

Identification of new high value-added and labour-intensive crops adapted to social agroecology

Summary

The project aims to be a starting point for improving the productivity and sustainability of a group of companies dedicated to social agriculture through the introduction of new crops. From a study of each of the companies, both agronomically and economically, the growing conditions, the agronomic characteristics of farms and marketing capabilities are defined. With this information, a list of potential new crops that can fit into the specific conditions of each company is made. These new crops must present a number of characteristics: be well adapted to the soil and climatic conditions and be well adapted to the conditions of farm production, present an added value that enables greater eases of marketing and present some demand in the market. From the initial list of crops a filter is performed, allowing to determine which crops are discarded, which crops can be incorporated immediately, or what they can do in the medium or long term. Finally an action plan that enables the implementation of new crops in each of the farms is made.

Objectives

The main aim of the project is to improve the profitability of primary production companies dedicated to social agriculture, through the identification of new crops and varieties, especially those with a consolidated demand and is not currently produced in Catalonia, adapt to the peculiarities of this type of farms and allow them to improve the efficiency of their production systems as well as open new production lines. To achieve this overall objective defined the following specific objectives were been defined:

- (1) Create an Operative Group made up of companies engaged in agricultural production linked to social agriculture, the characteristics of which are, by their very nature, the ability to have high volume of labor, often with special abilities. This working group should help identify the associated problems and the strengths of these farms, more specifically in relation to production capacity (use of labor) and the types of crops that are used.
- (2) Develop, according to the peculiarities of the collaborating farms, a list of new crops that are adapted to the soil and climatic conditions of exploitation, and their conditions of production, which may be interested to access new consumer groups or cover the current offer.
- (3) Design a plan of experimentation with the aim of incorporating these new crops to the production schemes of farms, evaluating both the behavior of these new crops in the collaborating farms as their adaptation to technical factors of farm production.

Conclusions

- (a) The consortium of companies that constitute the operative group has been consolidated. These are committed to jointly examine the results presented and decide what actions undertaken to carry out the proposals resulting from this project.
- (b) The advantages of this consortium from both productive and commercially has been identified. Share experiences in production management and personnel training, increase productive dimension, explore ways of joint marketing and to reach a minimum of $r + d$, seem the immediate benefits of the association, which already is translated in to share results of this project.
- (c) 100 species has been listed and evaluated. This list can bring more innovation in the structure and

skills of the consortium companies, taking into account the biological, business and commercial aspects. Also this list of varieties itself, is an important capital for companies therefore beyond current valuations, and a source of information to try new varieties depending on market developments.

(d) The initial list has been filtered, giving a list of 25 candidate varieties to rank their economic potential for the consortium companies. Moreover it has made an assessment of experimentation and training staff to gradually implement the new varieties. With this information companies can start renewing their crops and at the same time schedule and seek resources for the tasks of staff training and variety trials with little or no growing tradition in our country.

Operational Group Leader

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Farming / forestry competitiveness and
Plant production and horticulture

Territorial scope

Província

Barcelona

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Vallès Oriental

Vallès Occidental

Maresme

Project dissemination *(publications, seminars, multimedia...)*

Project website

www.fundaciomiquelagusti.cat

www.heura-cet.cat

Other project information

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