
| When the initiative started?              | <p>1997</p>   |
| In Working/care hours for client per day: | <p>Healthy clients work on the farm in the garden for 3 hours per day, except Sunday. Working time depends on the season – during summer time it is longer. Disabled clients who are not able to work in the fields assist with activities in the kitchen.</p>  |

## Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- Farming: Social farming is practiced in small garden of the halfway house and on rented soil (0.8 hectares – 4 fields with measures 200x10 meters). They cultivate maize, potatoes, beets, and vegetables, mainly onions, carrots, parsley, peas, cucumbers, kohlrabi, garlic, tomatoes, and paprika. Clients grow seedlings of vegetables themselves.
- Herb production: They started with cultivation of herbs in 2012. Pot marigold (*Calendula officinalis* L.) and mallow flower (*Malva sylvestris* L.) are sold to Agrokarpaty Plavnica (Tea Company), salvia (*Salvia officinalis* L.) and lemon balm (*Melissa officinalis* L.) are cultivated for their own consumption.
- Fruit production: They grow strawberries and raspberries in a small social garden. The orchard consists of a fruit garden (two cherry trees, one apple tree, two pear trees) and of fast growers Paulownia (10 trees).
- Animal husbandry: Poultry farming (50-80 chickens and turkey) with an on site chicken brooder on the farm.

## Financial aspects of the activity:

What are the main sources of funding?

- gifts – sponsoring
- sales of dried herbs
- sale of chicken eggs and meat
- 2% of taxes

## Other important aspects of the activity:

People from the civic association strive to grow organically without using chemical treatment or pesticides. Natural poultry manure from their own farming is used as fertilizer. Cut grass, and leaves are composted. Clients from this facility have very good relationships with the inhabitants of the small town Svidník. Clients work at the scrapyards, help inhabitants with woodworking, grass cutting, and often ploughing with small tractors.

## Results of the farm activity:

Strength:

- stable civic association with long history (established in 1997)
- provision of free meals at regular intervals, feeling of warmth and safety
- cooperation with Tea company and Svidník town
- sale of eggs, meat, herbs
- effort to receive grants (Orange foundation)
- clients voluntary work
- clients are part of public life

Weaknesses:

- lack of cultivation area
- do not own land
- do not receive subsidies, direct payments per ha of agricultural land
- area with poultry farming is situated in the garden of terraced house in the centre of Svidník town

Wider benefits:

building and maintaining client's dignity

## Future prospects and sustainability:

They would like to rent agricultural land and expand animal production by broilers, cattle, dairy cows, sheep, and goats in the future.

According to people from this civic association it is necessary to prepare rooms and areas for disabled and handicapped people without homes. In the future, they would like to prepare conditions in the halfway house to host tortured and abused mothers with children.

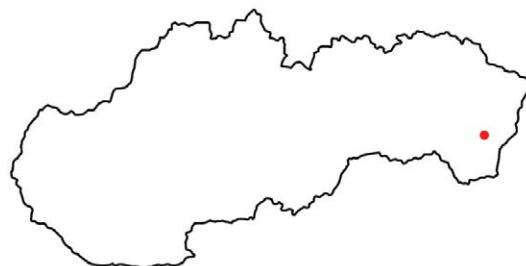
## In conclusion - lessons to pass on:

The purpose of this civic association is and will be building work habits of clients who were experiencing chronic long-term unemployment. The work discipline and precision in work acquired help clients to find jobs in the labour market.

## Vegetable Ltd.

### Contact details of the farm:

name of the farm:  
 Zelenina s.r.o. (SK)  
 Vegetable Ltd (EN)  
 address: Zeleninárska 2, 071 01 Michalovce,  
 Slovakia  
 email: patrikmitera@gmail.com



### Short description of the farm:

The company was established in 2001 as a wholesale producer of vegetables and fruit in the Michalovce district, 490 km from the capital of Slovakia, Bratislava. Owners of Zelenina s.r.o. company sought to produce their own products – vegetables and fruit. For this reason they purchased an older agricultural property in the village Jastrabie pri Michalovciach, in eastern Slovakia. They additionally purchased machines and rented more cultivation area, gradually.

Nowadays, Zelenina s.r.o. is not solely a wholesaler but an active farm with 500 hectares of land. Arable land (300 hectares) is used for the cultivation of cereals, mainly wheat, legumes, oil plants and special crops, such as garlic and poppy. Permanent meadows and pastures cover 200 hectares, approximately. One part is field grasses for cutting according to EU legislation; second part is used as pasture for 15 heifers of Aberdeen Angus. According to EU and National legislation, the Zelenina s.r.o. receives financial support – subsidies, direct payments per ha of agricultural land, etc.

Zelenina s.r.o. started with social agriculture in 2016. The owners were awarded two successful project applications from the National Projects of the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic.

The first project “Cesta z kruhu nezamestnanosti” – Eng.: “The Journey from the Unemployment Circle” provided financial subsidies for the employment (duration at least 15 months) of long-term unemployed people, job seekers with primary and lower secondary education, job seekers older than 54 years and disabled job seekers.

The second one “Praxou k zamestnaniu” – Eng.: “From Practice to the Employment” provided subsidies for the employment (duration at least 9 months) of job seekers younger than 29 years. Thanks to these projects they could employ 7 disadvantaged job seekers, mainly from Roma community, with primary education.

### Some key words to describe the farm:

- National Projects: “Cesta z kruhu nezamestnanosti” – Eng.: “The Journey from the Unemployment Circle”, “Praxou k zamestnaniu” – Eng.: “From Practice to the Employment.”
- Education
- Job seekers with over 12 months of unemployment
- People from Roma community

### Practical details of the social farm:

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Main target group:            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• people from the Roma community</li> <li>• young, less educated individuals with limited working habits and skills</li> </ul>   |
| Purpose:                      | The aim of the social activity and aspect is to acquire work habits, self-reliance and education of employees; to help them to improve quality of life; and to teach duties.  |
| What activities are involved? | <p>People (employees) take part in the day-to-day activities on the farm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cattle feeding</li> <li>• working in stalls (cleaning, repairing)</li> <li>• field working during vegetation period (especially, weeding in garlic), fertilization, manual harvest of poppy</li> <li>• auxiliary labour (e.g. grass cutting, installation of electric fences, etc.)</li> </ul> |



|   |   |
|---|---|
| Who started the activity?                 | Co-owners of Zelenina company   |
| What was the inspiration or motivation?   | The main inspiration was (and still is) the Gospel of Jesus Christ – help the weak and the poor regardless of whether they deserve it.  |
| Does anyone else support the initiative?  | State – Slovak Republic - through National Projects: “The Journey from the Un-employment Circle” and “Employment Practice”, provided by Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic. |
| When the initiative started?              | 2016  |
| In Working/care hours for client per day: | Working time of each employee is 8 hours per day.   |

### Details of any farm resources and farm structure used:

- Farming: The farm has the area of 500 hectares, approximately (300 hectares of arable land and 200 hectares of permanent meadows and pastures). They are specialized in plant production – cultivation of wheat, garlic, poppy, sunflower, soya, maize. All agri-products are sold.
- Animal husbandry: The farm has also 15 heifers of Aberdeen Angus that are on pastures throughout the year. Animal production was expanded with the addition of Vietnamese pigs, recently.

### Financial aspects of the activity:

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| What are the main sources of funding? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sales of agri-products (crops and meat)</li> <li>• national projects (for the salary of employees)</li> <li>• direct payments and subsidies per ha of agricultural land</li> </ul> |
|---------------------------------------|---|

### Results of the farm activity:

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Direct Results: | obvious improvement of work skills of employees   |
| Strength:       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the number of employees</li> <li>• own or rented land (valid lease agreements)</li> <li>• financial self-sufficiency</li> <li>• stable funding</li> <li>• direct payments and subsidies per ha of agricultural land</li> <li>• cooperation with Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic</li> <li>• support of people from roma community</li> </ul> |
| Weaknesses:     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employees without working habits, skills</li> <li>• worse working ethic of employees - problematic clients</li> <li>• time limited duration of financial support from state</li> <li>• inability to offer the current employees a permanent job</li> </ul>   |
| Wider benefits: | opportunity for different, new agricultural projects  |

## **Future prospects and sustainability:**

In the future, they would like to create such a working area and the forms of agri-business in which auxiliary and unskilled workers, uneducated people, those unemployed for over 12 months could be integrated. The aim is to make a profitable agri-business even without the help and support of the state (subsidies to employees) so that the business can “stand on its own feet”.

## **In conclusion - lessons to pass on:**

People live in a world where the strong, educated and skilled are being promoted. People should not forget the weaker, unskilled workers, or those facing challenges in minority communities. These people deserve a chance for a decent life – and Zelenina s.r.o. offers a paid job to them. During “the journey from the unemployment circle” employees made many mistakes, inaccuracies, human failures, and slips. Therefore, employers should be more patient, tolerant, and trustful and should forgive mistakes. The work of employees involved in the program has proven to be more precise, improved, and more efficient with each day and week of the employment program.

The owners of Zelenina s.r.o. hope that at the end of financial support period from the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic that they will be able to employ each of their current employees for an indefinite period. Even if this will not be possible, employees who participated in the program are expected to have an easier time finding a job because their working habits will no longer be at the level of long-term unemployed people.



The overall objective of this manual is to present best-practices from Visegrad countries (V4: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia) in relation to social farming while acknowledging common historical developments of agriculture in the region and the overall impact on the trajectory of social farms. The passages were created taking into account a number of key factors including: comparable agricultural position in Europe in relation to geography and market factors, common structural conditions for achieving successful social farm systems-operation, similar difficulties and challenges stemming from pre-regime change practices and post-transition privatisation. In addition to mapping out the contemporary social farm situation for V4 countries with assistance from published detailed studies, the manual also concentrates on presenting local best-practices in V4 countries which to date have not been documented in detail. This best-practice collection differs from western and northern European examples as the gathered V4 examples showcased operate and must operate under national V4 circumstances. Although certain elements transferred from western and northern countries are surely recognizable in V4 best-practices, the country-specific features predominate. Assembling a collection of V4 best-practices permits a constructive comparison and contrast study with the well-documented western and northern patterns, and will assist in outlining the successful future operation of social farms under the legal framework of the Central and Eastern European Visegrad countries, where social pillars can be integrated into farming policy at the local, national, and international level.