

JUŠKEVIČIŲ FAMILY FARM

Farm that shifts from traditional farm to specialised garlic producer.

Identification data:

Name: Robertas Juškevičius

Location: Valavičių village, Marijampolės district., Lithuania

Farm size: 16 ha of own land

Year established: 1998

Main activities: beef cattle, beekeeping, vegetables (garlic), cereals

Web / Facebook / Twitter: N/A

Two generations of the farmer's family work on the farm. The farm is located in Valavičiai village, Marijampolė district. The parents started farming with a small area of their land (16 ha). The farmer leased land for several years; the largest site of arable land was 30 ha. Both established traditions and a mixed farm, crop and animal husbandry have been developed to generate farm income throughout the year. Vegetables, fruits, and berries were consistently grown for their own needs. The farmer has always kept several bee colonies. The primary income came from the sale of milk and grain. Only one member of the farm worked permanently on the farm. Other employees were hired only for a limited amount of time.

Children studied and contributed to the farm work according to the need and possibilities - in the evenings, on weekends or during the season. Currently, only one of the farmer's three children works on the farm; he combines activities on the farm with paid work in the city. The land is a valuable resource, and therefore farming is not given up. At the same time, however, it seeks to reap some of its benefits.

Different generations of farmers have different attitudes towards farming. Therefore, the organisation of both activities and work on the farm is different. Older family members have remained with the mixed farm organisation, but the number of cattle is gradually reduced. Currently, family cultivates only own land. More attention is given to vegetable growing, crop production and increasing the number of bee colonies.

The goal and attitude of the young generation of farmers - farming - is not a way of life but a business. New, less traditional solutions are introduced. Robertas aims to be independent and apply more advanced technologies, rely on the recommendations of scientists, and develop a sustainable business. A lot of attention was given to searching for a good business idea.

Due to the limited land resources, it was considered how much production is available from a small area of land. Considering the possible production volumes, its prices in the market, the need for the size of storage facilities and storage features. Robertas decided to grow garlic. As own resources are limited, business experience - low, a decision was made to implement the business idea with minimal risk: initially, production volumes were planned relatively small, limited to family members' work, available farm buildings for storage, more rational use of available tillage machinery. Specialised planting and harvesting techniques were produced with the help of a neighbour.

It is planned to invest more in the modernisation of the farm, both in specialised agricultural machinery and infrastructure, using the EU structural assistance funds soon. Garlic has been on the market for four years, sold directly from the farm or through intermediaries (small retailers and distributors). At present, the farm does not belong to a cooperative, but this possibility is not ruled out as the volume of activity increases.

However, cooperation is a complex issue. In Lithuania, farmers' cooperation is slow to develop. There is no deep tradition of cooperation. Farmers cooperate, but it is not a formal organisation

Viability of small farms managed by young farmers under new
"farm-to-fork" strategy (2020-1-CZ01-KA203-078495)

Photos:

