



copa
european farmers

Innovation Award for Women Farmers **2018**

Women farmers as drivers of innovation

Award ceremony :

15th October 2018, 14.30 – 17.00

*Room JDE 63, European Economical and Social
Committee Brussels (EESC)*

**Message from the Secretary General of Copa-Cogeca,
Pekka Pesonen**



The Innovation Award for Women Farmers was introduced in 2010 to shine a light on the central role played by women in farming. The award has made it possible to better acknowledge the many innovative approaches women take to agriculture and diversification throughout the EU. The award gives women the opportunity to demonstrate their capacity to help find new solutions to the challenges faced by the rural world and to showcase their role as key players in the future of rural areas.

The theme of the award's 2018 edition was "Women farmers as drivers of innovation". At Copa, we received 35 high-quality applications from different countries across the EU. Among so many innovative projects, it was a real challenge to select a winner of the award as well as a winner of the special prize. For this reason, we decided to put together this small brochure which features all of the proposed projects, giving the public access to the range of innovative solutions that exist in our rural areas. These projects are wonderful examples of how our women farmers are becoming more and more empowered!

**Message from the Chairwoman of the Women's Committee,
Lotta Folkesson**



The agricultural sector needs innovators in order to stay competitive. Women farmers play an important role in ensuring this. They play a fundamental part in rural development and farming. Recent statistics indicate that women farmers represent 35% of the European Union's agricultural workforce, and 30% of these women are farm managers. Furthermore, spouses and family members are frequently overlooked, and their influence within the workforce often goes unnoticed.

In the Women's Committee of Copa, we promote the empowerment of women in rural areas.

This award acknowledges one aspect of our everyday work. Having such impressive and innovative projects to show for our efforts can only make us even more certain of our work: women are capable of impressive things and this is no different in rural areas! The projects that we are proud to present here are evidence of the benefits that empowering women brings to rural areas, farming, the economy and society as a whole. Many things have been achieved so far but there is still a long way to go. Let's take this journey together!

Shortlisted applications



Christina Bauer • Easy baking and cooking with Christina • Austrian Chamber of Agriculture/ Austria

Christina and Johann bought the Bramlgut farm in Göriach, Austria, in 2010. The farm's economic base is **dairy production** and it has its own **breeding programme**. 14 dairy cows and 25 young cattle are housed in the new loose-housing system. Forestry is the third pillar of the business.

An important source of Christina and Johann's income comes from **renting three high-quality furnished apartments**. The apartments' quiet location on the outskirts of the Lungau Valley, which offers numerous hiking opportunities, lends itself to this activity. In 2015, Christina Bauer began to share her passion for baking. Christina created a Facebook page, "Easy baking and cooking with Christina", providing readers with tried and tested everyday recipes and images of her creations. In May, she completed her training as a woman farmer seminar leader ("Seminarbäuerin") and started offering baking courses to consumers of all ages. She found that she could easily combine interacting with consumers over the internet and holding courses on the farm with work on the farm and raising her children at home. Christina offers baking courses in her own kitchen on the farm. The application to participate in her courses can be completed via Facebook and online. Course participants are encouraged to shape their own pastry to get a better feel for the dough. The baking is done using regional cereals and simple ingredients that are widely available. All the rolls in the recipe book are easy to make, with step-by-step instructions to guide bakers through all important preparation stages. Common household appliances are used so that everyone can replicate the recipes at home.

The food blog "Baking with Christina" (<http://backenmitchristina.at>) serves as preparation and follow-up for the courses. By using regional cereals on the cooking courses, participants are encouraged to purchase food products from the region. Thus, **awareness of agricultural products is raised in order to influence buying and eating habits**.

www.backenmitchristina.at



Judy Kerkhofs-Roozen • Food processing care farm • ZLTO/ The Netherlands

Judy was one of the first entrepreneurs in the Netherlands to start a care farm in 2000. The care farm has evolved considerably throughout the years and is now a "development farm" with a team of care coaches and production employees. The farm "De Laarhoeve" provides outreach care to approximately **25 employees with disabilities**. Among the farm products are jams, dessert sauces, apple sauce, cooking pears, red cabbage, chutneys and pasta sauces. Processing is completely natural and the customers are retail chains and the catering industry.

The applicant is building a **professional experimental kitchen** with several production and packaging lines. The aim is to improve the quality and expand the current facilities. The design and equipment have been chosen according to the work needs of the employees at the care farm, maximising their work space. The project provides the opportunity to develop and test new products and recipes before they are produced and processed on the farm. The products are placed on the market with a **private label, contain no added sugar** and less salt than normal products, and have a **higher nutritional value**. Products rejected due to their shape, size or ripeness are usually used to feed livestock or thrown away. With this project, the applicant creates value by **preventing food waste, shortening the food chain, improving quality, reducing costs, increasing efficiency and transparency, reducing food miles, and ensuring sustainability**. Other farmers can use Judy's facilities to organise workshops, food tasting sessions and company meetings. The kitchen will be operational as of the third quarter of 2018, and will provide an enhanced, meaningful work environment for workers with disabilities.

<http://www.delaarhoeve.nl/>



Nienke Koumans • Margar'Ice • FNSEA/ France

The applicant and her husband bought a farm in 2005. Her husband started his agricultural business with 30 cows, and she joined him in 2008. They now have more than 100 cows and produce 900,000 litres of milk per year, which they sell to the local dairy. On their 95 hectares of land, they produce corn, alfalfa and grass for the cattle. Since 2011, Nienke has focused her efforts on a new business area: **milk-based ice cream**. With a total of 5,000

litres produced in 2011 and 20,000 litres last year, the applicant sells the ice cream under the **brand name Margar'Ice**. Nienke started with a small laboratory and a small delivery truck. Now she has a new, bigger laboratory with more storage and production space. She offers **26 flavours to which only natural ingredients are added**: sugar, cream, milk powder and the milk from their dairy cows. She sells her products in supermarkets and dairy shops in the region. She also makes caramel and yoghurt flavoured ice-cream, and for the sorbets, she uses real fruit. Since the project was launched, the farm has employed an additional person to help with the various tasks. Selling the ice cream allows the family farm to increase its average milk price and to become less dependent on market milk prices (and their fluctuations).

www.glace-marguerice.com



Sandra Quarantini • Color Off • Coldiretti/ Italy

Color Off is a “coloreria”, a natural plant-based dye business, located in Ostrense, Italy. The applicant – a **molecular biologist** – **founded this start-up after months of study and research**. On a hectare of land located in the hills of the Marche Apennines, **Sandra grows and processes dye plants** in order to extract **organic colouring agents** and to dye natural fibres. Her crops are environmentally sustainable and have a low environmental impact. She organises classes and workshops on natural dyeing on her farm – a real lab – but also in other locations on request.

The idea behind Sandra Quarantini’s natural dye start-up is to provide a solution to the problems caused by synthetic dyes, pollution and allergies. Her favourite colour is yellow, and she is specialised in the cultivation of reseda luteola, from which she obtains a very bright yellow which can be sold to clients as a plant or dye. Her activities are targeted at weavers, tailors and artists, but she also receives many requests from private individuals, e.g. to dye layettes for newborns. Soon she will open an online shop as she has many requests from abroad.

The project respects the environment and promotes new and sustainable lifestyles and consumption models.

<http://www.coloroff.it/>



Magdalena Wegiel • Trout Ojcowski • KRIR/ Poland

The applicant worked for 25 years in the **IT industry** and **did not have any previous education or experience in the agricultural or fishery sectors**. She moved to the countryside and started a project with her daughter. The aim of the “**Trout Ojcowski**” fish farm is to **restore brown trout breeding, promote environmentally conscious and ethical breeding, and to educate the community about the history of the region and culinary traditions**. In 2014, unused ponds intended for naturalisation were leased to Magdalena Wegiel and her daughter. In fact, it was during the implementation of a project in cooperation with the Ojcowski Park that Magdalena Wegiel first heard about naturalised ponds and decided to take the risk and take part in a tender. The main criterion for the tender was to run a holding in accordance with environmental requirements, which is exactly what the applicant decided to do. The fish ponds located in the national park owe their unique features to the picturesque scenery, natural microclimate and to Mlynówka, a stream providing well-oxygenated, crystal clear water. This provides favourable breeding conditions, maintaining genetic purity. Wild trout fry are less prone to diseases and adapt well to natural foodstuffs, resulting in high survival rates. No industrial techniques are used to enhance weight growth. On the fish farm, the applicant uses traditional tools: seines, wooden pliers, landing nets and boat hooks.

Only 2% of all trout farms in Poland breed brown trout, and such farms are among the few in Europe. Brown trout is a very difficult and demanding fish, bred mainly by the Polish Fishing Associations for restocking rivers. The innovativeness of the project lies primarily in its focus on **breeding a unique species in a natural and original way, combined with modern methods of sale and communication**. Indeed, in addition to breeding, the project also involves catering activities: the trout is cooked and sold in two different kinds of modern food trucks. Trout Ojcowski is now a well-known brand and is appreciated by caterers, healthy food enthusiasts and the most talented of chefs.

The applicant has won national awards with the project and has taken part in educational activities in the field of environmental protection and culinary heritage, cooperating with local authorities.

<http://pstragojcowski.pl/>



Other applications



Kiki Ahlstedt • Värmland • LRF/ Sweden

The applicant and her husband run two different farms: one is dedicated to forestry and the other to lamb production. They also provide accommodation and activities for tourists. The applicant has created a digital portal for local farms in the county of Värmland, Sweden. The web portal serves as an online shop where the farms can sell directly to consumers and clients. Indeed, reaching out to consumers online is one of the major advantages of the portal. It is a collaboration of 15 farms all located in the local area. They all contribute in their own way, be it in terms of marketing, payment or distribution. Each farm is responsible for its own products on the web portal, ensuring a good balance between collective and individual responsibility. The portal makes it possible to present the farms online, bringing consumers closer to the farms. The project is particularly important given that Sweden is a large country, with vast rural areas often separated by long distances. This makes it difficult for farmers to sell directly to consumers through ordinary on-site farm shops. The website therefore connects urban consumers with local producers. It also provides consumers with a means of buying directly from the farm. The applicant's innovative project is sustainable in the long run.



Laura Bargione • Social farming • CIA/ Italy

Laura Bargione started her career as an agricultural entrepreneur in 2006. She owns the **Mariscò Farm** and runs it with her family according to organic agricultural principles. The crops are transformed into preserves following traditional Sicilian recipes. In 2010, Laura expanded the farm to include social farming services, establishing partnerships with various Sicilian associations and NGOs. Since then, she has organised one-day or weekend activities linked to **music, art and organic agriculture**. These workshops are about supporting and being supported by psychiatric patients, encouraging them to learn life skills and to work with others.

Mariscò started to work with young people in 2014, when the farm concluded an agreement with the social association Associazione Persefone and its psychologist. Fuelled by their own resources and passion, the farm and the association started a pilot project together called "The Courage to Love. Sowing the Seeds of the Future: the courage to care for others". The beneficiaries of this project were 10 young men with psychiatric and social difficulties, aged between 16 and 18. The project ran for almost 2 years. The young men visited the farm from Monday to Friday, from 8.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., providing them with a routine. Mariscò focused on helping them learn basic farming skills, which would enable them to later be employed on farms. As a result of the project, some of the participants decided by themselves to go back to school, two of them were taken off medication by a doctor, and medication was reduced for another. The project also encouraged integration between locals and immigrants. Some of the young men found seasonal jobs, and were thus able to contribute to society.



Stefania Bevilacqua • Agri-falconeria • Coldiretti/ Italy

The applicant's farm of **60 hectares**, Abazia Laurana, was recently set up in the region of Emilia Romagna. Its three main activities are: professional breeding of birds of prey (juveniles are sold to enthusiasts, sportsman, hunters, etc.), an organic orchard (cherry trees, blueberry bushes, etc.) and the care farm (cooperation initiated with the municipality of Cesena's social services). The interconnectivity of these activities lies at the heart of this project!

Agri-falconry can be defined as using birds of prey that are trained to scare off animals, mainly birds, and to prevent them from damaging crops. This plays a particularly important role in the applicant's organic and biodynamic practice as it neither alters the environment nor introduces harmful substances or materials. Moreover, there is no blood shed in this activity due to the training protocol that the birds of prey have learnt. Thus, it is not intended as hunting. Compared to conventional methods (acoustic, visual or mechanic procedures), agri-falconry proves itself to be more productive, sustainable and less expensive.

The applicant drew up a comprehensive document entitled "Agri-falconry Protocol" in which she defines all aspects related to the species of birds of prey to be used, training and looking after the birds, breeding, aviary sizes, resting areas and educating peers. Wild crows, blackbirds, starlings and other birds that cause damage are kept away from crops and urged into different areas, mainly into woods where biodiversity has been maintained

to provide them with food. **Agri-falconry has proven to be effective, leading to an increased crop yield at minimum extra expense.**

The applicant believes that she can provide agro-falconry services and training, acquired from falconry schools, to other farmers, etc. There is certainly room to develop new professional opportunities that can meet professional and family needs alike.



Francesca Ceci • Plant-based cosmetics • Confagricoltura/ Italy

Potentilla is a company which produces **cosmetics using leaves**, flowers, fruit, berries and the roots of the wild plants growing in the Murgia region in Apulia, Italy.

The **100% natural formulations** are free from petroleum and its derivatives, preservatives and colouring, and are produced preserving the full effect of the plant extracts. The plants are harvested by hand and the applicant's company cooperates with a cosmetic laboratory working with state-of-the-art technology. Potentilla organises and promotes events to share knowledge on wild plants and on how to value and protect natural resources in the region. The company aims to study, analyse and pass on traditional knowledge on plants. In order to realise this objective, the applicant cooperates with different botanic experts, combining modern techniques with ancient traditions. In this respect, communication is very important and she cooperates with communication experts, artists, etc. All communication on the product is connected to the region and its natural resources. By using wild plants, business can be generated from spontaneous species, thereby protecting biodiversity. No water or pesticides are used and the **packaging is 100% green.**



Christine de Wilde • Organic croquettes • ZLTO/ The Netherlands

The applicant and her husband run an organic **cattle farm**. Their Angus cattle graze on organic pastures in a region in the south of the Netherlands. In 2012, they decided to specialise in Black Angus cattle. It is hard to survive as a farmer so Christine and her husband decided to focus on a niche market: the organic and local market. Besides working on the farm and in their shop, the applicant also works in the care sector for 18 hours a week.

The applicant has developed an **organic beef croquette: a very popular beef ragout snack in the Netherlands, served hot and eaten with chips or bread.** It is made with local meat, which means that it is more sustainable than beef imported from South America. The beef is left to stew in organic bouillon for 3 days. The meat is taken from the neck and breast. Each croquette includes 25 grams of meat, in contrast to the 10 grams in an ordinary croquette. The croquettes are made according to a traditional family recipe and will be sold in local markets, snack bars and their own farm shops. The ingredients of the croquette are all natural. The new product has completed the development stage and is now in the process of being introduced onto the local market. The aim is for the business to grow gradually in order to supply a larger group of snack bars.



Rosa María Díaz de Lope Díaz Caro • School of value • UPA/ Spain

The applicant is the Director of a **school and training centre. Her work is based on the concept of a model farm of sustainability and ecological agro-livestock production.** The school offers courses geared to provide qualifications for employment, weekend courses, mentoring for entrepreneurs, workshops, educational workshops, leisure courses, farm visits and rental of the facilities, etc. The farm's sustainability model focusses on diversifying ecological production and combines elements such as **cereals, pulses, horticulture, aquaculture, livestock, fruit trees, clean energy sources and autonomous waste management.** The school provides an ideal environment for training, guidance and mentoring on the creation of green jobs and acts as a source of motivation and inspiration for the many people who attend.

The school is certified by the Spanish Ministry of Employment and Economy and has a social inclusion system which provides women in precarious circumstances with tools to access more stable jobs and equips people with disabilities with the skills they require to leave day care centres and enter into work. In addition, the elderly attend sessions in which they share their wisdom and exchange innovative ideas with young people in the school's diverse groups.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tr1uzsZzHSM>





Maria Flynn • Purple potatoes • IFA/ Ireland

Maria's family farm (**Ballymakenny Farm**) is 130 acres with a further 420 acres that are being leased. Since 2009, the farm has been losing money due to the drop in potato prices.

Maria decided to **diversify into heritage potatoes**. A trial of eight drills produced nine tonnes, triple the projected amount. As a result of a strategic marketing plan, the **purple Violetta potatoes** made 2,000 euros per tonne in 2015.

Indeed, from the first day the potatoes were planted, Maria tracked the journey on **social media, building up momentum among top Irish chefs including JP McMahon (Aniar) and Ed Cooney**.

The Violetta potato and Maria's developing range of speciality vegetables are now the **core business** for Ballymakenny Farm, with the heritage crop established as a limited company. Ballymakenny Farm potatoes are **in five-star and Michelin-star hotels and restaurants**. The real innovation behind this project is not just the product itself and the route to the market. Essentially, Maria has recreated a whole new market for this historic potato. This year she planted six of the speciality potatoes including the Violetta and the Real Emmalie which has a pink flesh. She has also planted 60,000 tenderstem broccoli plants, 1,000 sweet stem cauliflower plants and Yukon Gold potatoes, a new endeavour for Ireland.

For the first time in eight years, Ballymakenny Farm is generating profit, making it a **sustainable business**. Nineteen tonnes of Violetta potatoes achieved sales of 38,000 euros, ten times the earnings of the rooster potato. They are making more with 20 acres of Violetta potatoes than with 600 acres of rooster potatoes, working smarter and striking a better work-life balance. Ballymakenny Farm is no longer only a farm but an oriented business and a trusted brand with a strong reputation.



Alessandra Germano • Tuorlo Biancofiore • Coldiretti/ Italy

The applicant has a poultry farm, "**Tuorlo Biancofiore**", located in the heart of the Gargano National Park, land that requires the farms to fully guarantee the quality of the products, animal welfare and environmental conservation. Alessandra's hens are reared in the open air, and therefore lay genuinely high-quality eggs. Animals are free to claw at the ground from sunrise until dusk so as to respect their biological body clock. The freedom to roam in an open space allows the hens to have a rich, diversified and natural diet based on the spontaneous grasses that they consume. On average, the hens lay an egg every 30 hours.

The applicant's cereals are purchased and milled directly in the area which gives the eggs a delicate flavour.

The applicant developed a range of egg packaging – duly registered – which is designed for consumers. The packaging is unique, it clearly identifies the company and stands out to the consumer. The consumer recognises the quality of the product through the packaging because it is associated with the company. This innovative packaging guarantees easy transportation, product integrity and respect for business ethics and also leads the consumer back to the company. The design is innovative and made using 100% recycled materials.

The company has been able to take its place in a highly competitive market. It is designed to attract premium consumers. Consumers prefer "Tuorlo Biancofiore" because they choose quality, respect for the environment, ethics, animal welfare, territory and tradition.

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



Laura Gioacchini • Cose dell'altro orto • Coldiretti/Italy

The applicant's farm (*Cose dell'altro orto*, or things from the other garden) is in Osimo and covers **approximately one hectare of land**. The applicant grows a wide range of ancient and unusual vegetables with a view to restoring ancient varieties of vegetables that are jeopardised due to large-scale distributors.

The ancient variety of seeds were passed down to Laura from her father. Yin and yang beans, squared peppers, blue pumpkins, rainbow beets, purple snow peas, green aubergines and orange cabbages are all being produced again. The vegetables are grown in a **natural way** with no pesticides or chemical fertilisers and are grown according to the season. Laura is also rearing ancient breeds of animals including the "Ancona" hen.

The applicant also saw an opportunity in the **enlarging migrant community in Italy as vegetables with African and Asian origins, such as Gumbo or the Chinese cabbage, are in high demand.**

The project's innovation lies in the fact that it is reshaping the heritage of the past.

The products are distributed and sold directly to the public at markets, allowing Laura to tell the story of each variety.

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



Agnieszka Gremza • Homely • KRIR/ Poland

The applicant has a farm of 70 hectares which is mainly dedicated to **dairy cattle breeding and crop production for the cattle**. She did not want to be as exposed to milk prices and decided to set up her own **cheese factory, "homely", to make cheese using the milk from her cows**. She produces various types of cheese (farm gouda, rennet cheese, acid cheeses, whey and blue cheese), butter, yogurt and pickled cheese. With the goat milk that she buys from local producers, she also produces goat cheeses.

The cheeses are made with an ancient recipe from the applicant's mother-in-law. She decided to add some herbs to the cheeses and the business started to take off. Consumers can buy the cheese on the farm, at local traditional food fairs in Poland and she can send the cheeses by post when the customers buy online from her website – www.serkorycinski.com. In 2012, the applicant's home-made cheese was registered by the European Commission as a **protected geographical indication**.



Slavica Grobelnik • Team building in the vineyard • Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry of Slovenia/ Slovenia

The applicant's farm is located in the Bizelijsko-Sremiska wine region in Slovenia. The main agricultural activities on the farm are viticulture and wine production on the 4 hectares of vineyard fields and meadows. The farm produces 6 different products from the grapes: wines, special wines, natural grape juices, wine spirit, brandy and grapeseed oil. Since 1991, the farm has dedicated some of its land to accommodation for tourists. The applicant also hosts excursions.

The project's innovation resides in the fact that it brings both **sports tourism and agri-tourism onto the farm, offering tourists the opportunity to learn about wine through team challenges**. The participants get to know the **vineyard by winding their way through the vine trellises, visiting the winery, tasting the wine, and learning about the tasks and equipment involved, about the beverages produced from the grapes, as well as about the dishes that were prepared using grapes in the past**. Visitors can also enjoy a full-body massage with the grapeseed oil: the oil softens and smooths the skin, effectively preventing age spots and reducing wrinkles around the eyes.

The project has enabled the applicant to improve her financial results and significantly increase the farm's annual return. The number of visitors in spring and autumn, especially during the grape harvest, has risen as has the number of overnight stays and the revenue per guest.



Andrea Höglinger • State-of-the-art composting plant • Austrian Chamber of Agriculture/ Austria

Andrea Höglinger took over her parents' farm in 2013. On her holding, she composts green and shrub cuttings, rootstocks and material from nearby organic waste containers. In a **state-of-the-art composting plant**, the green waste is used to produce various compost and soil substrates. The compost and soil mixes are sold either in bulk or by the bag. Andrea Höglinger's daily routine is characterised by work on the farm and family life (two children) in a house with three generations under one roof.

Andrea's project is innovative because it **invests in the natural cycle of composting on her farm. Moreover, this has created jobs on the holding**.

Compostable garden waste and waste from organic waste containers (provided by the municipality which offers its citizens organic waste containers to promote the separate collection of compostable organic waste) is processed in the region and sold as soil. This reduces the amount of garden and household waste. It also means that transportation by local waste collection services is avoided and that packaging material is saved because compost substrates are also sold in bulk. **Andrea has transitioned from pig fattening to composting – an innovative branch in the semi-urban area surrounding her municipality. She is a pioneer in this field.**

Given that demand has grown beyond the borders of her municipality in recent years, Andrea has expanded her facilities (building a new sales hall/warehouse including an office and an industrial weighing unit). Additional customer-oriented services, such as delivery to private and larger customers (gardening companies, tree nurseries etc.), have meant that she has also needed to invest in truck cranes.

Andrea's objective is to serve as a one-stop provider of organic, sustainable substrates in the medium term. Two jobs have already been created as a result of Andrea's composting plant and she has won an award for her achievements in Austria.



Snjezana Jakopovic • Different collections • Croatian Chamber of Agriculture/ Croatia

The applicant's family farm was established in March 2008. Initially, it was an organic farm which also produced and sold dried herbs. Very soon, however, the family realised that they could do much more. They started producing aromatic and medicinal herbs (immortelle, lemon balm, mint, chocolate mint, hazelnut) and processing them themselves. They quickly found that their own production was too small for the range of end products that were needed. Other farms therefore started to sell them their produce, boosting the local economy and helping to tackle problems of land abandonment and empty fields.

In November 2017, the **"Different collections"** product range was born: the applicant created **4 innovative products using pumpkin**.

The applicant experimented over the course of several months until she achieved an organic cosmetic made of pumpkin seed oil. It has an intense aroma and is combined with **peppermint, immortelle and orange essential oils**. This use of well-known plants is highly innovative. Pumpkin is very popular in the region but only as a food supplement. The applicant researched and found out that pumpkin seed oil is very good for hair and body care: it contains phytosterols (which make the skin soft), sterols (which improve hair growth), squalene, carotenoids, E complex vitamins, vitamin A and many minerals. Besides helping to heal prostate problems, it has relaxing properties and helps clean oily skin.

The applicant successfully sells her products to end consumers and to local spas and hotels. As a result, she is less dependent on the normal food supply chain.



Tatjana Ladinek • Sewn pillows • The Slovenian Chamber Of Agriculture And Forestry/ Slovenia

The applicant's family-owned Hudobnik farm is located in Breznica nad Prevaljami. The farm's main activity is **livestock breeding**. It is a small farm with a cultivated area of five hectares and approximately seven hectares of forest. The family grows cereals and grasses, which the applicant uses for her products that respect Mother Nature. In addition to rye and wheat, they grow oats and spelt, the hulls of which the applicant uses in her innovative activity.

When Tatjana lost her job at the end of **2010**, she decided to stay on the farm and take care of her family. Since the farm is small, her husband (who is employed) provides regular income. The applicant wanted to add extra value to their farm and improve her knowledge and expertise. Given her experience with textiles, she **began sewing pillows using high-quality 100% natural dense-woven cotton**. Tatjana stuffed them with cereals produced on the farm and started selling the products at fairs in the local area. She has expanded her product range to include herbs in products such as **natural ointments, soaps, herbal salts, teas**, etc. which she sells in local stores. She obtained **Dual Certificates of Slovenian Handicrafts for her soaps and pillows** (six certificates in total).

She shares her acquired and refined knowledge in various workshops and classes for children and adults and has won several national prizes for her activities.

The products can be found online at **OBCUTEK NARAVE - KMETIJA HUDOBNIK**. The applicant offers her products to individuals and companies in original natural gift packaging which is available in German or English.

Website: <https://www.obcuteknarave.si>





Giuditta Mercurio • Gentil Verde • Coldiretti/ Italy

Gentil Verde is a farm owned by the applicant and another female entrepreneur. It is made up of the farmhouse, planning laboratory, arable and forest lands. They cultivate wheat and spelt – suited to organic cultivation – which represent the very start of the supply chain. They alternate crops in order to maintain a high level of fertility in the land. They mill the cereals using an ancient water-operated mill; the cereal processing is slower, the flavour is not subject to excessive heat and the germ remains intact while preserving the best possible organoleptic quality. They have a laboratory where they process flour into different kinds of bread and where the wood stove is located.

The applicant's innovative concept revolves around two main points: the company's processing and combining tradition with new technologies.

Its innovative nature lies in the production of crops that are well-suited to processing, notably bread and baked products. Cereals are selected based on the mountain area. High grains suited to organic crop cultivation, those that are the most resistant to plant diseases and those that have good organoleptic characteristics are chosen. Thanks to crop rotation, legumes are produced and processed into **products that are suitable for consumers with gluten intolerance. Ultimately, the product remains unchanged in substance and taste.** Social platforms serve to promote the products and to give the farm visibility. The applicant's farm sells on the direct market so that they can have direct contact with the consumer and avoid intermediaries.



Immacolata Migliaccio • L'orto Intonato • Confagricoltura/ Italy

The applicant's organic farm, ABIM company, works according to the principles of organic farming. It aims to cultivate in a natural way so as to protect mankind, the environment and biodiversity and it does not use chemical pesticides. The company is classed as one of the custodian organic cultivators of **ancient indigenous varieties that are endangered.** A photovoltaic panel system has been built in order to ensure the utmost respect for the environment. **The company is also part of a network of local companies founded by the applicant to foster cooperation in selling all the companies' products.**

The applicant's innovative project is centred on cultivating **vegetables with classical music.** The company accommodates **young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and, with the support of experts, offers internships and orientation projects aiming to provide them with more autonomous career paths.** The company, which also works towards social goals, **welcomes political refugees.** At the end of the last traineeship, two refugees were hired within the company structure. Some of the trainees have experienced traumatic events in their lives which can affect their emotional stability. The training period offers numerous opportunities to **meet new people, acquire new skills, to share and exchange knowledge** as well as to **engage in dialogue.** Above all, they are able to forge positive relationships.

People from disadvantaged backgrounds, in particular migrants, are also involved in the creation of an organic vegetable garden which features a new experimental cultivation system with classical music. Cultivating the vegetables native to Campania, embracing the colourful history and the rich biodiversity of Campania accompanied by classical music stimulates the growth of plants and breaks down communication barriers between the migrants.

<http://www.abim.it/>



Emanuela Milone • Micropropagation laboratory • CIA/ Italy

"Vivai Milone" is located in the south of Italy and has a nursery of 35 hectares. They produce certified **citrus, fruit and olive trees**, as well as numerous **ornamental varieties.** They offer their clients different services ranging from garden design to **setting up assistance.** In 2015, the applicant set up a **micropropagation laboratory.** This allows for the production of plantlets to reach an advanced and technological level, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The classic micropropagation technique has several advantages over traditional propagation techniques. This project encompasses several innovative concepts that have been inspired by agronomic, economic and environmental sustainability with a view to maximising results in terms of economy, production and quality. The laboratory **employs eight operators**, covers 170 square metres and can produce one million plants per year. Growth chambers optimise energy efficiency. The structure of these chambers was made with a specific material that allows for optimal insulation, making it possible to maintain the internal temperature without continuous use of the conditioning machine. Lighting has been designed so as to save energy on two levels: through lower consumption thanks to **LED lighting** and through energy saved by not having to heat up the chamber. Disposable containers have replaced old

glass containers which allowed the dimensions of the laboratory to be reduced.

In comparison to a conventional laboratory, approximately 40% of energy is saved and it is possible to have constant production (conventional practice only allows for production 7-8 months a year).

www.vivaimilone.it



Elina Paivarinta • Vanaha navetta • MTK/ Finland

The applicant's family farm is a **dairy farm with 65 cows and young cattle**. They produce around **650,000 litres of milk** per year.

As the farm is very accessible, Elina started organising an event called **"Day at the Farm"** during which the agriculture and forestry sectors are presented to citizens.

In 2012, the applicant decided that the **abandoned former cow stable (Vanaha navetta)** should be renovated so that it could be used as a venue for different kind of events. She has obtained all the necessary permission to produce and serve a **wide range of dishes featuring locally-sourced products**. Working with **local products allows her to save money and allows for a more natural style of cooking**. **Vanaha navetta** can seat up to 150 customers. Music, ranging from rock to classic, is also played at the venue.

In 2017, a kitchen was built in a former milk tank room. Currently she organises five to six events a year. **Vanaha navetta** is, however, only open five months a year due to weather conditions in Finland.

<https://dreambroker.com/channel/jmpzo9uf/r9uxgz16>



Anne Robin • Flowering grasslands • FNSEA/ France

The applicant's family farm, "GAEC", produces **45,500 litters of conventional milk from 55 dairy cows**. They have **20 "taurillons" (young bulls)** and **194 hectares (70% grasses and 30% annual crops)**.

Her project is centred on the value of **flowering grasslands and how they contribute to biodiversity and nature conservation**. The applicant wanted to answer the following questions: **how can value be created from the contribution made by permanent grasslands? (carbon sinks, contribution to the landscape, distinct labels etc.) And how can we make the most of the hay and, generally speaking, high-quality grass from the grasslands using these techniques?** This project shows that it is possible to combine conventional milk production with the maintenance of diversified permanent grasslands. The combination of the applicant's traditional know-how and the absence of any chemical products allows the farm to produce high-quality fodder at a lower cost. Consulting naturalists, agronomists and beekeepers gives her an overview of the interaction and development that take place on her pastures, and thereby helps her to gain new techniques to improve them. The flora and fauna adds to the beauty of the countryside and makes the cows love to roam the pasture, ruminant and sleep. The quality fodder, which the grasslands produce, can be nicely combined with corn silage for the cattle. **The next step is for conventional farm production to go beyond this and to convert the environmental gain into economic value.**



Ilaria Salvadori • Farm school • Coldiretti/ Italy

The applicant's farm located in the beautiful area of Val di Chiana, Italy. The applicant has a **house and a sheep shed in the valley**. The hills have good fertile soil and the weather is well-suited to cultivating olive groves. Ilaria grows four kinds of olive trees. The harvest is done by hand and using a small machine. They produce **extra-virgin olive oil using the cold method**. The applicant's innovative project is called **"farm school"**, an initiative that involves working with guests from all around the world. They **learn about her life, her work and products**. The visitors participate in her cooking classes, in gardening and the harvesting of fruit and vegetables. The applicant also makes videos about her activities which are in Italian and subtitled in English in order to emphasise the value of the language.

One of the applicant's other innovative ideas is a **cheese-making class**. With the sheep's milk she produces pecorino, a typical local cheese. At the end of the class, the guests are able to eat the food that is prepared. This way the applicant can explain the real value and the quality of the food. Moreover, she is exploring the idea of having smaller bottles and less packaging for extra-virgin olive oil, something that could also apply to jam, jelly and flour.

www.fattoriabistecca.com



Malgorzata Solis • Cider factory • KRIR/ Poland

The applicant runs a **family fruit-growing farm** with an area of 16 hectares. In 2015, she planted a quarter of her orchard with old apple varieties (a self-created arboretum) to showcase **old varieties of apples, which are not planted in mainstream market orchards**, to visitors. Since 2010, the applicant has been processing her own fruit to produce simple juices, jams and fruit syrups. Since 2016, she has been running an artisanal cider factory. The applicant organises educational programmes for young children on her farm, focussing on the role of bees in the environment and the use of fruit in domestic processing as well as healthy eating.

The innovative nature of this project lies in the fact that it offers new products and services using local resources. This project stemmed from the difficulties that the applicant faced when exporting orchard products due to the Russian embargo. The applicant attended several training courses and decided to create a sales platform for local products (<http://frux-solis.pl/>). Alternatively, visitors can buy the locally-manufactured products on the farm. She modernised an old barn into a fruit processing factory which consists of a large kitchen, a warehouse, a conference room and a fireplace. Polish apples that used to be exported to Russia started to be processed into traditional cider. The project is very market-oriented in the sense that the applicant has developed new products to sell locally – jams, juices, ciders, etc. The project also has an ecological certification.



Gabriella Soós • Circular feeders • Hungarian Chamber of Agriculture/ Hungary

The applicant has set up a **small-scale farm focussed on field crop production (wheat, maize, triticale, alfalfa), livestock breeding (sheep, pigs and poultry), and horticulture (potatoes, organic roses and grapes).**

The applicant installed new circular feeders for the sheep she was rearing, a step that halved the amount of feed wasted. As a result, the animals are now more relaxed, every animal has constant access to the feeder, there is less feed used and the animals' health has improved. The applicant has started to provide the pigs that she rears with green feed and in doing so she has improved the sow's digestion, making it easier to guarantee that the sow is in perfect health.

For her organic roses, the applicant **grows nitrogen-fixing fabaceae** in various spaces between the rows. Thanks to the nitrogen-fixing plants, the rose shoots are larger, the rose petals 15% heavier and the amount of flowers cut has increased by 20%.

Based on previous experience with triticale, **she doubled the line spacing to 30.8 cm** and reduced the seed quantity to 60% in order to stimulate the plant to grow thicker stems and thus increased the quantity of straw by 25%-30% with unchanged grain yields.

With regards to organic alfalfa, the applicant chooses one out of the four mowing operations, preparing haylage for example, depending on the weather at the time of the given mowing operation. The number of the alfalfa stems in the area remains steady which means that yield losses yield loss are prevented for a period of two to three years.

In addition, the applicant has managed to set up an **ecological meadow-pasture**. The applicant leads the animals to certain sections of the area in a predetermined order thereby reducing losses caused by trapping and grazing by nearly 40%.



Claudia Sorbo • C.A.R.A. • Coldiretti/ Italy

Villa Sorbo is a farm owned by the applicant (29 years old) and her brother Salvatore (25 years old). The farm exclusively engages in organic farming activities. The holding is approximately 12 hectares. It is made up of Aglianico, Fiano and Falanghina vineyards, three regional grape varieties, as well as olive groves and wood. Beekeeping is also one of the farm's main activities.

The applicant's project is called C.A.R.A. (Caserta Beekeepers Environmental Detection) **TERRA, using bees for the public good**. The idea stemmed from cooperation between the University Federico II and the University of Molise and uses **bees as bio-indicators for different areas**. Given the need for the environment to be strictly monitored, the two universities came up with the idea of creating a system to bio-monitor the environment using the hives belonging to all the beekeepers that are part of CONAPROA (the Conaproa Agricultural Cooperative Society) and, therefore the hives in the area surrounding Galluccio, including those belonging to Claudia. The initiative consists of creating a **network of several units**, each one made up of two to three hives, which are all located in stations that were already set up on three beekeepers farms. The main reason behind

this is that every single hive naturally guarantees approximately ten million micro samples from the air, water, soil and vegetation. The absence of the bees reveals that there are adverse conditions due to the concentration of pollutants. This project is not replacing instrumental monitoring but has lower management costs and raises **awareness as to the importance of the environment**. Moreover, the applicant now understands the territory's specific conditions and the importance of having an environmental certification for her products such as mozzarella, tomato, annurca apples and honey.



Anna Sottile • Agri-tourism • Donne in Campo/ Italy

The Bergi Agritourism Company is located in Sicily, in the Madonie Natural Park. It owns about 100 hectares of land on which it grows **olive trees, vegetables, fruit, citrus fruit, ash trees for the production of manna and almond trees, as well as keeping bees for the production of Sicilian black bee honey** (all organic). The applicant decided to diversify the business's activities through **agri-tourism, providing accommodation and a restaurant**. She also set up an educational farm and a social farm, a product processing facility, an energy production plant, a museum, and a shop both on-site and online.

These complementary activities aim to not only protect and enhance local biodiversity and to create a direct relationship with the consumer, but also to inform and make people aware of food choices.

The business's main product is Sicilian **black bee honey, produced organically** from wild plants growing in the Madonie Natural Park. In the beginning, the company had a small area of 2 hectares. Thanks to studies and research carried out by a Sicilian entomologist and synergies with other local beekeepers, the applicant became aware of the vulnerability of the black bee. The applicant thus began to produce "slow food presidium" black bee honey, a registered brand granted to producers participating in the "slow food presidia" project to protect products at risk of extinction. The company participated in the project to reintroduce and conserve the *Apis mellifera siciliana* subspecies threatened with extinction. The company now researches new genetic lines (essential to combatting inbreeding), sets up fertilisation stations in isolated places, and evaluates the performance of the breed in comparison with others.



Ida Traupmann • Regional farm shop • Austrian Chamber of Agriculture/ Austria

Together with her husband, Ida Traupmann manages an organic farm (>100 hectares) in Sumetendorf, Austria. The business focuses on arable farming. For 25 years, they have been producing tinned food and jars of jams from the fruit and vegetables they grow (tomatoes, green and red peppers, salads and courgettes). Ida and Helmut Traupmann also cultivate grains and cereals (wheat, black rye and barley), sorghum and soybeans.

Fifteen years ago, Ida Traupmann set up a **shop for regional farm products**: "Stremtaler Schmankerl-Eck". She is responsible for managing and ensuring the success of the business. Under her guidance, the shop has expanded and is now an **important sales point for over 50 regional farmers. The majority of the products are organic**. In 2012, she opened another shop for farm products in her home village, Strem. **Ida Traupmann also provides training for female farmers and cookery courses**.

Ida is responsible for the accounting and for coordinating the suppliers, not only for the "Stremtaler Schmankerl-Eck" store, but also for her second regional farm products store in Strem. Once a month, Ida Traupmann **cooks regional and seasonal meals** together with farmers and clients/consumers. She continuously strives to introduce new products.

Thanks to the regional shop "Stremtaler Schmankerl-Eck", 50 farmers are able to sell their own products in the region. Consumers can buy numerous local products in one place. The shop offers fresh, seasonal products and consumers are able to order in advance (for example, goose in the autumn or lamb at Easter).





Rosa Maria Tregattini • Agro tourism • Confagricoltura/ Italy

The applicant has been a **farmer since 1981**. She produces cereals, barley and soya. In 2010, she decided to start to innovate, with the support of her children, so as to avoid losing touch with the farm's heritage. She renovated an old area by introducing an educational space: **rural tourism with a social and culinary purpose**. The space houses a **small museum, a rural house where people can find simple and basic furniture as well as objects that were used in the past in manual agricultural labour**. Guests find themselves among donkeys, horses and ducks: a haven for children.

'Agro tourism' has become a social hub for different kinds of people from all walks of life. Here, people take a walk down memory lane while discovering the history of the local agricultural world. In the summer, events are organised during which experts visit the farm and explain to the clients how to grow roses, to give but one example.



Kris Vertonghen • Vacuum-steamed endives • Boerenbond/ Belgium

The applicant's family farm grows **chicory and endives**. **Endive production is highly specialised** and only with many hours of dedicated labour can a high-quality product be delivered. In the first phase, producing strong roots is key. After harvesting, the roots are put in soil or water to grow a white head of creamy leaves with a smooth and bitter taste.

Nevertheless, the applicant became frustrated as the quality of the products did not completely satisfy the customers and the prices were very volatile.

The applicant then discovered the possibilities of **vacuum-steaming and packing**. She created a high-quality product: the vacuum-steamed endive. **The freshness, distinctive aroma and high nutrition value** of the endives remains intact and the unique flavour is enhanced. Variations were created in order to cater for the retail customer as well as the specialised caterers.

Following this, other vegetables (Brussel sprouts, asparagus, mini carrots, leek stalks, sliced leeks, celeriac cubes, stewed vegetables, and cauliflower) were added to the successful portfolio.

A modern look and the feel of the packaging was key to capturing the attention of the customers.



Arianna Vulpiani • BioFarm Orto supported by Demeter.life • Confagricoltura/ Italy

In 2017, the applicant developed the project **BioFarm Orto with the support of Demeter.life**. BioFarm Orto provides families in Rome with a new concept for creating an organic vegetable garden. The concept is very simple: **the client rents a portion of a vegetable garden, the company cultivates it, and the consumer harvests the vegetables**. All food is produced **organically**: the result is healthy, safe, tasty and sustainable food for all families. It also **saves money** for the client. The project is very easy to replicate worldwide, and there are plans to expand it. Given the project's dimension and issues of distance, the applicant sought support from the platform Demeter.life, a platform facilitating agricultural business development on the Italian market. In particular, Demeter.life focuses on the concept of micro-farming, enabling the rental of portions of a local farmer's lands (micro-farms). As the only decentralised platform that offers an entire ecosystem for farmers and consumers, it plans to apply the concept worldwide. This is all made possible thanks to **blockchain technology**: the agricultural revolution 4.0. The aim is to **have blockchain certification and traceability** for the cultivation of products. The applicant is currently waiting for registration on the platform to be completed but has already received requests for affiliation from 23 countries.

The advantage of this project is that the end consumer costs are reduced, the process is sped up and the products are fresher. It makes it easier for farmers to plan ahead (micro-fields are booked in advance) and provides them with greater market access as well as food chain certification.





Aly Wisse-Maat • Internet access • ZLTO/ The Netherlands

Aly runs an agricultural business with her husband in the Netherlands. They are also involved in energy production, producing and using 17.5 megawatts of wind energy with a group of 14 other farmers (camperwin BV). **The applicant's project involves providing internet access to rural areas.** Although internet is available everywhere in the countryside, it does not meet the European standard of 30 MBps. In the near future, greater capacity will be needed due to increasing data streams to and from farms, which are doubling every year. The farmers' association ZLTO, together with the local government, drew up an inventory of the local community's needs in terms of high-speed internet. Over 400 families were still not connected. Aly set up a working group within the **energy cooperation** and took it upon herself to make high-speed internet available to everyone in her community. She organised an informative meeting, set up a decision-making process within the local community and, along with the working group, engaged in discussions with the regional internet provider *Skyling*. At present, 110 households have been provided with an internet connection, and their aim for the next four months is to increase this number to 125. The working group has applied for government subsidies which it has received. With these funds, they can establish an internet connection by installing new internet masts, receivers and transmitters. Indeed, signal connection to the masts can often be lost due to the lines of beautiful trees surrounding farms.

The team is proud of the collaboration between *Skyling*, which is able to put the system in place but lacks the local network of participants, and the farmer's association ZLTO, which has a network of members who support the association's vision. This innovative work has even enabled farmers to install operational long-distance alarm and camera systems.



Federica Zurli • Aromatic plants • Coldiretti/ Italy

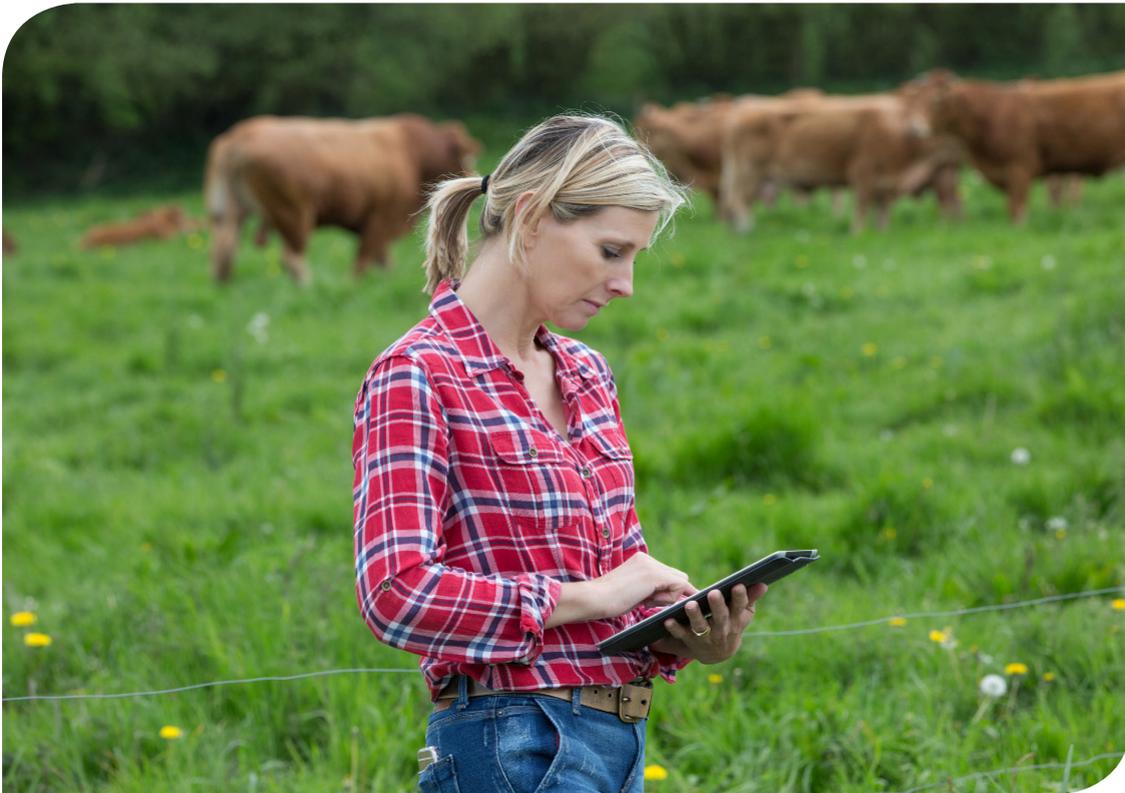
Piante Officinali San Marco is a certified **organic farm** of 21 hectares specialised in growing and processing aromatic plants. The environment of the farm – located near Siena – used to be considered hostile for aromatic plants. However, it has since proved to be filled with benefits that could become the applicant's major asset.

Officinali San Marco was created in 2009 and was the result of the personal efforts of an entrepreneur who decided to take a chance and specialise in **the cultivation and processing of officinal plants**. Seven hectares of land are dedicated to the cultivation of medicinal plants, including **sage, oregano, thyme, rosemary, helichrysum and saffron**. Another ten hectares are used for the extensive production of aromatic plants, such as **fennel and linen**. The herbs are intended for food use. To this end, a **laboratory** has been set up which complies with the HACCP and is equipped with technological facilities enabling the selection, processing and cutting of dried herbs.

The company began experimenting on the field with about 10-12 species identified among the most suitable varieties. **The experiment was successful for 90% of the species**, at which point the applicant realised that the project had a good chance of success.

The applicant is now increasing the company's sales through modern forms of media (company websites with e-commerce activities, integration in the main network and search engines) and the creation of brand products.

The company has also developed its own "Export" project which aims to promote organic food products made in Tuscany on the Japanese market. The company was recently granted the biological certification JAS (Japanese Agricultural Standard) necessary for export and marketing in Japan. The Officinali San Marco site is available in English and in Japanese.



Copa is the united voice of farmers in the EU. Created in 1958, it represents the interests of 23 million farmers and their families in the EU to ensure that they have a fair standard of living and an economically viable future. Copa defends a sustainable and competitive EU agriculture sector capable of providing quality food supplies to half a billion consumers in the EU at the same time as ensuring attractive, flourishing rural areas. Copa provides a platform for its members to exchange their views and agree on common positions on upcoming issues affecting the agriculture sector in order to influence key EU and international policy makers and public opinion. Copa also provides up to date and specialised information and analyses that both cater to the needs of its members and meet the requirements underpinning public relations and promotes the multifunctional role of farmers in society.

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