

***ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING EXCHANGE INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE
HOSPITALITY SMEs IN THE BALKAN-MEDITERRANEAN REGION***

Subsidy Contract No. BMP1/1.3/2616/2017

Company name: Red Tractor Farm

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Country/region of operation: Greece/ Region of South Aegean/Kea (Tzia)

Sustainability dimension: social, economic, environmental

Description of the enterprise/initiative:

The Red Tractor Farm is an old 7-acre family property with self-catering cottages surrounded by vineyards and olive groves, set in the hilly landscape only a few-minute stroll from the beach and the port of Kea. The owners grow fruits and vegetables, produce wine, olive oil, marmalade and fruit preserves, all organic, as well as acorn flour, which they make from the nuts of local oak trees collected by islanders and volunteers.

Social/ community impact:

The guesthouse promotes environmental sustainability and interaction with the nature in the farm.

Stakeholders: Guests, islanders, volunteers

Approach applied:

Agro-tourism approach

Innovation applied:

Red Tractor Farm hosts volunteers for collecting acorn in October and doing various farm jobs during the winter. Volunteers over 21 years old stay at the guesthouse in exchange for 6 hours work per day.

Sustainability of the business model:

The agro-touristic model promoted by the farm can bring many economic and non-economic benefits for farmers, visitors and communities. On the one hand, the visitors can enjoy recreation and leisure agricultural activities, while, on the other hand, the entrepreneurs have the opportunity to increase their income and quality of life, maximize the productivity of farm resources through their recreational use and diversify their business by providing touristic services. In this sense, local natural and cultural heritage - based on agriculture- is preserved and the local community is economically enhanced (increase of local employment and promotion of local businesses, such as restaurants and shops) (Broccardo et al, 2017; Tew & Barbieri, 2012), while, at the same time, education and environmental awareness is promoted (Zoto et al, 2013).

Key success factors: Quality of accommodation, sales of own and/or local agricultural products, excursions and guided tours, learning laboratories, wellness, agricultural production activities, such as harvesting vegetables and fruits, complete tourism packages, support and participation of local government, sufficient funds for tourism development, cooperation with local businesses (Broccardo et al, 2017; Komppula, 2014; Tew & Barbieri, 2012).

Challenges and problems: Balancing between the primary agricultural production activities and the agro-touristic activities -as sources of income-, isolation from important tourist attractions, responding to market opportunities, seasonality, small scale character of the business, limited support system for small businesses, need for significant investment beyond the business' capacity, matching the quality of products and services to tourists demands and expectations, having the skills and the resources for effective marketing (Doh et al, 2017; Tew & Barbieri, 2012; Sharpley, 2002).

Year when the enterprise was created: n/a

References (web-site, intent links, video, etc.):

<http://www.redtractorfarm.com/>

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