

SŁODKI ZAKĄTEK

Producer group focused on sugar beet from Wielkopolski region

Identification details

Name: Słodki Zakątek

Location: Kobylin, Wielkopolskie voivodeship, Poland

Number of members: 25 (12 are young)

Year of foundation: 2017

Main activities: sugar beet production and sale

Web / Facebook / Twitter: N/A

Wojciech Styburski is the leader of a producer group that was established in 2017. It is located in the southern part of the Wielkopolska province. It is a region traditionally associated with sugar beet production due to the existence of sugar factories, relatively good soils and cultivation traditions. It currently has 25 members, half of which (12 people) are young farmers under the age of 40. The producer group brings together farmers engaged in sugar beet production. It is a form of organized, registered cooperation. About 40% of the total value of sales of products (sugar beet) for the whole group comes from the farms managed by young farmers.

The organization was established with the use of EU support funds for the creation of agricultural producer groups. In the management structure key decisions are made by the manager. The management of the group is entrusted to Agrintegracja, which first inspired farmers to cooperate, giving farmers the possibilities to build a common market position. Agrintegracja, as the manager with whom the group has a service contract, provides up-to-date market information to the members of the group, legal accounting services, supports the implementation of the business plan, help implementation of innovations and carries out research and development projects together with group members in order to search for current problems of the associated producers.

It is an open group and the condition for new members to join the organization is the production of a specific product - sugar beets. The Group carries out joint purchases of production inputs, which in recent seasons has made it possible to purchase plant protection chemicals, necessary for beet cultivation, at a discount of 5.5% on the wholesale price. The members of the group are professional family farms with an average size of about 50 ha of arable land. Young farmers - members of the group - are persons connected with the farm since childhood. Continuation of running a farm results from fascination with agricultural production which brings new challenges every day. Farmers with small sugar beets area - mainly just small farms - are supported to specialise in growing vegetables sustainably or organically, and this diversifies their income, especially when growing sugar beet on a smaller area does not allow them to meet their economic objectives.

Due to the integration farmers participate in training. Members of the group take part in trainings, conferences and seminars. The distinguishing feature of the group is the association of the best farmers focused on knowledge development. Farm managers are highly aware that cooperation is the way to develop and modernize their farms. Some members from the group have signed up to participate in the EPI group. This is a consortium set up by Agrintegracja to carry out a research and development project

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

towards sustainable sugar beet cultivation by reducing plant protection products and developing cultivation techniques to reduce the effects of drought.

The most important current challenge for the group is to achieve the standard of plants cultivation at the highest level with the use of the best possible technology - starting from hared use of modern agricultural machinery through selection of the best possible agro-technology which will allow to obtain high yields with the respect to the environmental issues. Some of the members who have decided to grow beet in the strip till formula are taking advantage of the special offer for producers group and are purchasing sowing services at about 10% cheaper.

Photos:

