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2.

### **Slovenia and organic farming**

Slovenia has 2 million inhabitants, 43.7% live in rural areas.

Slovenia covers an area of 20.271 km<sup>2</sup> of which 56.1% is forest and 39.9% is agricultural land. 10,40% of this land is cultivated organic. We have more than 72.000 agricultural holdings with an average size of 6.6 hectare. Average organic farm has 13 hectares. (Resource: <https://ec.europa.eu>, <https://www.stat.si/statweb>).

3.

### **Eko Prlekija d.o.o., so.p. community for the development of organic farming**

In summer 2017, Boštjan Kosec took the initiative to bring together organic farmers from our region. He and Jožef Zadavec were already selling young beef meat to the end consumers. Eight founding members founded the company Eko Prlekija in September 2017. These organic farmers from Prlekija have combined their knowledge and strength to enter the market together. Among them are cattle and sheep breeders, fruit and vegetable producers, a wine grower and a farmer with herbs. The founding members have 200 hectares of land.

4.

Today, the company Eko Prlekija buys organic products from 47 members, who are farming on 800 hectares. We are the first Slovenian farmers group. 500 end consumers from all Slovenian regions and 16 public institutions from our and neighborhood regions buy our products.

5.

### **Our offer**

We buy and sell only organic products. Young beef, pork and chicken meat, eggs, milk and dairy products, goat dairy products, fruits, vegetables, pickled vegetables, juices, vinegar, oils, nuts and more. 80% of our income comes from meat.

Consumers are becoming more aware of their power in choosing healthier food. But they also want to know where the food they buy is grown and processed. That is why personal contact with our customers is very important to us.

We also help our suppliers to prepare their crops and products and we help with sales and logistics.

#### 6.

Every month we make a product list of everything our farmers have at their disposal. We deliver our products every 14 days to our end consumers and in between to public institutions. This way we optimize costs and it is more friendly for the environment.

#### 7.,8.,9.,10.

We also sell on some local farmers markets, local events, we organize open house days on our farms, and we are often present in local radio stations and television programs. Everywhere we go, we inform people about our excellent products and also about ourselves. The best advertisement, however, are our satisfied customers.

#### 11.

In 2019 we had 135.000 € income and in 2020 190.000 €, despite the Corona crisis. We have suffered a large drop in income from public institutions, but revenue from end consumers has increased. We deliver all our products in person, so we are maintaining personal contact with both our producers and customers.

We got support funds from two public tenders:

- 55.400 € for three years (2021-2023) for establishment and development of short supply chains and local markets,
- 120.000 € for four years for establishment of producer groups and organizations in the agricultural and forestry sector.

#### 12.

##### **Success factors**

1. innovative approach and initiative from one leading farmer,
2. strong support in the core of the foundation,
3. personal contact with all our customers,
4. we help our farmers,
5. very important was the support of public funds.

We are very positive orientated organic farmers from Prlekija. We love our land and want to pass it on to our children in a better condition than it was when we got it into "management".

Our vision is to continue to:

- offer quality products to our customers,
- expand our offer of various products,
- develop and grow together with our farmers and
- offer consulting services to motivate conventional farmers for organic farming.