



National Rural Network Malta

Overview of developments in the NRN Consultation Process within the 6 thematic working groups

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Managing Authority



Rural Development Programme for Malta 2007-2013

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

Europe Investing in Rural Areas



So Far.....

6 Themes with 6 Working Groups

- + **Increasing returns to the fresh produce sector, and improving efficient input use**
- + **Improving the long-term sustainability of the livestock sector in Malta**
- + **Food processing and adding value – establishing quality chains and new products**
- + **Direct sales of fresh produce**
- + **Making a high quality rural visitor experience**
- + **Enhancing the landscape and adapting to future water challenges**

1st Meeting

- × **Purpose of meetings explained**
- × **Targets explained**
- × **Participants given an opportunity to express themselves**



2nd Meeting

SWOT analysis

- **Strengths**
- **Weaknesses**
- **Opportunity**
- **Threats**

Theme 01- SWOT Analysis

Increasing returns to the fresh produce sector, and improving efficient input use

Strengths

- × **Fresh and quality Produce for the consumer**
- × **Improvement of landscape-farmers are the main actors in the maintenance of rural landscapes**
- × **Dedication of the farmers**
- × **Knowledgeable through years of experience inherited through generations**
- × **Strong sector is a safety net in the event of global shortages.**

Weaknesses

- × **Aging farming population**
 - × **MEPA not permitting building of storage rooms and other structures close to fields**
 - × **Low prices due to competition from cheap imports.**
 - × **Local products not promoted enough on TV and other media.**
 - × **Lack of representation – no Minister for agriculture, co-ops and P/O with inadequate leaders**
 - × **Lack of co-operation between farmers**
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Theme 01- SWOT Analysis

Increasing returns to the fresh produce sector, and improving efficient input use

Opportunities

- ✘ **Quality Standards should be in place to encourage farmers to produce high quality products.**
- ✘ **Farmers should explore more exportation opportunities.**
- ✘ **Additional training to be offered to farmers in regards to improved quality, grading, cross-compliance, etc**
- ✘ **Funds should be invested for the promotion and marketing of local produce.**

Threats

- ✘ **No agricultural representation on MEPA board. Sector is not adequately represented and its voice cannot be heard.**
- ✘ **Not enough incentive to full time farmers to continue their trade.**
- ✘ **EU rules are same for all MS. This poses a disadvantage for Malta. MT has specific needs due to its size.**
- ✘ **In new programme, larger farmers will be required to adhere to more regulations.**
- ✘ **Lack of funding for cooperatives. Coops had very limited opportunities for funding under the current programme.**

Theme 02- SWOT Analysis

Improving the long-term sustainability of the livestock sector in Malta

Strengths

- × **Quality of Maltese fresh products**
- × **Small size of Malta allows for:**
 - + **Traceability**
 - + **Transport/distribution**
 - + **Direct selling**
 - + **Freshness of products**
- × **Product Diversity**
- × **Cooperatives that are already in place**
- × **Known local Brands (Benna, Majjal ta'Malta)**

Weaknesses

- × **Water and Electricity Bills**
 - + **Weather conditions**
 - + **PV panels**
- × **Lack of funds to improve sustainability of industry**
- × **MEPA red-tape to improve industry**
- × **Cheap imports effect sales of local products.**
- × **Lack of enforcement/ traceability**
- × **Weak consumer education**
- × **Small size (economies of scale)**
- × **Lack of government support for Local Products**
- × **Animal productivity lower when compared with other EU breeders**

Theme 03- SWOT Analysis

Food processing and adding value – establishing quality chains and new products

Strengths

- ✘ **Higher standards in Hygiene and animal welfare**
- ✘ **Increase in production of olives and viticulture**
- ✘ **More rubble walls have been constructed**
- ✘ **More land is being tilled**
- ✘ **Programme acted as a catalyst to investment and upgrading**
- ✘ **R & D has improved.**

Weaknesses

- ✘ **“Grey water” not available for agriculture**
- ✘ **More and better marketing of Maltese products**
- ✘ **Operational cost increased, while export prices remain the same**
- ✘ **Not enough efforts to protect farmer from fluctuation of prices**
- ✘ **No policy for agro-tourism is on hand.**
- ✘ **Not enough attention given toward value added products (e.g. Organic products)**

Theme 04- SWOT Analysis

Direct sales of fresh produce

Strengths

- × **Selling for 'cash' – direct income and direct control of price by farmer**
- × **Product Control & Presentation – Control on quantity, quality and variety**
- × **Consumer will get a genuine product**
- × **Direct contact with the consumer- feedback form consumer, thereby producing what consumer wants**
- × **Consumer gets fresh produce**
- × **Grading of Local produce**
- × **Identified as a local product (own certification)**

Weaknesses

- × **Farmers need to put in more investment**
- × **Direct market is small but wholesale market is big.**
- × **Lack of organization and therefore less power**
- × **More time needed to produce and sell – more human resources needed**

Theme 04- SWOT Analysis

Direct sales of fresh produce

Opportunities

- × **Marketing opportunities**
- × **Grouping themselves together**
- × **Farm modernization**
- × **Agro-tourism**
- × **Educating the public**
- × **Grading and labeling of product.**
- × **New Markets**

Threats

- × **Imported produce and traceability**
 - × **Government bureaucracy**
 - × **The health of the seller.**
 - × **Laws are not equal for all.**
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Theme 05- SWOT Analysis

Making a high quality rural visitor experience

Strengths

- × **Today farmers are more appreciated**
- × **Farmers provide a “free” service to the community. The upkeep of the rural area**
- × **Local fresh products**
- × **Managed coastal areas and landscapes**
- × **Works/projects done by local councils in rural areas**
- × **Wide consultation**
- × **Cultural routes/trails**

Weaknesses

- × **Rights and status of farms**
 - × **Aging farm population**
 - × **Concept of sun and sea**
 - × **Lack of marketing**
 - × **Rural tourism (countryside) due to “smallness” difficult to sell to tourists**
 - × **Limit in capacity building (people limitations)**
 - × **Mentality (closed, secluded)**
 - × **Fragmented land parcels**
 - × **Difficult to obtain Government land.**
 - × **No policy structure for rural tourism**
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Theme 05- SWOT Analysis

Making a high quality rural visitor experience

Opportunities

- ✘ **Source of income through rural tourism for farmers**
- ✘ **Increase tourist arrivals during shoulder months**
- ✘ **Rural tourism will strengthen one of the major economic pillars (tourism)**
- ✘ **Malta can offer something rural different from other countries**
- ✘ **Maximize on the proximity of attractions due to size of Malta**
- ✘ **Networking between organization**

Threats

- ✘ **Full time farmers not given enough value to entice new farmers**
- ✘ **Identity of local products/lack of authenticity**
- ✘ **Land use and land abandonment**
- ✘ **Unfair competition**
- ✘ **Property rights**
- ✘ **“walks” do not give any benefit to farmers**
- ✘ **Loss of biodiversity through mass tourism**
- ✘ **Lack of co-ordination between Government departments**
- ✘ **MEPA policies makes it difficult to operate**
- ✘ **Distance between bureaucrats and people in the industry**

Theme 06- SWOT Analysis

Enhancing the landscape and adapting to future water challenges

Strengths

- × **Farmers are knowledgeable about their sector**
- × **Farmers have invested heavily in their land and thus the chances to abandon their land are very remote**
- × **LFA and AEM helped farmers to take good care of some aspects of the landscape.**
- × **Unique character of Maltese country side due to rubble walls**
- × **Farmers understand importance of water as a major resource**
- × **Considerable number of existent damaged water reservoirs could be used.**

Weaknesses

- × **MEPA bureaucracy and policies sometimes work against sector**
- × **Small parcels of land are becoming more fragmented**
- × **Outdated laws especially on land entitlement.**
- × **No real measure of volume of water used by sector**
- × **Electricity meter rental rates are high**
- × **One AEM Measure capped the number of trees a land owner could be given financial remuneration on.**
- × **Government Land too expensive for farmers to bid on.**

Theme 06- SWOT Analysis

Enhancing the landscape and adapting to future water challenges

Opportunities

- ✘ Using recycled stones to build rubble walls
- ✘ Rubble walls could be owned by Government and then sub-contacted.
- ✘ Repairing existing water reservoirs which have been damaged
- ✘ Catch more rain water by making use of water reservoirs
- ✘ Using water from cleaned up valleys.
- ✘ Educate farmer on optimization of water use in irrigation (better water management.
- ✘ Define “freshness” to favour local produce and thus make the sector more attractive to new farmers.

Threats

- ✘ Increase in land abandonment
- ✘ Aging farming population
- ✘ Lack of interest from young people
- ✘ Market challenges from cheap imports making farming not viable
- ✘ Low water quality
- ✘ Failure to continue restoration of rubble walls due to time and money.
- ✘ Low grade imports compete with local products.

3rd Meeting

- ✘ The CCRI team will join the working groups for the 3rd Meeting.
 - ✘ The CCRI team, together with the Working Groups will identify activities from the SWOT analysis that can formulate the 2014-2020 programme.
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Thank you
