



GAZDOVSTVO U GÁLISA – SHR

Small family farm competing with large local cooperative farm for land.

Identification details:

Name: Ing. Denis Gális

Location: Veľké Uherce, Slovakia

Farm size: 5 ha

Year established: 2018

Main activities: vegetable production

Web / Facebook / Twitter: N/A

The Gális Farm is located in the village Veľké Uherce, Slovakia, where the climate has been quite dry for the last 10 years. The soil is good, loose structure, creditworthiness from 5 to 7, in places watered by groundwater from the surrounding mountains. Temperatures are favorable, except for late spring frosts. Within the village, the Gális family is the only one who grows something on a larger area than 5 acres.

The Gális family has always had a relationship with the land. They have always grown vegetables for their own consumption, had a garden and a 12-acre roll. Gradually, the neighbors around stopped cultivating the soil, whether due to old age or comfort, and so that it would not overgrow, they began to cultivate it. In this way, they started to gain more and more acres, and thus their production, which they could no longer consume on their own, grew. Therefore, they were looking for an opportunity in the vegetable segment and found an advertisement for cooperation in growing garlic. Although this business was not successful, they received only half of the paid planting, and when the purchase was to come, the business partner fell silent. So, in order not to lose the money spent, they had to find their own sales for the garlic grown and that's how it started.

At first, they only sold surpluses to acquaintances and through advertisements on the Internet, then set up a direct sale from the yard, but they were hampered by quantitative restrictions. And, that is why in 2018 was established the Gális Farm – SHR.

At the beginning, they started with winter garlic, then added potatoes, onions, poppies, root vegetables, beans and cabbage for fermentation, sweet corn. With increasing acreage, they also increased the area of individual commodities and added other crops, beetroot, pickled cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, celery, leeks, strawberries, peas, teat beans, hokkaido pumpkins, zucchini and butter pumpkins. In 2021, there was a big problem with part-time workers – there was no one to collect. They realized that they could grow in larger quantities only those vegetables, for which they had proper mechanization, in order to keep costs within reasonable figures. That's why they spent a lot of resources on buying technology. At present, they are dominated by the production of potatoes 3 ha, garlic 0.17 ha, onions 0.25 ha, carrots 0.2 ha, parsley 0.1 ha, poppy 0.25 ha, which is how they are going to supply their larger clients. Their other vegetables will be only supplied to their own sales stand, which is located in the village every Saturday morning. In 2022, due

to high demand, they are going to significantly increase only the area of beetroot and celery. But, on the contrary, they are forced to limit the production of beans for grain unless they have the technology to do so, because manual harvesting will not be paid for by larger customers.

The local cooperative prevents the farm from acquiring land for rent in every possible way, even if they have a completely different focus of production. It sees them as a competitor, so it is not possible to cooperate with the local cooperative. Also, it was not possible for the farm to negotiate mutually advantageous purchase conditions with the sellers - (fresh box). The farm only cooperates with other farmers in the surrounding villages as part of machine assistance, because none of them is engaged in special production. The Gális Farm is small to supply manufacturers. They only supply a few catering establishments.

The main goal for the future is to grow in area, on supply. They have started planting an orchard and they would like to build a large foil plant with automatic irrigation, heating and ventilation for growing early spring vegetables and peppers. Also, they want to open a small store so to sell their products more conveniently and all week long and to try to supply some retail chain.

The whole Gális family works on the farm in addition to their employment. The generational change is still in its infancy. The closest member of the family from the "new generation" is less than 2 years old, but she already enjoys breaking mole holes.

Photos:

