



**Council of the Baltic Sea States Expert Group on Sustainable Development, CBSS-Baltic 21**  
**Funding activities and projects in cooperation with civil society actors in Belarus and in Russian Federation**

In cooperation with the Swedish Ministry for the Environment

**Project title: Formation of new local food markets**

**Project acronym: FOOD**

## **Action plan how new local food market formation experiences can be transferred into other countries.**

Based on the best practice examples, new local food market formation can be transferred into other countries.

There are examples how best practices can be transferred into other countries:

*Based on the case study “Cheese-makers house”.* A similar experience or model of the development of a local food market can be used in other countries. The important thing is to have initiators of the idea, to attract like-minded people, i.e. potential suppliers or consumers, who would be willing to join in developing an informal cooperation network. In the next stage it is important to determine the availability or acquisition of resources required for this activity by using necessary financial resources. Then it is necessary to decide about the venue: to choose the place for business or production. The third stage should deal with the sales of the products and innovative relation forms between the suppliers and consumers that would create a food chain with the smallest possible number of intermediaries and a close relationship between both participants of the system. Different other activities would ensure close cooperation, such as a possibility to visit the farm and to become familiar with its operations, volunteer support to the implementation of some of the activities, participation in the events, etc.

*Based on the case study “Mobile farmers market”.* The main advice the cooperative management would like to give to those who are considering a similar trading system in other countries is related to cooperation. A mobile farmers market should function as a cooperative. “The problems of both labour force and material resources can be



successfully resolved in cooperation with several neighbours,” says M. Maciulevičius. Cooperation is supported by the state. Different sources of financing are available at the initial stage. Cooperation reduces both the financial burden and the risk. Furthermore, activities can be easily shared by deciding who will be in charge of the production process or sales. One of the potential sources of financing is support to rural communities: several successful rural community projects have already been completed in Lithuania and small processing enterprises have been put into operation.

Collaboration with a great variety of institutions plays a major role in launching and developing mobile trade, including but not limited to

- retail chains,
- local authorities,
- the Ministry of Agriculture or other similar institutions,
- non-governmental organisations (different farmer associations, an association of rural tourism, the chamber of agriculture, etc.)
- food quality control institutions;
- different companies and organisations located in the city, which can offer a site for the farmers market on their territory and thus provide their staff with an opportunity to get high quality food in their workplace.

On top of that, it is extremely important to foster cooperation between the farmers. Farm visits and experience sharing contribute to building a team where everyone feels responsible for the quality and origin of products made by themselves as well as other members of the cooperative.

Whereas farm modernisation is less important than many can think it can be achieved gradually. The most important thing is to regain the consumers' trust in the farmers market and to produce products that are marketable and in great demand. Therefore it is essential to use the most diverse forms of the dialogue between the supplier and the consumer. Various events can successfully serve this purpose. They can be dedicated to a specific type of food, e.g. honey, apples, potatoes, tomatoes, etc. During such events potential buyers can not only be introduced to the range of products but they can also find out the advantages of certain types or species and benefit from direct communication with the producers, who are conversant with all the subtle aspects of manufacturing and consumption. Whereas in the future some mobile farmers market



sites might grow into stationary shops that will be possibly located in the same supermarket or shopping centre.

*Based on the case study “Lithuanian natural agriculture network”.* Similar initiative of natural agriculture network can be easily implemented in other countries. Firstly, it is important to have an initiator who wants to start to implement this activity and to find members who want to cooperate together. Natural agriculture enthusiasts should agree on main principles and activities they are willing to provide for the customers. Secondly, they should agree what tools they want to use for creating second part of the network – list of consumers and the platform they want to use (it can be website, direct contacts, etc.). Finally, they can discuss what additional activities they are willing to introduce to expand their activities based to the needs of growers and consumers – as seminars to share experiences, as some tasting events where consumers can try their products and socialise themselves, etc.

*Based on the case study “Farmers and organic food “Ecaeja”.* Similar initiatives could be implemented in other countries. However, to succeed it is necessary to have comprehensive development and a link “consumer-producer of green-labeled” products, if the community is not yet mature for paying more for the clean products, when there exist serious problems of food security, such initiatives could not be implemented. Secondly, the project was initiated by the consumers and therefore it needs an initiative group that would be ready to overcome difficulties of the launch period (the first year the project worked to zero [profit], sometimes even at a loss) and develop the project. Third, it is necessary to determine in what form the project would run, and what tools will be used to promote products. In our case a web site, but as the analysis of such initiatives shows that direct sales, specialized shops, sections in department stores and others tools are quite effective. Fourth - it is necessary to have information support for the project, in this case, it means that they have to constantly inform people, both existing and potential customers, as well as other people about the benefits of the proposed products. In our case it was a large number of articles about the project, the benefits of healthy diet in the media, as well as leaflets and detailed information about the farmers and production technologies at the project’s portal.



*Based on the case study "Farming enterprise "LANA 97".* These initiatives of associations of farmers aimed at marketing their products can be easily implemented in other countries. To do so: firstly, association of several farms engaged in production of different types of foods, association of farmers engaged in production of similar products only makes sense if there is a wide distribution channel and insufficient internal capacity to achieve it. Secondly, it is necessary to have a proactive producer in the group ready to take on all difficulties associated with marketing of products, and first of all ready to be liable for it with its name, because of additional quality control function. Third, one needs to select the shape and tools for sales.

*Based on the case study "Developing a farm (Agro-Eco) of tourism in Belarus".* Over 7 years of active development of rural tourism in the country, with governmental support, the number of rural households that take tourists has increased from 34 to 1,881, i.e. 55 times, whereas the number of tourists has increased 300 times.

Currently, in our country there are the most favorable conditions to involve in development of rural tourism among all CIS and foreign countries.

This experience is a very positive example of dynamic development, and can be used in other countries. A necessary prerequisite for its implementation is a tripartite understanding between the state, the society (through NGOs) and peasants, as the main provider. If any element falls out of the three that would mean that the project is not implementable.

In addition, it is worth noting the main points resulting in possibilities of such dynamic development of agro-tourism in the country:

1. A clear statutory definition of the status of farmsteads, simple organization and registration;
2. Preferential conditions for functioning (tax breaks, government subsidized concessional lending);
3. State aid to develop and maintain infrastructure;
4. Help associations in advertising and promotion services;
5. Initiative of rural dwellers and residents (or residents who would like to move to a rural area or a village).



The following recommendations to improve functioning of agro-tourism sector can be offered:

- To introduce certain changes to the already existing regulations, to eliminate existing gaps and inaccuracies therein that would allow stakeholders developing rural tourism and providing services in this area more efficiently and in strict compliance with the law;
- To conduct training and retraining of persons wishing to establish agro-tourist enterprise, as well as training with specialized secondary and vocational education to work in the field of rural tourism;
- To establish public information resources in the field of agro-tourism. This applies both information for potential owners of rural estates, and availability of statistical information that would contribute to research in this area;
- To ensure maximum level of cooperation in the field of rural tourism at all levels;
- To improve quality of the existing rural estates, this can be achieved by introducing certification of rural tourism facilities;
- To improve infrastructure in rural settlements, especially in repairing and replacing access roads to the objects of rural tourism;
- To ensure further development of information support to rural tourism (installation of information boards and signs at the entrances to towns and settlement, as well as international, national and local roads, production and distribution of promotional and informational literature);
- To develop integration and cooperation in agricultural and ecological tourism by creating greenways, resorts and agro “mini-hotels” network based on rural estates and farmsteads;
- To create conditions for cooperation between rural tourism entities and protected areas, forest hunting and hunting farms in order to create a comprehensive travel programs to offer leisure and rest to agro-eco tourists following their promotion by tourism enterprises;
- To maximize the use of material base of agricultural production cooperatives to create agro-complexes;



- To create a specialized research center for scientific and marketing research in the field of rural tourism. Activities of the center should involve experts from various fields: economists, lawyers, geographers, ecologists, anthropologists, tourism sector specialists etc.

*Based on the case study “The possibility of applying the principles of “slow food” in the implementation of farm milk”.* Farm milk is produced in many countries, usually it is packed in glass or plastic package and to pack it in authentic eco-safe package, not only farms should be improved but pottery shops too.

*Based on the case study “Zaetc farm”.* According to the organizers of the project, the only alternative to increase the efficiency of such projects is the increasing involvement of local people, both as a manufacturer of environmentally friendly products, as well as buyers, that means to extend the range of the local food market net.

*Based on the case study “Network of organic farm Kluken”.* As farm products are quite diverse: chickens, eggs, dairy products, meat, vegetables, herbs and fruits, it allows you to create a local market is not only the width of coverage, but the depth of satisfaction of local residents. At the moment, the farm does not expand the number of consumers of its products, it sells more variety of foodstuffs. From the positive experience of this project may be noted the successful combination of organic production of agricultural products in the local market, with the involvement of the urban population, both as consumers of farm produce, and as participants in the training program of rural life. Almost all participants of educational programs for children and their parents have become consumers of farm produce. Part of the parents began to try themselves in farming, often collaborates with Kluken farm. Thus on the face of not only the organization of the local food market, but also promote his ideas.

*Based on the case study “Home bakery “Lastochkino Gnezdo”.* Aleksander and Valerya would be glad to establish some branches in Kaliningrad, Chernyahovsk on Sovetsk. The family is looking for the couples which would like to start their business under the franchise license and is planning to open a web site in the future.