

sema

Sustainable Entrepreneurship
based on Multifunctional Agriculture

*Color up your entrepreneurial acting in/ with
Multifunctional Farming and share
your experiences.*



SEMA Case Study Profile

The Polish Educational Farm “Pszczółki”

1 Farm Profile

The organic - agritourism farm "Bees" - can be found in the Malopolska province in the municipality of Pałecznicza in Niezwojowice. The farm is located in the neighborhood of fish ponds with a total area of 4 hectares. Pleasant surroundings of the parcels of land filled with fruit and vegetable orchards. This is, where the apiary and the beekeeper's house are located. In the old manor galleries of paintings and mock battle of Raclawice can be found.

The organic farm promotes an active lifestyle and the development of healthy eating habits. The owners' goal is to promote the beauty and richness of nature showing visitors the traditions and customs of the region.

2 Multifunctional Farming

The farm started its organic activities in the apiary. The owners have tried to certify the production of the farm by applying organic standards. The ecological activity became the nucleus of the multifunctional business activities. Then came the idea to start agritourism. This is facilitated by the natural and cultural environment of the area and the predisposition of the owners. Organic agriculture and apiary and agritourism business have been included to the educational activities, and the effect was putting the farm to the National Network of Educational Farms. The next stage of development was the setting up multifunctional eco-store with the healthy food. And at least, the established the foundation "Pszczółki".

2.1 Situation before Multifunctional Activity

The farm covers only small area. Agricultural activities alone would not be sufficient as the main and only source of income. Due to the location of the farm within Malopolska voivodship, which is characterized by fragmentation of the agrarian areas but also the rich of the natural and cultural heritage the farm is predestined for multifunctional activities. To survive the farm the owners decided to go in the direction of tourism activities using various ancillary services - such as educational workshops, either organic food, or their own apiary. At the beginning they increased the amount of hives and adjusted the bee farm to the agritourism activity. After a few years they decided to start educational services. So again they had to adjust their farm environment to this kind of activity.

2.2 Developing the Business Idea

For the implementation of all these activities one needs the right people. The key person, who runs the business together with her family is Ms Agnieszka Król. She attracts tourists with her optimism, positive attitude, creativity and hospitality. Friendly, family atmosphere makes guests feel very welcome so they come back the farm and recommend it to others.

2.3 Multifunctional Agriculture

As part of their multifunctional activities, the farm offers:

- Offer of the agritouristic services for guests, which involves accommodation (10 beds) with full board.
- There are attraction and services like:
 - - one day excursions
 - - thematic events
 - - integration events
 - - trainings
 - - grill and fire events
 - - tasting homemade specialties of traditional Polish cuisine and macrobiotic cuisine.
- The farm offers a wellness lounge and dishes prepared by the owners.
- Seven educational packages aimed primarily to children:
 - "Plum"
 - "Animal farm"
 - "Tearing feathers"
 - "Life of the bees colonies during the year"
 - "Fishing"
 - "Organic garden – fresh food from the garden"
 - "Sourdough bread - a true taste of tradition".

In addition, in the Eco-shop it is possible to buy small souvenirs and fresh products from the farm (having in mind the freshness and the highest quality goods at confirmation of delivery).

2.4 Financing the New Business

The activity is developed using their own savings. It is promoted by their own website Educational Farms. It should be emphasized that Ms. Agnieszka collaborates with many institutions and participates in promoting their business at various trade shows, regional events.

2.5 Outcomes of the Business Development

Currently, the revenue situation is good, mainly due to the multifunctional activities of the farm. This type of activity makes sense, if it brings together many attractions. It is also important to choose activities appropriate for the group of customers and to make an attractive offer. Ecological activities and educational activities are packages addressed to the youngest guests. These services have become the hallmark of this farm.

3 Skills for Multifunctional Agriculture

Creativity, desire to promote organic food and natural and cultural heritage of the area, openness to people and new ideas are the main skills that are needed for the multifunctional development. It is also important to put on directly promoting their business - for example, the presence on various fairs by the owner that best promotes his farm.

3.1 Promoter and Staff Competences

The key person of the farm is the already mentioned Ms. Agnieszka Król, who continues to develop the multifunctional activities by, complementing it with new ideas. Leadership skills, creativity, willingness contribute to the success of the developed activities for both tourists and direct sales (apary), but also many other activities like the foundation "Pszczółki". The owner passed some courses (professional trainings) on marketing, law, business plans, and pedagogy. Those trainings provided by local agricultural advisory centers let her obtain business skills and competences. She also continuously participates in the trainings about beekeeping provided periodically by regional beekeeping association. All those trainings give to the owner new competences, which help her improve her services and enterprise.

3.2 Access to and Management of Skills and Know-How

To develop the multifunctional activities it is useful to have the necessary knowledge, and leadership skills. Being in contact with others allows you to the necessary acquire knowledge.

4 Experiences & Recommendations

4.1 Implementing the Business Idea

The owners began by their multifunctional business by conducting apiary and organic agriculture. Ms. Agnieszka to developed the farm by following environmental values and build on the rich history of the area. Her positive attitude and creativity led to adding new ideas. The implementation of new ideas and continuously building on existing multifunctional activities it important for the success of the farm. It should also be emphasized that the owners are open to cooperation and put great emphasis on the promotion of their activity.

4.2 Finding Supporters for the Business Concept

Educational activities connected with rural tourism and organic products is certainly a very good form for the use of all the surrounding properties. It is important that these activities form product as a whole and complement each other.

4.3 Promoter's Advice

For this activity the most important is the using the own products and promoting a lifestyle, ecology and passing on of the history, traditions to the guests, especially the youngest. The owners insist on credibility (high quality of the food, organic standards, and making guests feel like home).

4.4 Queries and Consideration

Currently, agritourism is so well developed in Poland. Due to a lot of competition one should seek additional activities to attract customers. Educational activities were promoted in rural areas for several years. It represents an innovation in the field of knowledge sharing and passing on traditions and culture of the region, primarily to children directly on the farm. In any business the quality of



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services offered is important.

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