

The Šenk Farm

1. Introduction

The farm is located in the typical Alpine environment of the Kamnik Savinja Alps in the border region with Austria, at an altitude of 900 m. Due to the altitude, relief and alpine climate, agricultural land is dominated by grassland, pastures and associated livestock farming. Jezersko-solčavska breed of sheep originates from this area. In addition, forestry is still very important in the traditional agriculture of this region. The place is characterized by dispersed settlements with independent farms. Tourism is an important activity. It decreased slightly in former decades, but it has been gaining importance again. One of the important points of revival of tourism is the Šenk farm, which was completely rebuilt by a young couple a few years ago.

2. Promoter profile



First Name

Polona

Last Name

Karničar

Birth Year

1976

Gender

Female

Education

Secondary vocational

3. Farm Profile







Address

Nosilka dopolnilne dejavnosti na kmetiji
Zgornje Jezersko 140
4206 Zgornje Jezersko
Slovenija

Country

Slovenia

Farm area in hectar

16.00

Date of establishment of the farm

1500

Date since when the promoter owns/rents the farm

Sun, 06/06/2010 - 12:00

NUMBER OF WORKERS	FAMILY MEMBERS	EXTERNAL WORKERS
Full time	0	3
Part time	1	6

Farm description

The Šenk farm, with its clustered arrangement of eight, wood-covered buildings, is a pearl of the Alpine architecture. It was founded more than 500 years ago. The main house is from 1517 and the settlement was created after the disappearance of lake in the 14th century. The homestead preserved its original image, and the house is protected as a cultural monument of national importance and thus subject to strict protection. The farm is strongly oriented towards tourist activity, offering home-made organic products from the garden and orchard and the traditional Slovenian autochthonous breeds of cattle, sheep and chicken are kept. Four generations have lived on the farm recently. All members of the family are involved in farm work and during the season they accept volunteers from Slovenia and also abroad. The farm and family members are closely connected with the local community and actively work and participate in it. Polona is the president of the tourist association Jezersko. The site is located in Natura 2000 and this place is considered as an independent municipality.

Website and social network links

www.senkovadomacija.si

<https://www.facebook.com/SenkovaDomacija/>

4. Multifunctional/sustainable farming and European Agricultural Landscapes (EAL)

Multifunctional & sustainable farming Key Words

Quality/Organic/Certified production

Tourism and recreation related to EAL

Traditional buildings

Free Text

Due to the difficult conditions of farming, the inhabitants of Jezersko always looked for income outside agriculture. The most important was forestry with famous Jezersko larch, transportation along the passages that connected Slovenia with Carinthia, charcoal production and later tourism and hiking. Above Jezersko, there is one of the oldest mountain huts in Slovenia, the Czech hut built by the Czech mountaineers in 1900, coming mostly from the circle of industrialists who had factories in Kranj. Jezersko lies in a typical Alpine landscape with high steep slopes with mountain pastures above the forest boundary. The landscape is sparsely populated and is subject to deagrarianisation and migration to the city. Lately, the area has been revived, mainly thanks to the young farm successors and their

families and this is partly supported by funds from the Rural Development Program, which are largely focused on the development of tourism and sustainable agriculture.

Advice/Recommendation

- The farm means, above all, a lot of work, but it also brings a lot of joy. It is important that the farm can survive and ensure existence for future generations.
- There are truly some resources provided by the state, but the bureaucracy is overwhelming and too complicated.

5. Considerations, skills/competences involved and queries/questions

General considerations

The farm is run by young couple with help of multi-generational family. Few years ago, both of them left their good jobs to begin developing tourism on the farm. They wanted to take advantage of the extraordinary potential that the farm has as a protected cultural monument and a unique natural environment. To obtain sufficient financial resources, they sold some farm land and applied for RDP funds. They had some support of advisory service but most of the work had to be done on their own. This was the most difficult period of the revival process since there was no regular family income and the family was dependent on their savings. The renewal period took longer than they planned so if there hadn't been clear vision and goals about the farm's future, it would be impossible to succeed. First few years after the start of agritourism, the main issue was how to attract guests. It took few years before they achieved satisfactory results. At current point of business development, the main concern is developing the relevant contents for tourist to offer and determining roles and responsibilities for family members. During the whole process of establishing a successful family business, they had to learn a lot. They had no experience in project management, construction engineering or tourism management and they were gaining entrepreneurial skills by solving problems. They claim that they had support of institutions and local authorities but the job had to be done by the family. Fortunately the family members are very connected, hardworking, focused, persistent and willing to learn. In the end, the effort paid off. Now they are sure that they made the right decision and that the agritourism based on unique environment and cultural values has a great potential. They see also many followers in their neighborhood who choose similar paths for developing and preserving their farms. They are also ready to share and explain their experience to those who are at the start of the same process of establishing agritourism business. Such exchanges and meetings are organized by various organizations; association of tourist farms, rural women associations, tourist associations, advisory services, development agencies ... They also noticed increased public attention, which is dedicated to preserving and protecting of agricultural landscapes. It is also very important for people to have possibility to make exchange of experiences on the subject with different people outside the local environment.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family. • Entrepreneurship. • Community. • Cultural heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure. • Lack of time.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation. • New contents. • Promotion. • Innovations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change. • Massive tourism. • Pollution maintenance. • Depopulation.

Keywords

EAL Keywords

Pasture

Protected area

Rural area

Farming Key words

Forestry

Grassland/Pasture

Horticulture

Livestock

Main Training/Skills/Competences

Formally acquired knowledge is not enough for the needs of farm management and tourism on the farm. Exchanges of experiences and visits of good practices mean a lot. Learning from one's own experience is very important. It is necessary to have a vision and goals, as well as persistence, resourcefulness and support of the family and locals.

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Queries/Questions

How to transfer knowledge in the unobtrusive way?

What channels can we use to transfer this knowledge? When to start training? Is not this a matter of lifelong learning?

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