



The Nordic-Baltic Leader Cooperation Award



The Best Local Resources and Environment Project – APPLICATION FORM

Please send the completed form and photos via e-mail to LeaderTNC@maainfo.ee

Deadline for submission is **17th May 2013**

Information: www.maainfo.ee/LeaderTNC

You can apply your project only in one category. If the project seems to be suitable for more than one category then please choose the category that fits the best.

Examples of transnational cooperation projects expected to apply in this category are:

Projects which have developed the use of local resources;

Local food and local food supply chains;

Better use of local raw materials;

Projects to protect the environment;

Activities in environmentally protected areas e.g. organic farming;

Ecological entrepreneurship;

Development of renewable or alternative sources of energy.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Title of the project			
Growing Gastronoms			
Information on the transnational cooperation project			
Start date:	March 2012	End date if completed, or the current stage:	December 2013 (the two English partners must finish in June 2013).
Duration of the (planned) actions in months:	22	Total project budget (in EUR):	240586,09
Countries involved:	3	Number of partners:	5



List of participating partners (LAGs and other organisations involved)		
Lead partner:	Country:	Project location:
LAG Pays Vallée du Loir	France	<i>Pays de la Loir</i>
Partners' names:	Country:	Project location:
Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership	England	Shropshire
Central Warwickshire Villages LAG	England	Warwickshire
MTÜ Hiidlaste Koostöökogu	Estonia	Hiiumaa
MTÜ Saarte Koostöökogu West Estonian Islands LAG	Estonia	Saaremaa

Project contact: (in Nordic-Baltic region)			
Title (Mr/Ms) and name:	Ms Sulvi Munk Ms Reet Kokovkin	Name of organisation:	Saarte Koostöökogu MTÜ/ West Estonian Islands Partnership LAG LAG Hiidlaste Koostöökogu/LAG Hiiumaa Cooperation Network
Position in the project:	coordinators	Address of organisation:	Tallinna mnt 57, 93811, Kuressaare, Saaremaa, Vabrikväljak 1, 92411 Kärkla
E-mail:	sulvi.munk@skk.ee reet@kogu.hiiumaa.ee	Telephone (inc. country code):	+372 56210102 +372 4622807
Languages spoken:	Estonian English	Project website:	Saaremaa: http://esto-growinggastronauts.webnode.com/ Hiiumaa: http://hiiusellid.webnode.com Warwickshire: http://growing-gastronauts.eu/index.html Vallée du Loir : http://growinggastronauts.wix.com/cooperation

Person submitting project (if different):			
Person submitting project (if different):		Name of organisation:	

Title (Mr/Ms) and name:	Ms Sulvi Munk Ms Reet Kokovkin	Name of organisation:	Saarte Koostöökogu MTÜ/ West Estonian Islands Partnership LAG LAG Hiidlaste Koostöökogu/LAG Hiiumaa Cooperation Network
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E-mail:	sulvi.munk@skk.ee reet@kogu.hiiumaa.ee	Telephone (inc. country code):	+37256210102 + 4622807
Languages spoken:	English, Estonian	Website:	Saaremaa: http://esto-growinggastronauts.webnode.com/ Hiiumaa: http://hiiusellid.webnode.com

Description of the project

Summary of the project (up to 100 words)

The main objective of the project is to strengthen links between schools and local food producers. The aim of the project is to study the implementation options of short supply chain from producers and processors "from farm to pot", exchange experiences and to learn from each other.

The second objective is to teach children practical examples, farm work, food preparation, etc.

The project activities are divided into two groups:

1. Activities oriented towards school children;

Called "farm to fork", it includes activities during school hours or after school, it helps to better understand the whole process starting from farmers contribution till the final product is in the market by offering students to see and experience the whole process – in their own country or in some other country.

2. Activities oriented towards staff of schools and pre-schools/nurseries.

Together with partners they are organizing a variety of events and thematical days, which are related to topics of local food and eating habits, such as exchange of school cooks in individual partner country, in England and in France; introducing the values of local food to children.

As the result of the project, a number of movie clips will be produced to make the learning process more interesting together with the interactive cookbook, that is translated into English, French and Estonian.

Shared Objectives

Need for the project and background: Why the project was started, who developed the idea, what

kind of targets the project has or is expected to achieve and the main target groups? How the international dimension added value? (up to 100 words)

Adding value to local food products and shortening supply chains are very important objectives for all partner LAGs.

The topic was initially raised at an international conference in November 2010 on Hiiumaa. Together with a UK participant, we discussed the importance of ensuring that school age children were introduced to better food. Although the situation in Estonian and France schools is not as bad as in UK, the trends are disturbing: more and more products of school food are delivered from far away by big suppliers.

In 2011 all partners met in the Valle de Loir, France where we agreed that the most important idea is to increase the use of local products in school kitchens and to give out knowledge about healthy food to school-children through a cooperation programme of farms and schools.

Local products mean short distance and/or a small number of intermediaries between producers and consumers as well as jobs to local farmers, thus becoming an important tool for strengthening the local communities and municipalities.

Main Joint Activities

What kind of actions took place and where? Please include both - the joint and individual actions - which were undertaken by the partners. (up to 200 words)

1. Activities oriented towards school children - the programme is to build so called "farm to fork".

Activities in Estonian schools (children age 10-14)

- Food preparation and healthy eating workshops in schools;

One example:

<http://esto-growinggastronauts.webnode.com/news/tulekul-kohaliku-toidu-paev-%22kokkamine-on-lahe%22-salme-p%C3%B5hikoolis/>

- Farm visits and farm activities workshops (topics - milk, bakery, meat, organic farming, apples);

For Example: One study-day begins with a visit to a milk factory, and then continues with an organic dairy farm visit, and the day will end with a homemade ice-cream making workshop. Each study-day will include approximately 20-30 children.

- Participation in local food fairs;

- Garden design in school yards and gardening workshops;

- Practical language skill development for school children.

Activities between partner schools (7 Estonia , 5 France, 5 UK): Each participating Estonian school have its partner in the UK and France schools (children age 10-14).

There are parallel activities between partner schools across all 3 countries.

- Growing vegetables that are new to them. Partner schools of all three countries planted the same seeds (for example sunflowers) to see how it grows in their region and compare the effects of soil and climate (keeping a plant diary with photos of the plants at various stages);
- Introducing a vegetable dish to a partner school that we like but they might not! Estonian children shared a recipe of their favourite way to cook beetroot;
- All school children were keeping a food diary to be shared with partner schools in France & the UK.

One example:

<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B12FBJSmZWm2MHNESGhIb3BORXc/edit>

2. Activities oriented towards staff of schools and pre-schools/nurseries

- Training sessions for cooks about local and healthy food;
- Roundtable between local farmers and consumers (schools and kindergartens) .

3. Activities between LAGs.

- Exchange of experiences of project partners and stakeholders in Hiiumaa, Saaremaa, Valle de Loir during March 2012 - March 2013. Study tour to England is planned in September 2013.
The stakeholders are school cooks, officials responsible for the food supply of school kitchens, teachers, municipality leaders, restaurant owners, farmers, school children;
- Creating a virtual cook-book: assembling recipes and photos of the practical children cooking classes; shooting video clips to illustrate the process of cooking <http://hiiusellid.webnode.com/news/kuidas-teha-v%3c3%b5id/> The process is ongoing
- Publishing flyers about the project (example: <http://hiiusellid.webnode.com/news/leaflet-for-hiiumaa-growing-gastronauts-is-published/>)

Results and Transferability

What was achieved? What is the added value of the project? Can the results or methodology of the project be used by others? Will the project or actions started during the project continue after completion? (up to 100 words)

The project is ongoing, but the results are already visible:

- children's awareness of the benefits of local food has been risen;
- children cooking classes have been successful, because children are very interested in taking part of them.

The enriched program of field visits, practical workshops, and shared activities with students in partner schools in other countries were exciting and engaging. All participants have had a "dirty hands" experience – they have seen how the food they eat daily is grown and prepared. Now, they know more about their own food situation as well as the food cultures of the partner countries. This is making them better consumers, they are becoming more open and curious.

School cooks and responsible persons are taking the issue of local food very seriously. We get reports that schools are already converting from regular food to local and ecological food. Cooks are eager to get trainings and participate in seminars to learn more.

The whole topic of local food is in focus of both - local and national - media. Estonian nationwide channel TV3 has already produced a TV-program with participation of one of partner schools.

Through the videos, web sites and recipe banks all actions are shared with other schools and with the relevant actors in the local communities of all partner countries.

The relating projects in this case are exchange of restaurant chefs between Estonia and France that took place in March 2013, to ensure the rise of the quality and the use of local products. This activity was a great success and will have a concrete impact to the community after the lifetime of the project.

The issue of local food products will continue both nationally and transnationally targeted to improve the quality of local food and the legislation, and to raise the awareness of parents, decision makers and public.

Lessons learnt

What new experiences were learnt? Were there any educational aspects? (up to 100 words)

We learned that publicity is very interested in the local food topic – it includes children and parents, cooks and decision makers. The project is a perfect tool to learn from each other - children and adults, school level and municipality. It has been very easy to communicate with stakeholders, because the need for knowledge in the matter of the local and healthy food is very strong.

Children learned by doing. This should be obvious but sometimes it is useful to demonstrate it. In order to have effective impacts on the attitudes and behaviours of primary school children, it is essential to physically involve them in to the learning process. Modern technologies, such as SKYPE provided an effective first step in allowing children to engage with their peers in other countries.

Why the project should receive the award.

1. Benefits for the development of local resources use or the environment.

How have the regions, organisations and stakeholders who participated in the project benefited? (up to 100 words)

- The project increased the knowledge of local food sources and encouraged the trust in the products of local farmers. On Hiiumaa a school signed a contract with local farmers to grow vegetables for the school. On Saaremaa one school made a school plot in one organic farm and maintained it over the summer;
- The benefit for the children is obvious; the eagerness of children participating in the project is very satisfactory. Children learnt how to use local food in the cooking process, they learnt that it is fun to cook from the beginning not just microvaving some half-ready stuff. They learnt why it is healthy to eat local food and why fast food is not good for their body and mind. They also get connected with children from partner countries to exchange the knowledge. Children learnt how their school food is being processed and that it is time and labour consuming to make tasty food. They learn how vegetables grow and how milk gets from the farm to the shop.

2. Transnational Cooperation and Partnership

How has this project promoted cooperation and partnership locally and transnational? What kind of stakeholders groups were involved - during and/or after - the project? (up to 100 words)

With the help of the project they have created local and transnational partnerships:

- Partnerships and direct supply chains between local farmers/food producers and consumers (school kitchens) ;

For example: at first we looked for partner schools that cared about and wanted to initiate local food activities and wanted to increase the use of locally sourced food products in their school kitchens. Immediately, the NGOs, Saare Organic Farmers Association and Saare Farmers Association agreed to be partners. Both organisations help to plan farm visits and farm related activities. Also Organic Farmers helped with garden planning, planting and on how to grow vegetables using organic methods.

- Partnership between children in the schools, teachers and parents discussing food quality in the school;
- Transnational partnerships between project partners, teachers and students of partner schools; partnerships of restaurants chefs.

This list will be longer after the end of the project and during the next developments on issue of the local food. The results in France included changes in the infrastructure. A Leader project was funded to set up a logistics centre (farmer to centre; centre to school) to help to connect local food with schools.

3. Level of innovation

What was new or innovative about the project? This could be a unique or specific new action, solution, result or effect. (up to 100 words)

It's a new approach to have our action groups focus on the origin of the food in schools and to do so with international cooperation. It's not uncommon for action groups to be engaged in activities in support of local food, but it is unique to approach the school food issue through promotional methods and to increase the use of local ingredients by raising the awareness of this issue by involving international partner schools.

The innovative aspect of this project is the cooperation between municipalities, children, parents, farms, legislative bodies and public. Also teaching children the importance of and cooking from the local products, hands-on, not just at home but also to appreciate the work done by school cooks.

Initially there were difficulties in coordinating activities between partner schools because the level of IT usage was very different. Through sharing experiences, especially using SKYPE conferencing most of these were gradually overcome.

The project has been extensively documented with photographs and videos which the partners plan to use to bring their case to local and regional decision makers.

<http://uudised.err.ee/index.php?0&popup=video&id=54462>

4. Impact on regional development

What are the positive effects of the project for those who participated, particularly partners in the Nordic-Baltic regions? (up to 100 words)

The impact of the project and the program of local food as a whole on regional development is huge: the more local consumers appreciate local food the more benefit it brings to the local farming and food processing. As a side effect, the progress of ecologically friendly and sustainable farming makes a huge impact on preserving traditional landscapes and farming culture. The project has positive impact on the Baltic partners, as well as on the Nordic-Baltic partnership: cooperation projects on promoting local and ecologically friendly food are currently initiated between Hiiumaa, Saaremaa and Gotland.

Estonian LAGs are continuing to support local food activities and are the initiators of community gardens, farm markets or in-school gardens.

5. Any other elements of the project which might be interesting?

Throughout the project development has been flexible. During the project, participants became very interested in promoting local and healthy food to their parents. In school meetings and workshops for parents they also discussed the initial programme of this topic.

Also there is a new initiative exploring how to intensify the impact of future workshops and how to make them more attractive. For example, in the next autumn, schools are organising family Apple Days which includes a visit to see Triinu Schneider from Hiiumaa and her mobile apple factory. We expect that this could promote the growing and using apples to make juice and other products in our area.

PHOTOS

Please send at least 5 photos (minimum 1000 Kb) of project activities separately to an e-mail: LeaderTNC@maainfo.ee. Please give every photo a **title, location, date and the name of the photographer**. In case the photos are too big for sending by e-mail, then you should contact organizers to get some additional instructions for uploading them.

Please note that organisations including the Rural Network Units may use these photos free of charge in the publication of information on nominated projects, on the competition website, in the best practice databases and in presentations about the competition. Photos will be not used for commercial purposes.

Collected information

Provided TNC project Information will be used only for competition purposes. It may be used in the publication of information on nominated projects, on the competition website, in the best practice databases and in presentations about the competition. Personal information will be kept confidential.