



## PATRIK PODSTAVEK

*Farm inspired by several foreign farmers from England, Austria and Germany.*

### **Identification details:**

Name: Patrik Podstavek

Location: Oravská Lesná, Slovakia

Farm size: 55 ha

Year established: 2019

Main activities: cattle production

Web / Facebook / Twitter: N/A

The farm of Patrik Podstavek is located in Oravská Lesná. It is the coldest village in Slovakia, where snow cover half a year. So, raising meat cattle without housing outside all year round, is a big challenge.

The reason for starting a business in agriculture was first of all, sensed opportunity in the market. There was a lot of uncultivated and neglected land in the cadaster, which the local cooperative did not want to cultivate, due to poorer creditworthiness and accessibility for large mechanization. Also the reason was a desire to work at home. At present, the farm manages an area of 55 ha, from which 20 ha is pastures and 35 ha forage meadows.

Until 2019, they operated as a small family farm, then Patrik and his family decided to try to breed in a larger scale. They bypassed the people who owned the land on which they could operate. They have invested their initial investments such as the purchase of cattle and equipment from their own resources. Then EU subsidies (direct payments) also started to help with their investments. So far, they have been able to put together 25 cattle and pay off almost all debts.

The goal is to stabilize the breeding of about 20 suckler cows from which they can produce an average of 18 calves per year. They sell live calves, approx. 12 months, to other breeders. They have experience with the huge demand of local small farmers to buy these animals. These farmers keep the calf for a year and use it for their own consumption. The idea is to sell half of the calves to another farm in the Orava region and process the other half to a slaughterhouse and sell the meat in the local area. So far, there is a great interest in this meat and demand outweighs meat supply. All production remains in their region, they do not want to sell anything abroad.

Patrik and his friend started breeding at the same time. They help each other – whether working with cattle (handling, calving) or in the summer when preparing forage. Their activity attracts many young boys who are interested in machinery, animals, agriculture in general. They want to create a brand "erdt farmers" that would cover their activities in terms of promotion and marketing. Also, they want to attract more young people – future breeders or raise awareness of their products, such as homemade meat, in the area. They



are inspired by several foreign farmers from England, Austria and Germany and they believe it will be rewarding and interesting. So far, they have already influenced with their way of breeding three other breeders – young people who started breeding meat cattle in the Orava region.

The future aim is to streamline the processes of grazing and welfare of animals (strip grazing, smart farming and animal tracking, handling enclosure), to build a covered wintering ground with dry litter (elimination of muddy rainy seasons, improving the conditions of cows and their calves). And also, they want to switch to organic farming within 3 years (even now they fulfill majority of the conditions).

Several generations have been engaged in this farm business. Patrik has three daughters, so he believes that at least one will be interested to continue the farming business.

### Photos:

