

CEEweb for Biodiversity

Learning by doing: how can Serbian small-scale farmers use the Visegrad model of economically and environmentally sustainable farming?

Small scale farming is of key importance – not only in providing local income and subsistence, but also for maintaining biodiversity-rich traditional landscapes. The experience sharing and capacity building trip of Serbian small-scale farmers to the Czech Republic and Slovakia aims to present practical and replicable examples to local Serbian farmers and entrepreneurs. Juniperia and Daphne – Institute of Applied Ecology have put together a programme which will be interactive, varied, interesting and useful to the Serbian participants.

The fieldtrip will take place from Tuesday, 22nd September to Saturday 26th September. Participants will visit numerous local initiatives and enterprises: a local action group in Kyjov, the “Butterfly Paradise” – a local conservation through extensive sheep grazing initiative in Zdanice, a local company producing herb teas, mixtures and spices in Sonnentor, a cooperative company of wine producers “Templarske sklepy”, a nursery of traditional fruit varieties in Bojkovice, local fruit processing and fruit drying facilities and an old orchard in Hostetin, a traditional cattle farm in Podkylava, a small family farm “Etelka”, an association of organic farmers “Ekotrend Slovakia” in Prasník, Stupava organic farm and a Life project site.

We hope that this fieldtrip will motivate Serbian farmers to look for more out of the box solutions which combine financial profitability with nature conservation. Through its practical aspects, the trip will provide the participants with first-hand experience, the necessary knowledge and skills as well as the belief that success has been achieved by others and is possible to be realised in Serbia. Knowledge about socio-economic and environmental sustainability should be shared freely as our common good. When Serbia joins the European Union, we hope that its farmers will be better prepared to cope with the change and safeguard their traditional nature-friendly farming practices.

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Korea

More information:

Malgorzata Siuta, siuta@ceeweb.org +36-1-398-01-35