



Farm-to-face cosmetics - slow luxury

Production and sale of natural, ecologically certified cosmetics and the creation of a 'farm-to-face' approach that is unique within the skincare industry.

EAFRD-funded projects

Location: Knin, Dalmatia, Croatia

Programming period: 2014-2020

Priorities: P2 - Competitiveness

P4 - Ecosystems management

P6 - Social inclusion and local development

Focus Areas: Entry of skilled/younger farmers / Biodiversity restoration, preservation & enhancement / Diversification & job creation

Measures: M06 - Farm & business development

M11 - Organic farming

M13 - Areas with constraints

Funding:	Total budget	140 779 (EUR)
	EAFRD	96 665 (EUR)
	National/Regional	14 114 (EUR)
	Private/Own funds	30 000 (EUR)

Timeframe: 2018 - 2023

Project promoter: OPG Brankica Borović - VIKTORIA Natural Cosmetics

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managed to close the production cycle, and this 'farm-to-face' approach that is unique within the skincare industry allows them to guarantee the traceability and high quality of their main ingredients.

The initiative has created new jobs, enhanced the farm's self-sustainability and accelerated business growth, enabling the family to live and work their dream in harmony with nature. As a result, they have launched two certified cosmetic lines made from immortelle and donkey milk. These products are now distributed in over 100 stores and have gained significant media attention. The brand is currently poised to expand beyond Croatia.

Project results

- Before Viktoria's Corner opened, there were no tourist visits to Radučić (196 inhabitants). Now, tourists from around the world come specifically every day to this corner for an exclusive experience. The company also organises workshops for children, tours of the laboratory, distillery and farm, and team-building workshops.
- The company has greatly increased the visibility of rural areas via its publicity and awareness work, featuring regularly on national and private broadcasters for the past five years.
- They have also proved that it is possible to create successful premium cosmetics from agricultural raw materials in rural areas, setting an example to all of those who are becoming increasingly interested in the sector and encouraging people to return to the area.

Summary

From 2017 to 2020, the Borović family farm utilised CAP support to facilitate the development of a permanent almond plantation for future cosmetic products. They also launched a new non-agricultural activity, focusing on the production and sale of natural cosmetics using ecologically certified immortelle (*helichrysum arenarium*) and other medicinal plants. This involved building a certified laboratory called 'Viktoria's Corner', certifying over ten luxury cosmetic products, and opening a webshop and social media channels. Essential equipment, including a distillation machine and a delivery vehicle, was purchased to ensure a self-sustained production process from cultivation to market. The family has





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- Their ecological production methods are helping to restore, preserve and enhance biodiversity.
- They have established a collaboration with Algebra University, Zagreb, with another one planned for Babson College, Boston, USA.

Key lessons and recommendations

With the help of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), along with the family's motivation and vision, the company has created a premium cosmetic brand from scratch while remaining faithful to nature and humankind.

The company has entire control over its traceability. Big skincare conglomerates dedicate huge budgets to guaranteeing traceability, yet for this brand, it comes naturally.

The project holder is also proud of the life that she is creating for her daughter. She believes many children could grow up the same way, at one with nature, bearing witness to their parents' daily striving to create and live their dreams. Nothing would be impossible for those children.

Context

Caught in the rhythm of modern life, at one point the Borović family realised that they needed to do something for themselves that would have a healing effect on them and help them cope with the hectic pace of everyday life. So, they decided to plant immortelle (*helichrysum arenarium*) on their family property in Radučić.

Working in the field may have tired their bodies, but it certainly rested their souls, and this took them more and more into nature. Cicero said: "If we follow nature as our leader, we will never get lost". Guided by this thought, the family created the immortelle plantation and added an almond and an iris plantation. They equipped and registered a laboratory for cosmetics and thus began their adventure.

Having divided their lives for a long time between Dalmatia and Italy, the family has taken the best of both cultures and educated themselves so that they could interact with nature in the right way. They were keen to study aromatherapy, natural cosmetics, cultivation and processing of medicinal plants in Croatia, as well as in Italy and France.

Objectives

The Borović family set out to raise the level of competitiveness and sustainability of the local economy of which they were a part. They wanted to encourage the production, processing, marketing and promotion of agricultural products, as well as certified cosmetics made from local and native agricultural products.

The family wanted to develop a sustainable farm-to-face premium cosmetic brand. This would bring with it other benefits. It would create a certain number of jobs (at least two employees) and enable their company to become a role model for an innovative approach and marketing campaigns by small agricultural brands.

To succeed, they needed to find the right solution for the right market, respecting the quality and effort of farm-to-face cosmetic products. They also wanted to make their products and methods of production sound realistic as opposed to idealistic or utopian.

Activities

In April 2018, using Measure 6 (support for starting a business for young farmers), Brankica Borović purchased the machinery required to set up permanent almond plantations. She acquired one hectare of reclaimed land deemed uncultivable for our almond plantation, with a view to producing almond oil intended for sensitive skin for her farm-to-face line of cosmetics within a few years.

Brankica purchased a tractor, tractor tiller, water tank, mulcher, syringe and digger, and was able to plant 350 almond trees on the hectare of land.

In February 2019, she and her family set about the second part of their activity: the production and sale of cosmetic products based on immortelle and other medicinal plants.

One of the first steps was the complete construction of the laboratory to enable the production of certified cosmetics. Being able to close the circle of production guarantees the traceability and quality of the cosmetics. The family-owned company also needed to acquire equipment for the partial automation of the production and to ensure hygienic conditions. This included a boiler for the distillation of essential oils to transform herbs into cosmetic raw materials.





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The company set up a website to enable sales via an online store, bringing it closer to the goal of direct sales. To provide a delivery service in Croatia, the family purchased a second-hand vehicle.

At the same time, they were required to prepare project documentation with data on the various cosmetic products as well as how they intended to follow good manufacturing practice.

From 2020 onwards, the company concentrated on creating media awareness and was able to appear on radio and television shows on national and private stations, with interviews with all major Croatian newspapers and magazines. A documentary on the family farm's work was produced by Croatian national broadcaster HRT TV and it went on to receive the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists star. The company also received the 2023 GRAZIA Beauty Award for the best shower gel with donkey milk.

Main results

Before the Borović family opened Viktoria's Corner, there were no tourist visits to Radučić (a village with 196 inhabitants). Now, tourists from around the world come specifically to this corner every day for an exclusive experience. The company also organises workshops for children, guided tours of the laboratory, distillery and farm, and team-building workshops.

The project has greatly increased the visibility of rural areas, via publicity and awareness work through national television and newspapers. The company has regularly featured across national and private broadcasters for the past five years.

They have also proved that it is possible to create successful premium cosmetics from agricultural raw materials in rural areas, setting an example to all of those who are becoming increasingly

interested in the sector and encouraging people to return to the area. Furthermore, their ecological production methods are helping to restore, preserve and enhance biodiversity.

The company has established collaborations with Algebra University Zagreb, featuring as a case study for the development of digital marketing strategy and participating in a seminar on brand development. The creation of an entrepreneurship strategy in the USA market is also planned for the next semester with Babson College in Boston, USA.

Key lessons

With the help of EAFRD, along with the family's motivation and vision, the company has created a premium cosmetic brand from scratch, but the key priority always had to be a commitment to remaining faithful to nature and humankind.

This has enabled the company to maintain complete control over its traceability. While big skincare conglomerates dedicate huge budgets to guaranteeing traceability, for this project, it comes naturally.

The project holder is also proud of the life that she is creating for her six-year-old daughter and strongly believes that many children could grow up in the same way, at one with nature, bearing witness to their parents' daily striving to create and live their dream. Nothing would be impossible for those children.

Additional informations:

Instagram:

https://www.instagram.com/viktoria_prirodnakozmetika/

Facebook:

https://www.facebook.com/viktoriaprirodnakozmetika?locale=hr_HR

Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLK9KkWnMLw> 30-second

LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/opg-brankica-borovi%C4%87-3a453025b/>

