Farma AFRA Odorica

1. Introduction

Odorica – a small family ecofarm lies in an imaginary triangle of Levoča, Levočské Lúky and Spišský Hrhov, in the Medvedie Mountains, near the town of Levoča (UNESCO). The farm boasts a view over the Tatras National Park (about 50 km). Mrs. Zuzana Homolová is the third generation of her family interested in herbs planting and processing. The name AFRA includes not only the name of the founder Andrey Frank, but also the aim of the farm: "Alternative Phytology of Plant Adaptogens". Other business activities of the farm include production and sale of healthy and fresh products directly on the farm.

2. Promoter profile



First Name
Zuzana

Last Name
Homolová

Birth Year
1963

Gender
Female

Education

Secondary.

3. Farm Profile











Address
48°59'57''N / 20°37'02''E

Country
Slovakia

Farm area in hectar
30.00

Date of establishment of the farm
1990

Date since when the promoter owns/rents the farm
Mon, 01/01/1990 - 12:00

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

Farm description

The farm is not located in a protected area but the landscape adds value to its farming activities. There are sources of high quality drinking water in the area and the organic agriculture positively influences the water protection activities. Views of the High Tatras (the National Park) and the Levoča medieval town (UNESCO) attract a lot of tourists. Historical terraces covering surrounding slopes around the farm were traditionally used for agriculture and now also protect slopes against erosion. A former owner - Czáky family from Spišský Hrhov built Odorica farm in the 19th century. After the collectivization, the farm became busy again in 1987. The farm produces traditional domestic organic food and other organic products. Animals are fed exclusively with natural fodder and grazed in a natural way emphasizing the best possible care. The farm focuses on medicinal plants (1.5 ha). Mrs. Zuzana Homolová sells medicinal plants through the company AFRA BIO based in Levoča. Moreover, Mrs. Homolová also used to take a part in lectures and frequently helps with consultations. At the same time she is the chair-woman of the Organic Farming Association - Ekotrend Slovakia. During farm visits visitors can enjoy domestic products. The farm also organizes children's summer eco-camps and participates in the world-wide initiative called woofing (WWOOF).

Website and social network links
odorica.sk
farmaodorica.sk
http://www.afrabio.sk/onas/ekofarma-odorica/
Ekofarma Odorica on Facebook
Odorica on Youtube I
Odorica on Youtube II

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

Multifunctional & sustainable farming Key Words
Avoid soil erosion
Biodiversity
Social farming
Direct sales
Quality/Organic/Certified production
Tourism and recreation related to EAL

Free Text

The farmer had no education background regarding the development of multifunctional and sustainable agricultural activities and these have been developed gradually over the course of several years on the basis of own experiences and thanks to sharing knowledge among other farmers. Therefore, experience shared and exchanged especially among young farmers should be easily accessed and shared online. However, many small farmers in Slovakia face a huge problem - slow or no Internet connection in remote rural regions.

Nevertheless, directs sales on the farm are the most crucial criterion for the successful multifunctional business strategy because only then visitors/ consumers are able to understand what the real quality really stands for - it is the quality of the particular landscape type and land cultivation practices taking into account the landscape value. Moreover, it should be noted that medicinal herbs, as a family tradition that presents the intangible cultural heritage, gave the farmer the opportunity to educate others on human wellbeing and health in connection with the importance of land cultivation in a sustainable way. This knowledge helped the farmer to broaden her opportunities in the business world as well - establishment of a shop with medicinal plants (online shop with a wide reach) and related educational activities with supra-regional impact as well as intensive local presence.

Advice/Recommendation

"The farmer is providing its products directly to the consumers. Knowledge on medicinal plants passed down through several generations represents an intangible cultural heritage positively influencing consumers’ health and the landscape quality as well."

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

General considerations

The farmer has been gaining the knowledge on multifunctional farming gradually over several years period not only through her everyday life on the farm but also from her professional work experiences in a non-profit organization with nationwide coverage - Ekotrend Slovakia. Ekotrend Slovakia brings together producers, manufacturers, professionals and those interested in organic farming and sustainable rural living. The main obstacle she faces is also the main problem of other small and family-run farms in Slovakia - a direct sale of farm products which is governed by ineffective legislation. Short market chain and direct sales are key points for the successful multifunctional business strategy. Moreover, direct sales together with organic farming positively influence the quality of the land. Nevertheless, small and family-run farms have an irredeemable position in redressing consequences of collectivization as well as inappropriate transformations that took place under communism and turning the agricultural landscape into a land with a valuable landscape character. Moreover, thanks to the efforts these farmers make customers and visitors can better understand relationship between high quality food and the landscape quality ("taste of the land") when they visit the farms and buy products there. The main challenge for the farmer is to be self-sufficient. Due to complicated and unclear legislation some of the crucial farming activities are virtually impossible to carry out.. Thus, farmers are missing out on the potential income, are unable to employ more people and revitalize the labor potential of the Slovakian countryside and thus fail to provide more adequate maintenance to the agricultural land. The most expected change in legislation is the recognition of a status of a farmer that will not be defined by its particular characteristics, but by many different conditions set by several laws instead.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Attractive landscape and clean environment with panoramic views. • The popularity of farms in Slovakia and abroad. • Frequent visits from the town of Levoča. • Own shop for medicinal plants sale.	• Large-scale intensively used arable land in the surroundings. • Insufficient ads regarding the farm (as the result of reluctance of competent institutions to address the issue).
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Clean and quality water is the crucial thing for cattle breading and animal products processing. • Great tourism potential - developments of other forms of tourism – guided tours or eco-museum concepts.	• Mass tourism means more busy atmosphere. • The intensification of agricultural production could negatively influence the water resources quality.

Keywords

EAL Keywords
Open fields
Terraced landscape

Farming Key words
Livestock
Medical plants
Processing

Main Training/Skills/Competences

Small and family-run farms need basic legislation knowledge and they expect exact legal definition of a family-run farm. In particular, such legislation should reflect particular needs (natural, historical, cultural, social and economic) of different rural regions with varied landscape types. Without simpler legislation many young farmers as well as small and family-run farms would struggle with legislation, thus making it difficult to carry out their daily activities under the specific conditions of a particular region or landscape type. The success means that the product finalization and sale are done by the farm. At that point the farm has an opportunity to explain consumers how the farmer's practices influence the value of the landscape type and other important information as well. For instance, organic farming contributes to the water resources protection and the cultivation of historical terraces

positively influences the landscape character. Eco-camps organized by the farmer are a very good opportunity to get the younger generation interested in farming and explain how the land cultivation in a sustainable way supports natural and cultural values of the agricultural landscape.

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Queries/Questions

- Is a family-run farm considered to be a specific business entity in your country? If yes, please provide examples which legislation positively stimulates multifunctional agricultural activities.

- What is the main role of a farmer in preserving landscape values?

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