

december 2019 / number 2 / year 1

NEWSLETTER

The national rural network



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*Competition Village
of the Year celebrated its
25th anniversary
this year*

Village of the Year

*Orange Ribbon through
the eyes of the winners*

Looking back

at the year 2019



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Dear readers,

you are holding in your hands 2nd issue of the National Rural Network Newsletter where you will find a lot of interesting information about the events which this network organized in 2019 and what is being prepared for you in the year 2020. We are also going to reveal to you where you can find inspirational examples of good practice in projects carried out with the financial support of the Rural Development Programme, we will introduce you to the thematic working groups established by the National Rural Network, the history of the competition Village of the Year and many other things.

We wish you a pleasant reading of the second issue of the National Rural Network Newsletter.

Team of authors

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Introducing the thematic working groups

Text: Team of authors, **photo:** NRN archive

Thematic working groups (further only “TWG”) are groups which are established by the National Rural Network (further only “NRN” or “Network”) at the national and regional level. The reason for their existence is the need for meaningful development of Czech countryside and agriculture. Apart from dealing with the climate, landscape, land conservation and social problems in connection with sustainable agriculture the activities of TWG are also aimed at the support of community led local development and ensuring a focused, effective and coordinated promotion of the results of the Rural Development Programme during the period 2014-2020 (further only “RDP”).

Thematic working groups are an important connecting link and a “presenter” of working meetings of the representatives of professional institutions, state administration, self-government, universities, scientific institutions, expert farming community and non-governmental organizations from various parts of the republic. At the same time within the frame of TWG the information about the application of RDP which can help as a supporting economical tool in the development of sustainable agriculture in the countryside is spread. TWGs are organized as multi-annual and their focus, activities and precise content is arranged within the frame of the regional plans of the Network of particular regional divisions of the State Agricultural Intervention Fund (further only “SAIF”) or within the plan on the national level. TWGs also include partner organizations and subjects whose activities are connected with the particular issues and also organizations and subjects which want to participate in solving specific issues of sustainable development of rural regions.

Fruit trees in the countryside with a link to the local markets and short supply chains

The thematic working group which came into existence in 2017 was aimed, apart from solving particular climate, landscape, soil protection and social problems with a link to sustainable agriculture, at support of the community led local development and ensuring focused,

effective and coordinated promotion of the results of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.

This TWG was an important joining link and a host of working meetings of the representatives of professional institutions, state administration, self-government, universities, scientific institutions, expert farming community and non-governmental organizations from various parts of the republic. At the same time, within the frame of TWG activities, the information about the application of RDP which can help as a supporting economical tool in the development of sustainable agriculture in the countryside was shared. In particular it was, for example, the operation 4.2.1 Agricultural products processing and introduction to market, 4.3.1 Landscape modifications, 10.1.1 Integrated production of fruit, 11.2.3 Preservation of methods of ecological farming – fruit orchards and 16.4.1 Horizontal and vertical cooperation among the participants of short supply chains and local markets. It showed how it is possible through the mediation of RDP to contribute to the support of the idea of using fruit trees in the improvement of the landscape by means of the operation 19.2.1 Support of executing operations within the frame of local development strategy. Apart from specialized seminars, excursions both in our country and abroad, presentations within the Bread Basket Agricultural Exhibition or conference COUNTRYSIDE, the TWG has also prepared several informative materials which you can see online and also use.

TWG has prepared **3 videoprogrammes** for the public:



How to plant and tend to a fruit tree in the countryside **PART 1**



How to plant and tend to a fruit tree in the countryside **PART 2**



How to plant and tend to a fruit tree in the countryside **PART 3**

And also
a practical
handbook
**Fruit
Trees for
Countryside**



The handbook includes methodical sheets and worksheets called “Live garden for primary and secondary schools”, do not hesitate to use them for teaching! You can as well use for the purpose of raising public awareness the posters which are part of the handbook.

Social agriculture – proposal of the system of measures for the conditions of the Czech Republic

Towards the end of 2017 the National Rural Network, the Regional Division of SAIF in Brno established a TWG which focuses on dealing with the proposals of the systems of measures suitable for the Czech practice which are going to support social agriculture and promote it. The gained output of the TWG will be used for the application of targeted financial backing and measures of social agriculture in the Czech Republic. TWG will at the same time share examples of good and bad practice in the development of environment-friendly agriculture in the countryside and provides conditions for coordination of outputs which solve the stated issues from various perspectives.

The activity of the TWG has started the cooperation between the School Farm

Humpolec and the Disabled People's Home Jeřábina in the sphere of social agriculture. The cooperation consists in clients of the Disabled People's Home Jeřábina coming to the School Farm Humpolec and carrying out various small manual agricultural jobs. The TWG at the same time organized specialized workshops and excursions – again both in this country and also abroad. The members of the TWG also provided the introductory contribution to the topics of the conference “The Development of Social Agriculture in CR” at the National conference Countryside 2019 and at the same time arranged presenting some of the contributions within the frame of Working Group III. Social Agriculture.

Short supply chains and community supported agriculture

The plan for 2020 is to start activities of a TWG aimed at short supply chains (further only “SSC”) and community supported agriculture (further only “CSAg”). The aim of the TWG is to provide a communication platform for those who are interested in the field of SSC and CSAg. Within the frame of the activities to present at specific examples successfully functioning distribution systems of SSC and CSAg in the conditions of CR; share experience of successful partner cooperation; process in summary the risks and limits (SWOT analysis), which negatively influence SSC and CSAg and which are the reason for so far minor interest in drawing of the financial support from some of the operations of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. The TWG will within the frame of its activities support the application and will spread information about the provisions of RDP which can help in making use of the outputs of this programme. This

concerns mainly the operation 4.2.1 Processing and introducing of agricultural products to the market; 16.4.1 Horizontal and vertical cooperation among the participants of short supply chains and local markets; 19.2.1 Implementing the

operations within the frame of community led local development; 19.3.1 Preparation and implementation of the cooperation activities of the local group. ■

If you are interested in social agriculture, have a look at the **Handbook for farmers** and public administration in the sphere of support and implementation of social agriculture in CR, which was prepared by the TWG and which you can see here:



Competition Village of the Year celebrated its 25th anniversary

Text: PaedDr. Věra Libichová (executive secretary of SFRD CR), **photo:** www.vesniceroku.cz

The most prominent event of the Society for Rural Development CR (further only "SFRD") is the competition Village of the Year. The purpose of this competition in the Rural Development Programme is an effort to encourage the inhabitants of the villages to actively take part in the development of their home, to publish varied and diverse ways in implementation of the rural development programme and draw the attention of the wide public to the importance of countryside.

The competition was for the first time held by the Society in 1995 under the name "Competition of the most successful programme of rural development". The Ministry of Regional Development (Czech Republic) and the Union of Towns and Municipalities (Czech Republic) have, since 1996, been the other inviting parties. The Ministry of Agriculture joined the inviting parties in 2007. The inviting parties were gradually joined by the Ministry of the Environment (Czech Republic), Ministry of Culture (Czech Republic), then also the Association of the Local Self-Governments of the Czech Republic, the Office of the President of the Czech Republic, Czech Landscape and Garden Society, Association of Librarians and Information Professionals of the Czech Republic, Association of the Regions of the Czech Republic.

The winner of the national round of the competition qualifies for the European Prize for Rural Development competition. This competition is announced by the European





working company for rural development and renewal of countryside (Europäische Arbeitsgesellschaft Landentwicklung und Dorferneuerung ARGE) biannually.

The competition is announced every year in spring during the Day of Small Villages in Prague and this year it was on 19th February.

Seminars have been prepared to encourage villages to take part in the competition and they took place in March. A motivational seminar in South Moravian Region was held in the village of Hrušky, in Ústecký Region in the village of Kytlice, in Královéhradecký Region in the village of Stěžery and last but not least in Olomoucký Region in the village of Šumvald. Other motivational seminars under the name "A Journey to Ribbon" were organized as a cooperation between SFRD and NRN in three regions: in South Bohemian Region in the village of Pištín, in Plzeňský Region in the village of Třemošná and in the Central Bohemian Region in the village of Cítov. Altogether 206 villages from all regions of the Czech Republic entered the 25th year of the competition Village of the Year in the Rural Development Programme.

The competition Village of the Year has discovered many original ideas and encouraged the inventiveness of our countryside. It helped the mayors of the villages to find the right local enthusiasts who can help with the implementation of the plans of the village but also with the craziest of ideas. And that is what it is about in this competition. After all those who are able to have a good time together surely are also able to work together.

Quite rightly all the villages whose mayors, members of the local councils and, of course, enthusiastic and initiative citizens who showed the courage to enter the competition and present the results of their long-time work deserve our admiration and acknowledgment.

All the villages that entered the competition were visited during May and June and evaluated by the regional evaluation committee and the 13 winners of the regional rounds qualified for the national round. During the national round they had an opportunity within the scope of 4 hours to present their rich social and club life, conceptual documents, caring for the green vegetation, cooperation with agricultural subjects and the environment and many other activities.

The results were announced on 14 September 2019 at the Fair of Countryside in Luhačovice. **The award "Village of the year 2019" was this year awarded to the village of Lipová from Ústecký region**, and the winner, apart from gaining the title, also received a financial reward of 2.6 million Czech crowns and an automobile of the partner of the competition.

The second place in the national round belongs to the village of Ratiboř from Zlínský region and the third place goes to the village of Libovice from the Central Bohemian region.

The holders of the Green and Orange Ribbons also qualified for the national evaluation; the announcement of the results took place on 1 October 2019 in the representative premises of the main hall of the Wallenstein Palace which is the seat of the **Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic**.



Libovice

The Orange Ribbon 2019 was awarded to the village of Třeštice from Vysočina region, the second place belongs to the village of Zašová from Zlínský region and the third place was taken by the village of Rudník in Královéhradecký region.

A travelling exhibition called **“25 years of the competition Village of the Year”**. was prepared for this year anniversary from a part of the financial resources gained from the fees from competing villages and from the funds made available by the Ministry of Regional

Development of the Czech Republic. It was possible to see this exhibiton for the first time at the National Conference Countryside 2019 in the Teplá Abbey. Gradually it will make its way through each region of the Czech Republic and will finish its journey at the National Conference Countryside 2020 in Žďár nad Sázavou.

Ing. Veronika Vrecionová, the chairwoman of SFRD CR, wrote her introductory words for this exhibition:

I am proud that the competition Village of the Year, at the birth of which the Society for the Rural Development was, is already celebrating its 25th anniversary. There is a lot of work behind it, not only the work of the organisers of the competition but mainly its participants. The competition could not exist without the excellent mayors, members of the local councils and enthusiastic citizens. Without these people the villages would not exist in the form which we had an opportunity to see during our visits. This does not concern only the winning villages but, in fact, all the participants of the competition. All of them were radiating energy and an interest in doing something more above the average. The interest in creating the atmosphere of the given place which was always unique.

The aim of the competition Village of the Year is not only to symbolically reward the active citizens but also to motivate the others to become active. To return life into villages which became lifeless due to people neglecting their closest environment. The place where they live and which should be closest to them. Village does not only consist of a few houses and roads but mainly of its inhabitants.

I am, of course, aware that to create a problem-free life in the villages it is necessary to remove a whole number of objective barriers. To create a good quality transport infrastructure so that people can commute to work to more distant locations, to build nurseries and primary schools so that their children have a place for education and also develop comfortable public transport and other necessary services including social and health ones.

This is also a task for us as the Society for Rural Development. We want to be heard and keep pointing out that villages must not be forgotten, that it is necessary to keep helping them and keep investing in them.

Finally, let me thank all who participated in the competition Village of the Year – be it as organisers or as participants. And, of course, congratulations to the winners!

Orange Ribbon

through the eyes of the winners

Text: Ing. Martina Petržilková, MBA, Martin Kodys,
photo: archive of the village

The village of Třeštice can be found in the peaceful and picturesque region of Javořice Highlands. There are 152 inhabitants living in the village. The village has been engaging in agriculture since 13th century and also today we can encounter farming in the fields, in the forests and livestock and fish farming wherever you go there. The questions regarding their participation in the competition Village of the Year were answered by the mayor of the village Mr Martin Kodys.

Where did you hear about the competition Village of the Year for the first time?

I heard about the competition sometime before the year 2010. At that time we had built a new building for the local authority, the fire station and repaired around 9 kms of agricultural roads. I thought that we would apply but already while studying the application form I gave up. At that point we were also building engineering infrastructure for 15 new houses and somehow there was no energy left.



In 2017 you gained the Blue Ribbon for social life, how did you perceive this award?

It was the first time ever that we took part in the competition Village of the Year. We hadn't had any experience with this competition and we hadn't even been anywhere to see and have some idea about it. That is why we value our success so much and we feel that the prize is a reward for our social life which is very rich in our village. We also properly celebrated our success together.

Did the award of the Blue Ribbon entice you to take part again in the competition Village of the Year?

Well, surely, as the sportspeople say. There are many sportspeople in our village and we all enjoy competing. And as we are busy organizing many events during the year we decided to apply only in 2019.

How were you preparing for the competition and who were all the people you asked to join the preparations and how?



Together with the members of the local council we prepared a scenario of the presentation aimed at everyday life in the village. We invited all the citizens who were interested to join in the presentation to a meeting. I was pleasantly surprised that all generations joined in and after that it went smoothly. We divided the tasks according to our skills and abilities and after that we just kept improving everything. Everybody that we cooperate with almost on daily basis joined in – farmers, foresters, fishermen, beekeepers, hunters, game keepers and, of course, firemen.

How long did the preparations for the whole presentation of the village in the regional round of the Village of the Year and the national round of the Orange Ribbon take? Did you decide to present the village differently compared to the year 2017?

We had enough time for all the preparations because we had divided all the tasks amongst us so it wasn't too demanding and everybody was enjoying it even during the preparations. The immediate preparation before the arrival of the committee was always one day before. We even had to interrupt our collective watching of the match of our ice hockey representation for 3rd place in the World Championship before the regional round. As we had some basic experience from the year 2017 we made the whole presentation very lively with more than 80 people joining in.

How do you cooperate with the agricultural subjects in the village, do you have any joint plans?

We cooperate more or less on the daily basis. Many citizens come daily to the building of the centre of agricultural cooperative in Třeštice for



take-away lunches. The agricultural cooperative also employs our citizens, allows the vehicles which belong to the village to refuel, in winter they clear some roads from snow and provide storage places for the village. It also supplies field stones for the needs of the village. The new private farmer helps with repairs of the roads and provides the village with the space of the pension to hold various events. The village in return maintains all agricultural roads in perfect order so that the farmers can cultivate the land, the hunters and game keepers look after their game, the forest owners manage their forests, the fishermen feed fish in their ponds. We plan together with the farmers to clear street gutters from the deposits of soil and in winter trimming off of the bushes alongside the roads. And we also plan together an event called "Tractor Zetor Rally".

What voluntary associations are there in the village of Třeštice?

The oldest one with the highest number of members is the Volunteer Fire Department which was founded in 1887 and which takes care of most sport and cultural events in our village. At the same time, thanks to the equipment which they use, they help also farmers and forest owners. The village has also been represented for 20 years by two ice hockey teams HC SDH Třeštice "A" and "B". There is also the Hunting Association in Třeštice.

What is it, in your opinion, that makes your village outstanding in agricultural sphere in comparison to other villages?

I think that it is the fact that the traditional agriculture has been preserved till our present time. Our village has been connected with agriculture since the very beginning in 14th century. The first agricultural cooperative was established already in 1907 and it was the Flax-Growing Cooperative. After 1989 none of the original farmers started farming privately



and all the land was cultivated by Agricultural Cooperative Hodice. More than half of the families in the village had their forests returned and the forests continue to be managed privately. People also continue to cultivate their crofts and keep farm animals. Some citizens even widened their activities to beekeeping and fish farming.

What kind of presentation of your village did you choose?

In both rounds we presented everyday life directly on the village green, in the cooperative, in the yard of a classical farm house, at the crofts and in the fields. We, for example, showed the cultivation of soil from ploughing to the harvest of wheat and potatoes nowadays but also at the times of our ancestors. We showed contemporary processing of wood during bark beetle calamity. At the end of the presentation we also visited a former mill which is nowadays used as a pension and there is an agricultural farm in its vicinity. More than half of our citizens joined in the presentation. They did not hesitate to use their annual leave or accommodate their private plans.

What would you recommend to other villages which want to take part in the competition Village of the Year?

The villages which could be even more successful than us are surely quite numerous. In my opinion, the most important thing is to process the application form for the competition Village of the Year and other necessary documents. The presentation itself in front of the evaluating panel is a nicely spent day for all the participants of the presentation.

Was there any celebration after winning the Orange Ribbon in the regional and national round?

We agreed that we would celebrate our success in the regional round after the national round. We had the presentation of the national round on Friday morning. After the presentation we put everything away and gathered in the village hall. We had many nice experiences that we were talking about and we celebrated till Saturday. After winning the national round we celebrated immediately after the announcement with the representatives of the village in Prague. As the victory in the national round is a historical achievement for our village and also for the Vysočina region we invited the county representative to Třeštice to celebrate this success with us. We also invited the mayors of the neighbouring villages and everybody who took part in the competition. We are going to celebrate at the beginning of December.

How are you going to invest the prize money?

We are going to invest the prize money into the II. phase of renovation of the village hall. We have moved everything out of the village hall and it is ready for the renovation. Next year there are going to be several events in the village hall including the Reunion of the Compatriots. It is an enormous award for all of our citizens and it came just at the right time.

How do you evaluate your participation in the competition with hindsight?

Best event of the year! The company of toddlers, pre-schoolers, pupils, students, working people, pensioners and the most senior citizens of Třeštice who created one team and managed together with farmers, fishermen, hunters, beekeepers and others to win the title of the masters of the CR is an unforgettable experience. And we will probably take part again one day. ■



Regional events organized by NRN

Looking back at the year 2019

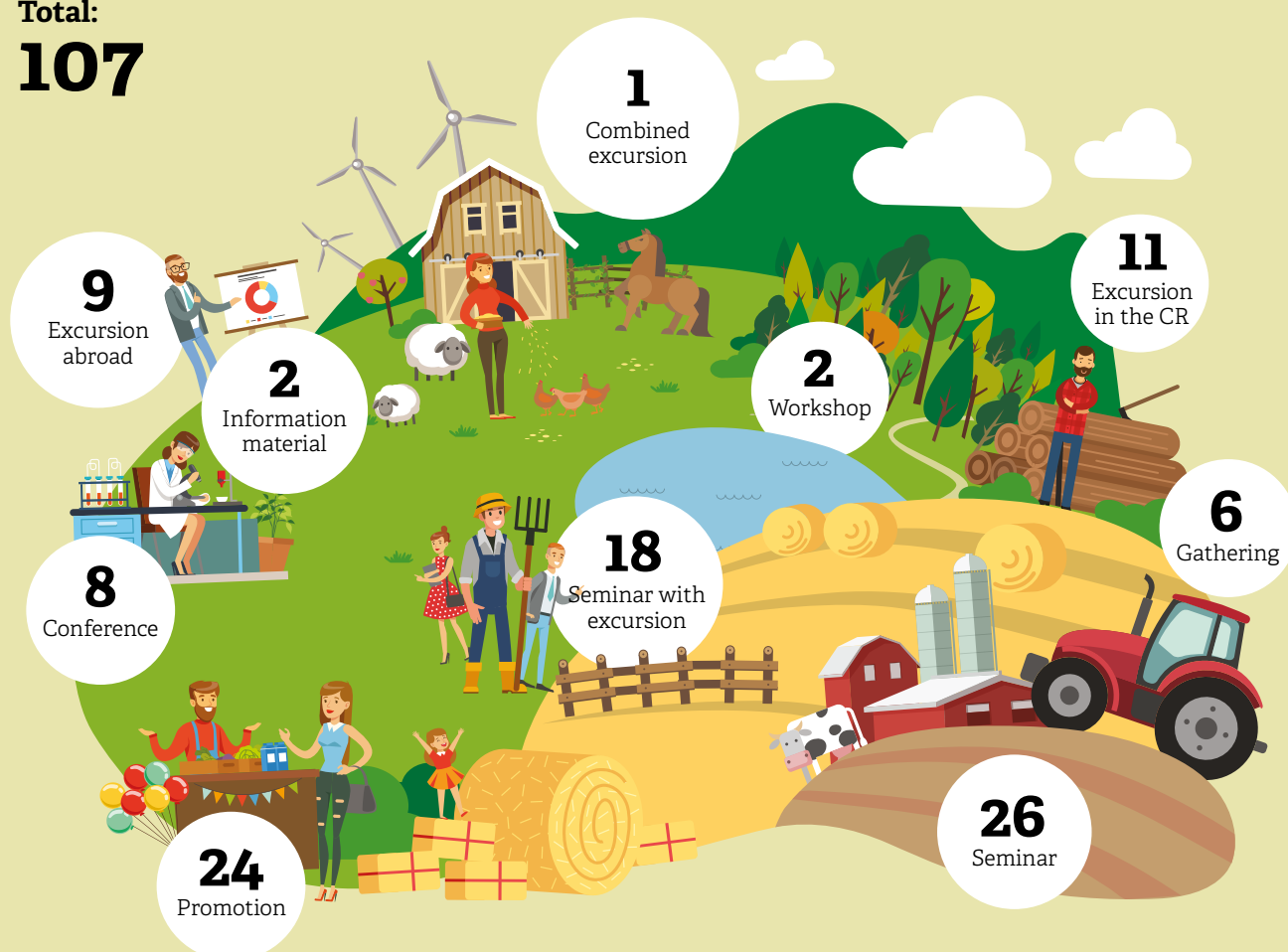
Text: Team of authors, **photo:** NRN archive

*The Network prepared many interesting events in the year 2019 and so far more than 11 500 participants took part in them. We are going to present some of them in this article. You can learn more about other Network events at the websites of **SAIF** and **eAGRI**.*

The events organized by NRN at the regional level in 2019 up to 1.11.2019

Total:

107



Regional division Prague

Bridges between theory and practice

The National Rural Network organized mainly for starting and future farmers predominantly from Poděbrady region an excursion to family farms in the Netherlands from 29.9. – 4.10.2019 which was aimed at introducing them to the possibilities of subsidies from RDP within the frame of the European Union.

The purpose of this event was to inspire and motivate the participants who were young, starting farmers or students of secondary agricultural schools and show them how the agricultural production is put into practice abroad and what are the various ways of drawing European support in the agricultural sector. One of the most interesting visited agricultural establishments was the farm of the Tomesen family near the village of Doetichen near Arnhem which specializes in breeding of laying hens and production of eggs.

The philosophy of the farm is to supply fresh eggs to the consumers in their nearest vicinity and to local producers at the regular local markets besides other things also through their own vending machine therefore straight from their yard. The Tomesens in the past



acquired with the help of a subsidy from RDP both this vending machine and an egg grading machine and now they are drawing subsidy "only" for a grassy area for grazing of hens. Laying hens have the opportunity to move on three floors and on one square meter there can be a maximum of nine hens which also have a possibility of going out in the grazing area. Using their own resources they also built new stables on the farm which allows the animals to go out and graze under the roof which is in regard to the risk of possible infections an optimal solution. The building for breeding is partially made from glass so the customers can see that the hens are not suffering and that they are kept in accordance with the welfare rules for breeding of these animals. The participants of the excursion found as interesting the marking of eggs with stars according to the type of breeding. If the farmer keeps the animals on bedding where they can go out into a roofed yard then the eggs have one star. If they can go out in the yard directly then they have two stars and if the hens are bred ecologically then the eggs have three stars. ■

Regional division Prague

Central Bohemian countryside after the mid-term evaluation with the view to the new role of RDP after the year 2020+

In the beautiful surroundings of the Břežany Farm, in the most westerly part of the region in Jesenice region, NRN organized from 15.-16.8.2019 regional workshop intended for LAG to share experience within the frame of the realization of the Strategy of Community Led

Local Development (further only "SCLLD") with the title "Central Bohemian countryside after the mid-term evaluation of the programme frame of RDP after the year 2020+".

The aim was above all to share the conclusions of the mid-term evaluation and, at the time, very topical question of implementation of these conclusions into the realization of SCLLD. An important part of the workshop was the discussion with focus on new programme period and a new role of RDP after the year 2020+, the future role of LAG within the context of Smart Village, sharing of experience and preparation for



the role of innovative brokers as well as evaluation of the feedback of each of the LAGs by NRN, by entrepreneurs, villages, the public and further the possibilities of cooperation with academia, the organs dealing with the administration of RDP and preparation of the

new programme period. During the workshop there was a visit of a chosen project of SCLLD in the territory of Jesenice (Forest gym – a project financed from Operation 19.2.1 – part 17.1.c – Forestry infrastructure). ■

Regional division České Budějovice Rural Forum 2019

In cooperation with Microregion Radbuza there was 2nd year of conference with the name "Rural Forum 2019" held from 25th-26th April in Plzeň region. .

During the two-day conference there were seminars which had as the main topic the countryside, SCLLD, the use of Operation programmes and RDP. There was also an excursion as a part of the conference to see some examples of good practice in drawing subsidies from RDP.

The conference offered space for discussion, sharing of experience and also mutual inspiration of the representatives of Local Action Groups (further only "LAG"), national organizations, regional and local self-government, farmers, small businesses and other specialists with experience in drawing subsidies not only from RDP but also from other Operational programmes.

The participants saw inspirational projects supported from RDP during the excursion.

There was a great response by the participants of the conference to the excursion into Karolína's Kitchen which was reconstructed within the frame of the cooperation project "We are opening the treasures of the countryside". Within this project there was, for example, the "Minimuseum of Štěpánka Haničincová" built in the village of Kvíčovce which was together with čertík Bertík (= a puppet character from Czech TV programme) a pleasant return to carefree childhood. ■



Regional division České Budějovice

Examples of good practice – processing and sale of primary production

From 18th – 20th June NRN organized in cooperation with Úhlava NGO (an organisation which engages in educational, consulting and informational activities with focus on environment, agriculture, tourism and development of the rural area of Pošumaví) a specialized excursion aimed at the presentation of the successful RDP projects.

The main purpose of the event was to present to the agricultural public and other partners from NRN mainly from Plzeň region interesting and inspirational farms in South Bohemian region, in the Vysočina region and also in South Moravian region which engage in processing and sale of their own agricultural production. The first visited place during the morning bloc was the Agricultural Cooperative (further only "AC") Bernartice, farm Jestřebí which is situated in Southern Bohemia nearby the town of Písek. AC farms on about 2750 ha of land and keeps 1650 head of cattle, there is a complete milk section in Jestřebí. All of the buildings were gradually renovated or newly built in the place of the original buildings. The afternoon bloc of the excursion started at the Biofarm Sasov which has one of the most extensive breeding of Presticke pig in CR. The farm grows about twenty kinds of crops, runs a small biogas plant, has a vegetable garden, keeps beef breed pasture cattle and Presticke pig. The last visited farm on the first day was the Biofarma DoRa which engages in goat breeding and processing their own goat milk in their own mini dairy. The second day started at the farm Ráječek which is near the centre of Brno and engages in growing vegetables, mainly lettuce and tomatoes. Then followed Almond orchards and Hustopeče Almond processing plant (its speciality is Hustopečská mandlovice=kind of vodka made from almonds) and Lavender farm in Starovičky where the crop is processed in a sheltered workshop which is part of the farm. The last day was dedicated to the visit

of a farm (winery) of the Valihrach family and the farm of the Němec family. The Valihrachs grow cereals, lucerne, rapeseed, sugar beet and sunflowers on 100 ha and vine (34 varieties) grows on 20 ha. The also keep beef cattle and run a small composting plant. The Němec family at present manage the area of about 160 ha of agricultural land, they keep cattle, poultry and Prestice pigs. They themselves process the products of primary production on the farm. The diverse programme of the excursion which consisted of successful projects from RDP was for the potential claimants of subsidies from RDP very inspirational. Thanks to the excursion the participants learnt specific information which they were interested in, they learnt about the obstacles and also gained interesting insights from putting into practice the RDP projects. ■



Regional division Ústí nad Labem

Implemented RDP projects in Slovakia and in Hungary – examples of good practice

During 21st-25th July NRN organized in cooperation with LAG Český Sever an excursion abroad for the representatives from the ranks of mayors, representatives of the villages and members of LAG. After the evening departure the excursion started with the morning arrival to the region of LAG Kras where the presentation of the village Jablonov nad Turňou and the presentation of implemented projects followed.

The participants had an opportunity to see the projects aimed at building a sports compound, changing the windows in school buildings, revitalization of the village green, solving drought and keeping the water in the countryside, constructing a “smart street lighting” of the village controlled by a mobile phone, building a network of road safety cameras, revitalization of the village hall and presentation of the project “Accommodation at David´s” – a project supported by LAG Kras. Next the participants continued to Hrušov where they became acquainted with the projects of building a community and tourist information centre. The following day started in the Hungarian village of Jósvalfö where they met the representatives of the Hungarian LAG Borsod Torna Gömör Egyesület. The village focuses on tourism



and the presented projects corresponded with that – they were e.g. about an accommodation facility of a rural type, or a museum of the history of the village and its surroundings. After seeing the implemented projects, there was a transfer to the village of Trizs and a visit of the regional producer and traditional processor of fruit. After a stop in the town of Edelény followed the evening workshop in the hotel and presentation of implemented projects of LAG Kras and projects of cooperation, the presentation of the project Old Fruit Journey, joined presentation of the project of cooperation with LAG Kras and presentation of LAG Český Sever and regional trademark Českosaské Švýcarsko – regional product. The following day started in Gombasek Valley, then followed a meeting with the representatives of the voluntary group SINE METU and also the visit of the residence of LAG Kras in Plešivec took place. The afternoon programme took the participants to the village of Čoltovo where the mayor presented the village and the projects implemented in the vicinity of the village – anti-flood barriers, reconstruction of the municipal house into a marketplace intended for the sale of regional products and terrain works in the village. The day finished in the village of Bohuňovo where the mayoress presented the implemented projects of Slovak-Hungarian cooperation. The last day of the excursion started in the seat of LAG Svornost in Solčany with a presentation of the participating LAGs on the topic of LEADER/CLLD and discussion regarding the projects of cooperation. During the afternoon hours the expected return back to the CR took place. The outcome of this event was also the increased awareness about the RDP projects abroad. In relation to the present target group there was also sharing of experience with drawing the subsidies within the frame of RDP. ■



Regional division Ústí nad Labem

Breeders' Day

National Rural Network became involved in cooperation with Military Forests and Farms CR (further only "MFF") for the first time on 20.9.2019. Military Forests and Farms organize the event "Breeders' Day MFF 2019" each year.



It was possible to see the traditional parade of cattle from the system of ecological farming with a guessing competition where the participants try to guess the weight of the high-pregnant heifers, bulls and calves. During the Breeders' Day in Bražec the visitors could see a presentation of agricultural machinery supplemented by a practical display of ecological agriculture and humane breeding of farm animals and the interested persons could buy regional farm foodstuffs and also beef from the farm. The visitors also took great interest in the NRN stall where they learnt the answers to their questions about 8th round of RDP. ■



Regional division Hradec Králové

Sharing the knowledge and spreading innovations from the space of European commercial fruit-growing

NRN organized an excursion to the member states of the European Union, namely to Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Finland from 3rd – 9th September. The first stop was at the fruit research and consultancy centre for northern Germany ESTEBURG – Fruit-Growing Centre Jork where there are several institutions.

The Centre has 25 ha of experimental plots out of which ¼ is within ecological regime. Other experiments are carried out directly at the growers' places. They also provide consultancy for 400 apple growers with the area of 6 – 7 thousand ha and for

150 cherry growers with the area of 50 ha where there are 250 ha of cherry trees with a covering system protecting the trees from the rain. The following day the excursion continued in Denmark with the visit to the Hyben Vital Alps company which focuses on





growing rosehips, their processing and sale of products. The company grows rosehips on the area of 50 ha, it also buys from the growers on 120 ha, mainly in Denmark, there is a small area in Sweden and also in the Netherlands. They grow ½ from their own selection gained 40 years ago, ½ of the rosehips are gained from Europe and from Chile. They sell the products into the whole world. They make pure rosehip oil from the seeds with an addition of lemon tree oil, they also make a powder from the rosehip seeds and rosehip pericarp. The next visit was to the national plant gene bank in Alnarp in Sweden which comes under the University and which contains a collection of vegetatively propagated plants. After the transfer to the Åland archipelago there was an excursion to Ålands Trädgårdshall, which is a company that associates 400 farmers out of which 45 are fruit farms. They organize the sale into market chains in Finland for them. They update prices and expenses each month, each farmer gets a calculation according to the used energy, transport costs and so on. The calculations are transparent, published for all growers. The company engages in production of fruit (apples, pears, strawberries), then production of onions and potatoes. The next stop was at the Karl Ers Frukt company, a family company which focuses on production of apples and pears. The owner grows fruit on 40 ha, stores the apples in ULO (ultra low content of oxygen) atmosphere, it sorts the fruit on its own fruit sorting line. Then there was a visit to Grannas Äppel company which has its own ULO storage, sorting line and apple juice making facility. Then

followed a stop in a consultancy firm Ålands Hushållningssällskap. The participants of the excursion became acquainted with the system of consultations for Åland farmers there. The company uses a signalling programme RIMpro for fruit growers in regards to pest and disease occurrence. It was possible to observe the monitored varieties of apple trees, pear trees, plum trees, cherry trees and berries in the test plantation. The last stop was in the company Smakbyns Bränneri, which produces its own special apple liquors, apple wine and other types of spirits and alcoholic drinks. The apple liquors are kept in oak barrels after the wine for the period of ten years. After this time they acquire a specific taste from the barrels and the products are sold as vintage liquors. ■



Regional division Hradec Králové

“Round Table” on agricultural problems 2019

On 13th June 2019 there was an event called “Round Table” on the problems of agriculture 2019. The event started with the evaluation of the past decade and with the view to the future. Dr. Ing. Jan Pešek from Agricultural Joint-Stock Company Mžany introduced the participants to the history of the event Agricultural Day Sovětice.

At present the Agricultural Day is under the condition of fulfilling certain conditions granted the auspices of Královéhradecký Region, this year the Agricultural Day was joined with the “Days of Czech Agriculture”. During his speech he evaluated the cooperation with NRN as a very successful one and pointed out to the participants the innovative projects which the Network is putting into practice at the moment and the machinery which will be exhibited at the Agricultural Day. After the introduction of the priorities and future focus of the extensive regional event Agricultural Days there was a presentation of NRN and its activities. Then followed talks on the current situation



in the commodity of milk and production of cheeses, new trends in the support of a higher consumption of cheese, vegetables and fruit, the current situation in discussions about the common agricultural policy after the year 2021 and finally there were awards granted to companies, institutions and individuals who actively supported the organizing of Agricultural Days and contributed to the high reputation of this event. The event facilitated mutual exchange of experience among its participants, establishing new contacts, discussions with expert on the given topics. ■

Regional division Brno

Possibilities of cooperation in the sphere of agricultural productivity in Croatia

A five-day excursion in Croatia took the participants firstly to the representatives of LAG Laura who introduced their work and prepared a workshop of the present representatives of MAS and LAG in which there was a discussion about the possibilities of cooperation, the spheres of cooperation and a joint concluding presentation of Czech LAGs.

The following day the participants moved over to the nearby seat of the Agricultural cooperative LIST and Association Orkula who are the members of the LAG Laura. They were introduced to the production of

the cooperative and activities of Association Orkula which looks after advertising, regional labelling and marketing. Then followed the visit of Maslina i vino Cooperative which farms on 60 ha in the regime of organic farming. The aim of the cooperative is to develop the countryside in the Ravni Kotar region and produce top class products via growing olives, wine-growing and fig growing. The participants learnt that receiving of applications for subsidies from LEADER was only started in Croatia last year, there were projects being prepared for financing from other sources or LAGs provided consultations to the applicants for subsidies, etc. On the third day the participants together with the representatives of LAG Lika visited the municipal authority of Duga Resa where the mayor presented the projects implemented via RDP. The representative of LAG Vallis



Croatia. The speeches were given by the representatives of the Croatian Ministry of Agriculture, Croatian Rural Development Network, Croatian network LEADER, the Czech Embassy in Croatia and also the representatives of Czech LAGs who aimed their presentations at the role of LAG in CR, they informed about the number of LAGs in CR, about the fact that the National Network of LAGs functions as an umbrella for the LAGs and also establishes its own working groups (International cooperation, Education,

presented the history, activities and projects of the LAG. In regards to the projects they use within the frame of ESF programme Erasmus + a lot of the projects are aimed at employing women and young people in the countryside regions and at the development of volunteering. Within the frame of Interreg they cooperate with a LAG in Slovakia and with a LAG in Italy. LAG Lika presented its activities, projects and SCLLD. The representatives of Czech LAGs also presented their activities. The day was finished at the Marinkovich farm. On the last day there was a Conference on the topic of LEADER/SCLLD and development of the countryside within the environment of the Czech Republic and

etc.) and that among other roles of LAG in their region there are also local action plans for education, community plans for social services, etc. The Croatian delegates asked a number of questions mainly in regards to the functioning and system of financing of LAG CR. After the final excursions at the family farm Jakopovic and winery Vinski vrch the participants set out on their return journey back to Czech Republic. ■

An important benefit of this event is a website which was created following the excursion, the projects and possibilities of cooperation: www.cz-hr-lags.eu.



Regional division Brno

Short supply chains and local markets – inspiration of food initiatives in CR

The aim of the excursion held from 14–15 October was the presentation of the successful cooperation in the area of short supply chains, local sale, community led agriculture, etc. The presentation started at the organic farm of the Šelongs where the participants became acquainted with the possibility of sale of its own produce through vegetable boxes.



They also talked about the possibilities of financing a farm. Mrs Šelongoá is a successful applicant of several projects within the frame of Rural Development Programme. Then followed an excursion to the cooperative shop Družstvo Viktorina

LOCA. The cooperative is based on the idea that cooperation is better than competition, the primary focus isn't economical, they are trying to promote access to good quality and local food, the support of local farmers who farm in accordance with nature. They strive for development of the local economy via food self-sufficiency. On the second day the participants visited farm Menšík, the farm has its own minidairy, its own small shop and also offers accommodation at the farm. Up to 80 % of the products are sold directly at the farm, they also supply 3 small shops nearby. The last visited place during the excursion was the farm of Ondřej Štancl who, apart from breeding meat cattle, also devotes himself to growing spelt and building their own bakery. His wife devotes herself mainly to baking bread – she grows and processes everything herself at the farm, within the frame of SSC they sell directly from the farm yard. ■

Regional division Olomouc

RDP and CLLD programme frame in practice

There was a workshop on 26th April which aimed mainly at creating suitable conditions for transfer of topical information and experience from RDP focusing at the operation LEADER. The workshop was for this reason intended primarily for the representatives of LAG from Olomouc and Zlín regions.

The aspiration of the workshop was to present the topical information to the participants and give them space for answering their questions and getting some feedback. As the lecturers were SAIF representatives, the LAG representatives had a unique opportunity to communicate their problems and questions directly with the project workers who administer the applications for subsidies or who check the applications. In the morning part the participants became acquainted with the current development of the administered applications for subsidies from RDP and on suitable chosen examples there was demonstrated which procedures

cause frequent errors and how to prevent such errors. The next presenter spoke about selection procedures and their conditions and at the same time the most frequent errors that the applicants make. In the afternoon part of the workshop the participants were presented with the topical information and possibilities of the operation LEADER, the participants were shown statistics of the given region and put into relation to the rest of the country. At the end the attendees were introduced to the very much discussed article 20 and its possibilities, what intentions will be possible to support within the article 20 and what the changes are in comparison to the previous experience. ■



Regional division Olomouc

Sweden – excursion tours to the RDP projects

The autumn excursion from 14th – 18th October was organized with the intention to share examples of good RDP practice, inspiration and topics which should contribute to the wider possibilities of drawing financial support of RDP. Demonstration of different procedures and types of activities motivates new possibilities of using RDP for the development of the regions and activation of the people living in the countryside.



The purpose of the event was to create space for discussion about a whole number of projects and support passing on experience and knowledge to others. During 5 days there was a meeting with the representatives of LAG, local authorities and other development organisations in the region and agricultural farms facilitated for the participants and experience with the preparation, implementation and further sustainability of the inspirational projects beneficial for the development of the region, local farms, social enterprising with a connection to agriculture was passed on.

The first project that the participants visited was in Germany, it was Erlebnis-Büdnerei, aimed at building a multipurpose barn. The second day started in Sweden, at the Tiraholms Fisk farm which engages in breeding, processing and sale of fish. After a short introduction of the representatives of LAG and the given region there followed an excursion in the town of Falkenberg where there was a project presented for establishing a foodfestival aimed at the support of local production implemented via



LEADER. The following presented projects were aimed at returning people back into the countryside and keeping them there. The third day was devoted to the Halland region with the topic of keeping people living in the countryside this time from the point of view of entrepreneurs and workers, introduction of the festival Into The Woods and possibilities of forest management. The other presented projects supported by LEADER are aimed at local products and sustainable production of food or also support of refugees (women). After the presentation of the projects followed the afternoon workshop where the representatives of CR gave their talks. For example Ing. Marian Jurečka, who outlined the main differences between the Czech and Swedish rural areas, the development of Czech agriculture and spoke about other topics. Also Ing. Radim Sršeň, Ph.D., who presented the functioning of LAG in the Czech Republic, LEADER and RDP as well as the current direction and new options in the forthcoming years. The representatives of the Swedish side outlined the biggest problems of the Halland region, the most frequently dealt with problem being the need for an intensive mutual cooperation in the regions where they have managed to stop the decrease in the numbers of inhabitants of rural areas and the need to solve this problem at the regional level. Day four was devoted to the presentation of functioning of RDP, method LEADER and LAG in Sweden and also the particular operational programmes and proceeding of the projects through the implementation structure. The participants learnt among other things that the Swedish model is based on one managing authority and one payment agency. Another interesting fact that they learnt was also that on average every third project creates new jobs and that the average financial demands of one project are around 60 000 Euros. The LEADER projects aimed at sport, cultural and educational events for youth were described in detail. After the closing talk on protection of water sources the participants set off on a day long journey back home. ■



Regional division Opava

Slovakia

An excursion to Slovakia which was loosely inspired by an excursion organized in 2018 RO Brno took place from 28th – 29th May. The participants first visited a homestead farm from 19th century called Gazdovský Dvůr where they were taken on a commentated tour and became acquainted with the restoration of the building within the frame of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Slovakia – Czech Republic in the cooperation with the village of Dolní.

The equipment of the homestead, bread baking oven and fruit drying room were financially supported from RDP 2007-2013. Then followed a tour of Pension Samuel and fruit orchard Uhliská which is part of the project Kopaničarska Fruit-Destillation Journey. The construction of the pension was supported from RDP 2007-2013/LEADER. Another part of the fruit-destillation journey was the stop at Pálenice Brestovec which is also a bearer of the approval mark “Kopanice Regional Product”. The excursion was thematically continued to Ovosad Myjava where the participants had a chance to taste regional products. The orchardist and processor used the subsidy support RDP 2007-2013 for planting the orchards and for the modernisation of the machinery and technological equipment. The first day finished in Agropenzion Adam where the participants became acquainted with the constructing of the organic farm with the organic breeding of beef cattle,

they learnt about the cooperation of LAG with Universities carried out in the projects finished and ongoing, about landscape modifications in the village and others. The second day started at the Organic Farm Charolais where the participants could see accompanying activities of the agricultural farm which are, for example, horse riding, accommodation in the huts, schools in nature and others. At the next stop at the farm Etelka with ecological production of dairy products the participants could taste the dairy products. The end of the excursion was devoted to the Hall of Folk Traditions, Crafts and Regional Products Myjava where the participants became better acquainted with the introducing of the regional mark “Kopanice Regional Product” the establishment of which was supported from RDP 2007-2013. ■





Regional division Opava

We are teaching each other 4: We have changed the climate, now let's change ourselves, there is still time to plant trees

The conference with excursion took place from 13th – 14th May on the premises of Mlýn u Vodníka Slámy where within the frame of the conference day were given talks in thematic blocs on the topics "Soil, Water and Landscape" including the examples of successfully implemented projects which can serve as inspirational examples for drawing financial funds from RDP.

It was mainly about the measure Processing and Introducing Agricultural Products to the Market, Investments into Agricultural Enterprises, Introduction of Preventative Anti-flooding Measures in Forests and non-project RDP measures, above all Agroenvironmental-climatic Measure (AEKO), Ecological Farming (EZ) and Forestry-environmental Measure (LESO-ENVI). The afternoon programme was devoted

to the round tables on the topic of "Man in the Countryside" with the landscape architect Ing. Lubomír Rychtář who took the participants for a walk in the surrounding countryside and "Countryside in Man" with a herbalist guide Hanka Rádlová who was talking about the return to the traditional herbalism which has accompanied rural life since time immemorial. The second day was devoted to a field excursion where the participants could visit first of all the village of Dobroslavice where they saw an avenue which was planted there by the members of DobroVize society as a form of communal work with the inhabitants of the village. The avenue called K Lipám is a memorial of individuals and families regarding the war traumas. Another visited place was "Kozmice Bird Meadows" which is a project of wetland construction for ecological stability of the countryside. The view from the viewtower situated on its edge makes it clear that this is a real bird paradise which is commonly visited by protected species of birds. The excursion day was finished with a visit to a dry polder in Vřesina by Hlučín which is an exemplary sample of a countryside measure which fulfills anti-flooding, aesthetical and educational function and is without any doubt a stabilization element in agricultural landscape. ■



What are we preparing for you in the first half of the year 2020?

Text: Team of authors

*In 2020 NRN is preparing seminars, excursions (inland and abroad), workshops, conferences and promotional events for all those who are interested in the information from RDP. The actual list of events that you can be looking for is published in half-yearly or monthly intervals at the **SAIF** and **MoA (eAgri)** websites. There you can also find a short report about the event, what were the things the participants learnt and what they saw.*



We prepare seminars each year which are aimed at the possibilities of subsidies from the Rural Development Programme. The lecturers of these seminars are accredited advisors of MoA or SAIF workers who administer the applications for subsidies for agroenvironmental measures or check in the field the fulfillment of the conditions given by the so called Principles or Rules for the Applicant. ■

Detailed information

about the exact location and date of these seminars will be gradually published in the invitations at the websites of **SAIF** or **eAgri**

Introduction of the partner activities



LAG Brána Vysočiny

Text: Ing. Milan Kouřil (MAS Brána Vysočiny), **photo:** archive of LAG Brána Vysočiny

Our aim is a general support of the sustainable development of the given area, especially by the activities that benefit the villages, non-profit organisations, small scale entrepreneurs, small and medium size companies, active natural persons and other subjects active in our region. We are active on the boundary of South Moravian Region and Vysočina Region.

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One of our important groups of small entrepreneurs for us are farmers. We try through our activities (including the partnership within the frame of NRN) to mediate to farmers experience from their field, help with development projects, finding possibilities for cooperation.

We carried out in cooperation with NRN a series of seminars **Company management from A to Z**. The seminars were organized in three regions – South Moravian, Moravian Silesian and in the Region Vysočina. The programme of the whole series was composed with the aim to show and present experience of those who “know how to do it” and those who are interested in this information in a comprehensive and interconnected form. The series offered the participants quality and practical information how to process, cooperate, how to package their products, how to sell them and promote. The seminars were attended altogether by 90 participants.

Rather successful were two seminars on the topic of **Support of development of meat processing**. We prepared the seminars in Mitrovský dvůr and in Tišnov, each of them was attended by approximately 30 participants. We managed to invite to both of these events interesting lecturers, our aim being, among other things, to interconnect the farmers – breeders of farm animals, butchers and other entrepreneurs who could together encourage the sale of meat from the farms in that region.

At present we are in the process of preparing a practical brochure dealing with the support of meat processing. It is a practical outcome which is an extract from other, good quality, detailed brochures, in combination with practical experience and examples so that the readers can get short, clear and concise suggestions and instructions. If needed the reader will be able to read the original texts that we were drawing from via appendixes.

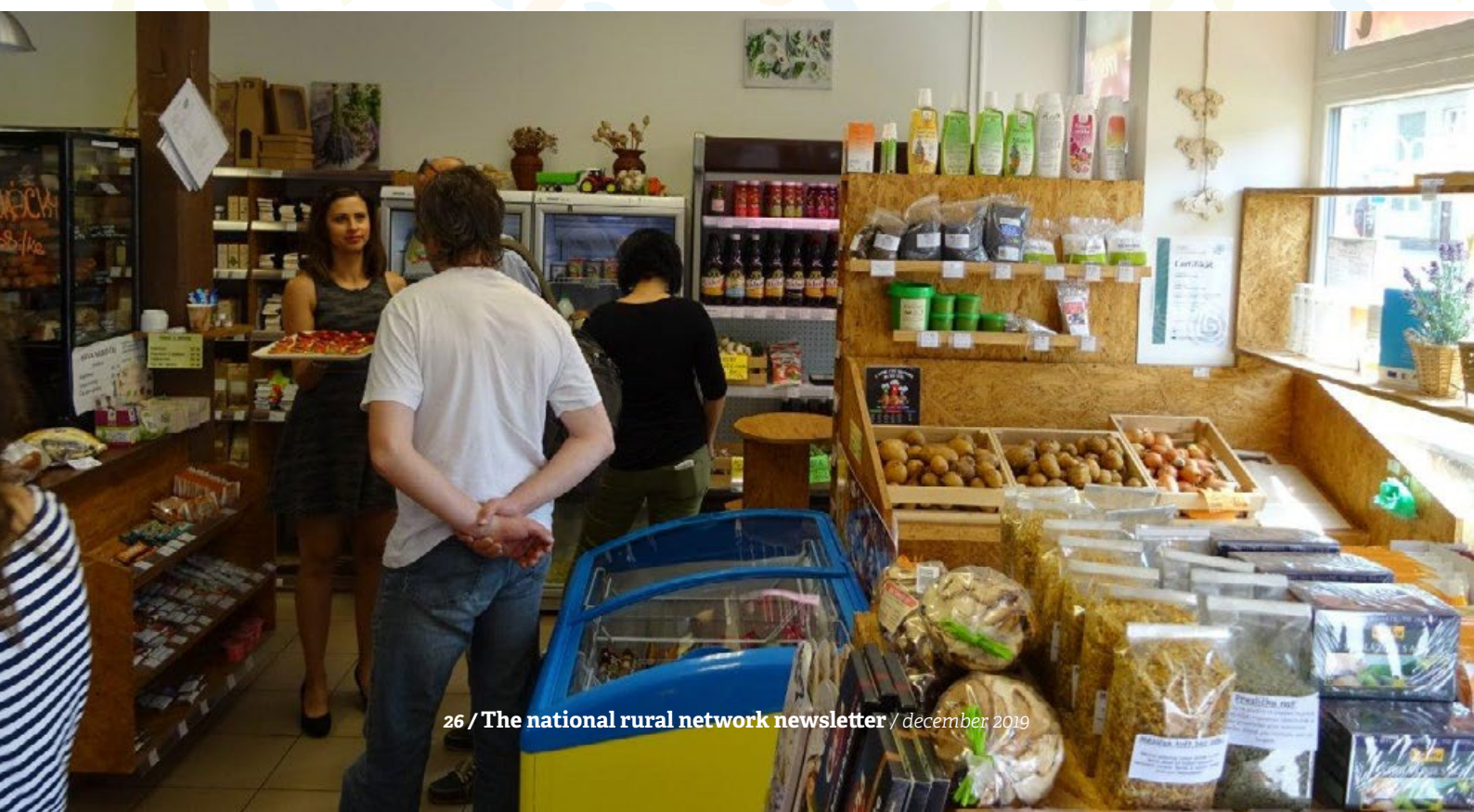
Local sales/short supply chains (SSC)

Cooperation among various subjects in the area of interest, short supply chains, direct sales, community supported farming. These are some of the options for the producer to get his products to the end customers. He/she tries with his/her activities to promote

already existing cooperation or start new ones. A very good example of such cooperation is e.g. the Crháks small shop in Blansko by train station. Apart from vegetables grown by Mr Crhák the customers can find there foodstuffs from the whole region. Directly in Tišnov there is Jůza butcher's where, apart from smoked meat, it is also possible to purchase cheese from Nelepeč farm. Cooperation generally speaking is a very specific type of sale, it is demanding not only regarding logistics but also the ability to make arrangements and plan differently, not only within one's own business activity. Short supply chains and local markets are activities which are supported within the frame of RDP, concretely in operation 16.4.1. Horizontal and vertical cooperation among the participants of short supply chains and local markets. This cooperation within the frame of RDP is intended as a support of cooperation of at least 2 subjects but, unfortunately, is not used by the farming public too much. On one hand the Rules of Operation are quite distant to the needs of daily practice, on the other hand the farmers and other entrepreneurs lack closer understanding of this operation and perhaps also courage to start a supported cooperation.

Communal processing place/kitchen/ café/shop

On the basis of experience mainly from abroad an idea came into existence here to establish a communal space not only for production and sale of regional foodstuffs. This common space will allow, subject to the hygienic and legal conditions, processing of one's own food materials (e.g. fruit, vegetables, milk) and create a product which can be put into circulation (officially sold). Simultaneously this space will offer the possibility of sale for those who do not have time, space or knowledge for sale of their own products. Thus a space will be created where it will be not only possible to process and sell one's own products but at the same time a place of natural meetings and sharing of experience, etc. This place could also become some kind of "incubator" of business and non-business opportunities in our region. We have been cooperating on this idea with the society Hojnost (www.hojnost.org), we would also like to interconnect it with a packaging-free shop. We are also in contact with another organisation, the cooperative Viktorina Loca (www.viktorinaloca.cz) in Příbor who are already running a cooperative shop, we consult with them the possibilities of development, etc. In October we organized an excursion both to the space of the cooperative in Příbor and also to their suppliers. One part of the excursion was also a workshop where we discussed the problems of cooperatives, cooperation, meaning of regional sales, etc. ■



Governing body of NRN – information section

Text: Team of authors, **photo:** NRN archive

National Rural Network has in the past implemented on central level a whole number of interesting activities and will continue in it also in 2020. The basic information is published on the website of MoA www.eagri.cz/Venkov. In this informative article we are going to introduce you to the best from the National Conference COUNTRYSIDE 2019, we will present the event of the regional coordinators which we found the most interesting recently, you will become acquainted with our promotional activity at Facebook and we will also introduce our Slovak colleagues to you. Thank you for favouring us in the past years and we are looking forward to be with you also in the new year!

Konference VENKOV 2019

National Conference COUNTRYSIDE 2019 took place this year in October in the Teplá Abbey in Karlovarský Region. All the official information about the course of it, outcomes of working groups and presentation of

lecturers is available at www.venkov40.cz/index.php.

This article is going to be a little glimpse back to some parts of the conference.

Teplá Abbey – the plenary session, working groups, fragments from the programme

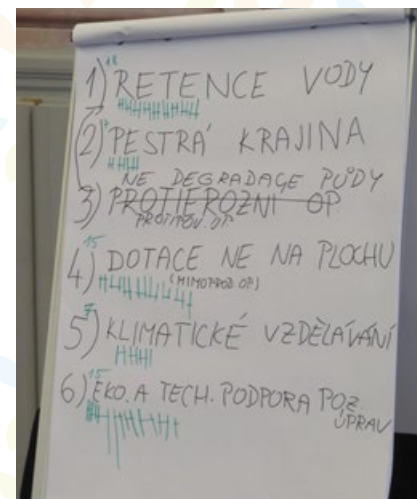
The huge area of the monastery was rather devastated during the previous regime (the description of the history of the monastery is available at the above website). The conference took place in the part which has been recently, with the support of the European subsidy funds, completely reconstructed. The conference participants could, for example, admire the monumental ceiling painting in the Blue Hall where the plenary session took place or unbelievably well preserved frescos in the summer refectory where there was a space prepared for refreshments.

Within the frame of the working groups these topics were discussed: "Water and



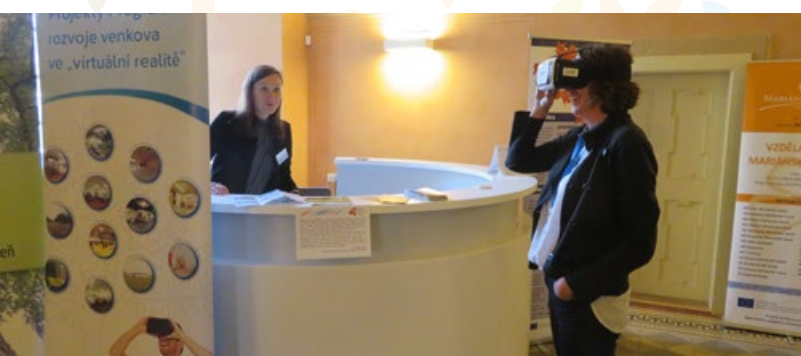
Drought“, “Life in the Rural Areas“, “Social Agriculture“, “International Cooperation“, “CLLD/LEADER Back to Roots“. After the end of this part of the programme it was possible to read at flipcharts a whole number of interesting opinions which were during their formulating often very lively discussed.

The outcomes and most important principles from



talks of individual working groups were on the last day of the conference presented during the concluding session. All the participants of the conference could voice their opinion on the single presented conclusions via electronic voting. The concrete formulated conclusions of each of the working groups are presented on the above mentioned websites of the conference.

The participants of the conference were offered also a non-traditional view of the implemented projects of the Rural Development Programme via the project of the National Rural Network within which the projects were specially photographed for the presentation in 360° glasses.



Specialized excursions

The organizers prepared 4 routes within which projects supported both by RDP and other subsidy programmes which contribute to the development of the rural areas were chosen for a visit. Even though the sky offered its “crying” face the participants were not put off by unfavourable weather and each of the 4 planned routes was visited by

buses completely full of participants. It is not within the limits of this article to describe all the routes and depict all of the visited places and projects (the names of the projects which were possible to visit within the plan of the excursions are mentioned on the above mentioned website). Some of the visited places which were seen by the participants of the route number 2 (Útersko) and number 3 (Bečovsko) will be presented in this text.

Route no. 2

The guide on this route talked very engagingly about his own experience with the project Revitalisation of the centre of social services Dobrá Voda (project IROP 2007-13). Various hand-crafted products are made within this project and are offered to customers in the shop of the Trappist monastery in Nový Dvůr (more about the monastery on www.novydvur.cz). The shop also offers some other products (e.g. mustard) which the monks make from the materials from the local agricultural companies. The participants could learn from the information panels in the shop more about the place which the Trappists chose to be their home. It was unbelievable that they managed to build such beautiful modern premises out of very devastated buildings.



In the village of Úterý there is a historical building directly in the centre of the little town being saved. Turbozna Community Centre is also, with the help of volunteers, rising like a phoenix from the ashes back to life. The aim of the Úterý society BART is to secure a worthy space for the fellow citizens where they could meet each other, facilities for tourists and a place for educational, public enlightenment, leisure time and hobby events and cultural events. Looking at the photographs of the inner yard there is still a lot of work awaiting them.

In the village of Křivce the representative of the Hřibárna Fialka company shortly presented the project RDP 2007-2013 with the title Sports Venue for Equestrian Activities in Křivce. Close to the stables there is a historical object where Martinus Society o.s. (www.martinus.wz.cz) carried out via local action group a project from RDP 2007-2013 called Stop the Woodworm in the Church of St. Martin. The Church of St. Martin has been (just like a whole number of other churches in the region of former Sudetenland) over the period of the past decades rather devastated and its size responds to a multiple higher number of inhabitants from the time of the First Republic. However, the local patriots got down to saving their cultural heritage with great enthusiasm and various social events take place in the church. Even 2 weddings took place there.



Route no. 3

Forest company Bečov, Ltd., implemented from RDP 2014-2020 the projects Wood-drying Kiln including the Storage Shelters, Acquisition of Technology for Growing and Harvesting Wood.



On the territory of the Local Action Group “Region of Living Waters” was, apart from other places, also visited Horní otročínský spring where there is a detailed information panel for the visitors. Both the visitors and the other participants of the conference were able to appreciate the good quality of the spring. In the space of the Teplá Abbey there were jugs with water from several springs of the local region available.



Otročin Farm, Ltd. prepared from RDP 2014-2020 (among others) projects Modernisation of Crop Production and Modernisation of an Agricultural Farm. During the prepared excursion the participants admired a modern, computer managed milking parlour from where the milk is taken to a nearby dairy in Krásné Údolí where they make, among other products, also good quality organic yogurts and BiFi drinks. You can find more about the activities of the visited company at www.farmaotrocin.cz/





Project from RDP 2007-2013 in Bečov Botanical Garden with the name Journeys of the Chatelains rightly aroused the interest of all the participants of the event. The project implemented via the local action group helped to secure various technical features in the garden (even some historical artefacts were used as much as possible) and objects necessary for ensuring comfort of the visitors of the garden. Work in this little botanical paradise continues even at present day, however, already now the visitors of the garden can enjoy various natural and artistic creations (e.g. metal sculptures from Internation Blacksmiths Symposium).



The basic information from all the excursions was presented to the participants of the conference on the last day of the conference. Nevertheless, the programme of the conference offered a whole number of opportunities/occasions where the participants could exchange their experience both from the visited excursions and from

the lectures or presentations of specialists within the frame of other parts of the programme. Conference COUNTRYSIDE was seen in positive light (according to the results from evaluation questionnaires) and many participants showed interest in meeting again in 2020 when the conference takes place in Vysočina Region. ■



“Smart countryside” – highlighted topic of the Network in 2019

This year in September the Regional Division of SAIF Prague prepared within the frame of events of the National Rural Network a specialized two-day excursion to Plzeň Region and to Bavaria. The event was thematically aimed at getting to know smart solutions in the regional space in our country and also abroad. A whole number of interesting themes and ideas were to be seen within the frame of the excursion.

The first day of the excursion took place on the territory of CR and during the visit of Smart City polygon in the village of Bolevec many representatives of the administration of a village or town who took part in it were inspired. There were shown the possibilities of solving “smart parking”, enhanced safety of pedestrians, smart benches, protection of the environment, etc.

The next part of the programme was found interesting by those participants of the excursion who focus on agriculture. They could see projects at an ecological farm that enhance the effectivity of the activities of a

young farmer. Directly in practice they had an opportunity to become acquainted with a milking robot which not only significantly lowers labour costs in livestock farming but also provides the farmer with up-to-date track of the herd, yield and health condition of each of the dairy cows.

The possibilities of the solutions with the label “smart countryside” are also in focus of the skillful members of the local action groups (further only “LAG”). Local action group Pošumaví in Klatovy created, for example, a media portal about pilgrimage paths in their region. It also cooperates, e.g. with the Czech University of Agriculture and together they are trying to find interesting ways of application of smart solutions in their area but also it partakes in spreading existing knowledge and possibilities among the inhabitants of its region. Another presented example of the activity of the three cooperating LAGs was the project “Cooperation Countryside of 21st Century”. In the course of implementation of the project there were information log cabins built which contain information about the interesting things in the nearest surroundings not only on information panels but those who are interested can also look it up on the Internet using QR codes. The built-in solar panels

then allow to charge a smartphone. You can learn more about the project at www.venkov21stoleti.cz/venkov21/



The second day of the excursion took place in Germany in the town of Freyung. Technological Campus of the University is located in this little town with seven thousand inhabitants. During the visit of the campus the participants of the excursion were, for example, informed about the methodology of choosing the best places for charging stations for electromobility on the basis of data analysis which is sourced from open source data (this open source data can, for example, be also used by local administration). They introduced the possibilities of using drones for early detection of forest infested with bark beetles. They showed the possibility of returning life to the centre of the cities and providing facilities for the citizens (by rebuilding empty properties in the centre into a multifunctional shopping and cultural

centre) or how to recultivate a brownfield into a future floristry showground.

Zajímavou platformou pro diskuzi o možnostech „chytrého venkova“ nabízí i odborná Tematická pracovní skupina „Chytrý venkov“, která byla v letošním roce zřízena na národní úrovni pro partnery Sítě z celé ČR. Informace o aktivitách/výstupech budou zveřejňovány na <http://eagri.cz/public/web/mze/venkov/prioritni-temata-site/tematicke-pracovni-skupiny/chytry-venkov/>



For those interested in the topic of smart countryside from the point of view of experience from abroad a thematically focused newsletter EU Rural Review has been translated from the English original. In electronic form it is at <http://eagri.cz/public/web/mze/venkov/prioritni-temata-site/chytry-venkov/eu-rural-review-c-26-chytry-venkov.html> ■

Link to the video from the **excursion:**



Facebook – fast source of information in 21st century

*The Internet has shortened the transmission of information to the end user to the shortest possible extent. The Ministry of Agriculture uses for contact with the persons interested in information modern communication technologies and one of the sources of information about interesting examples of implemented projects is also **facebook MoA**.*

Regularly, every week, you can find at the website www.facebook.com/ministerstvozemedelstvicr an inspirational example from the Rural Development Programme or activities of National Rural Network. Other stories of the applicants from the region can be found in the newsletter of MoA which is in electronic form available on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture www.eagri.cz ■



Spravodajca offers news from the Slovak Network

*Similarly to the Czech Republic also in Slovakia there is **National Rural Network of Slovakia**. Its partners in the regions implement a whole number of interesting events and activities.*

Similarly to the Czech Republic also in Slovakia there is National Rural Network of Slovakia. Its partners in the regions implement a whole number of interesting events and activities. In the spring months of 2019 the Slovak Network organized a study tour to the Czech Republic. It is possible to learn which companies/farms the participants visited and which projects they saw in the intermittent newsletter **Spravodajca** (specialized magazine of the National Rural Network of Slovakia) in no. 1/2019 (pages 10-11). Link to the website where you can electronically see all so far published issues is at: www.nsrv.sk/?pl=12&article=59.

In this intermittent newsletter there are also contacts for each of the departments of the Slovak Network. They will surely be glad to provide you with suitable suggestions for the visits of implemented RDP projects within the frame of your specialized excursion to Slovakia or will help you to find suitable partners for the projects of cooperation. ■



Looking back at 8th round of Rural Development Programme 2014-2020

Text: Team of authors

Receiving of the applications for subsidy in 8th round of RDP took place within the period of 8th – 29th October 2019. Apart from the investments into food processing companies, diversification of agricultural activity, education and projects of cooperation the applicants could also utilize the possibility to apply for subsidy in the frame of forestry operations which can help

in solving the current situation in combating the bark beetle. The conditions of the support of forestry machinery were then purposefully adapted for a better applicability in combating the calamity including a greater support for the small forest owners. Altogether there were 2381 Applications for Subsidy registered for the amount of 2 968 954 837 Czech crowns.

Table no. 1:

Summary of the registered Applications for subsidy 8th round of Rural Development Programme 2014-2020

Operation/ intention	Recommendation	Substitute	Not recommended		Total	
	Number of applications	Claim for Subsidy (Kč)	Number of applications	Claim for Subsidy (Kč)	Number of applications	Claim for Subsidy (Kč)
1. 1. 1	15	5 115 467				
1. 2. 1	8	4 460 517				
4. 2. 1a	127	221 743 492	40	98 822 667	77	94 407 233
4. 2. 1b	103	331 335 388	34	96 168 540	107	161 688 804
4. 2. 1c	24	54 334 303			1	3 937 500
6. 4. 1a	355	388 207 586	37	47 297 575		
6. 4. 1b	61	61 366 225				
6. 4. 2a	59	146 106 932	16	43 735 107	13	21 322 845
6. 4. 2b	4	12 001 500				
8. 3. 1	8	30 754 851	4	16 774 186	7	22 548 117
8. 4. 1	62	123 052 739	9	53 026 773	16	76 661 138
8. 4. 2	3	7 050 452				
8. 5. 1	153	37 074 662	9	5 358 697	2	150 900
8. 5. 2	27	34 230 683	7	13 987 083	73	77 997 349
8. 5. 3	10	101 863 112				
8. 6. 1	648	232 067 238	40	31 336 716	61	31 368 635
16. 3. 1a	108	219 310 199	39	51 828 210		
16. 3. 1b	4	3 575 646				
16. 3. 1c	9	6 360 770				
16. 4. 1a	1	525 000				
Grand total	1789	2 020 536 762	235	458 335 554	357	490 082 521

Source: SAIF

A big change for the applicants is the administrative simplification from the point of view of awarding the contracts where price marketing was replaced by closed bids. Adding on the supplements for the contracts to the application for subsidy is in 8th round of RDP as follows:

- The supposed value of the contract is lower than 500 000 Czech crowns without VAT – price marketing and its sources are like before submitted only to the Application for Payment. The date for submitting the other supplements for the Application is 7th January 2020 by 6pm.
- The supposed value of the contract is equal or higher than 500 000 Czech crowns without VAT and at the same time is equal or lower than 2 000 000 Czech crowns without VAT in case of a contract of supplying and/or service or 6 000 000 Czech crowns without VAT in case of a contract for building work – all the price marketings and their sources are submitted together with other supplements for Application for subsidy.

If the applicant has in the Application for subsidy only price marketing, the date for submitting of supplements is 7th January 2020 by 6pm.

- With competitive tendering/procurement procedure possibly in combination with price marketing the date for submitting of supplements is 18th February 2020 by 6pm.

We also remind you about a new condition for the applicants in 8th round of receiving of applications (General part of Rules for Applicants, Chapter 4., letter II, which concerns the entry in the Record keeping of Data about the Real Owners. The applicant must be according to the law about public registers (law no. 304/2013 Sb.) recorded in the Register of Data about Real Owners. If the applicant is not recorded in the Register of Data about Real Owners and will not amend this deficiency not even at the request of SAIF (therefore within the limit of standard supplementing of the application) then the administration of his/her Application for subsidy will be terminated. ■



Kids Corner

Home bird feeder

Text: Team of authorss, **photo:** Pixabay, NRN archive

In winter you have a chance to observe little birdies who come for something to eat into the bird feeder. You can most frequently see great tit and blue tit, house sparrow or tree sparrow, common blackbird, greenfinch or bullfinch.

It is the best to fill the feeder with seeds, most often sunflower seeds, walnuts or it is possible to buy winter mixtures of various seeds. Definitely do not feed the birdies with the kitchen leftovers, rotting and mouldy food can be dangerous for them!

It is very often the case that the food in the bird feeder is essential for the birds so that they can survive till spring, so we are going to teach you how you can make such feeder for them.

You will need:

- Beef suet (available at the butcher's)
- Seeds (we have got winter mixture of seeds for birdies)
- String
- Coconut shell/ Cones (preferably pine ones)

1. First decide where you want to place the mixture for birdies. We are going to pour the mixture both into coconut shells and into cones. It is good to split the coconut shell into two halves like two bowls. Drill a hole into each of them and thread the string through it. The bowl will be hanging from the tree by this string. If you are going to put your suet on the cones then create a hook on them on which you can attach the string.



2. Melt suet cut into small cubes in a saucepan. It is enough to have the cooker on the low heat, the suet melts quickly.

3. Put the mixture of seeds into the melted suet (make sure it is not hot) and stir thoroughly.



4. Immerse the cones into the mixture. When suet starts to congeal take out the cones and squeeze them so that the suet gets into them as deep as possible. Pour the remaining mixture into the bowls made from coconut shells.

5. Once the suet congeals hang up the feeders and watch which birdie will come for its snack.



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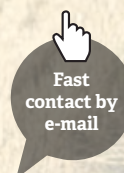
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