



2023 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title: -"Naša Zlatka" -Protect local farmers and promote tourism

Destination, Country: Zlatibor, The Republic of Serbia

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In the category: Destination Management Environment & Climate Thriving Communities
 Nature & Scenery Culture & Tradition Business & Marketing

The Story in a picture:

Promotion of the Dairy products



Summary:

The municipality of Cajetina and the Zlatiborski Eko Agrar, which is a non-profit organization formed by the municipality, protect small dairy farmers with less than eight cows by purchasing their milk and produce traditional Zlatibor regional specialties such as cheese and Kajmak(sour cream) under the original brand named "Naša Zlatka". They built up a distribution including hotels and restaurants in Zlatibor region and ensured that locals and tourists have the opportunity to enjoy the products. The Zlatibor Tourism Organization has also assisted and cooperated in brand promotion at the fairs and events, as well as in media introductions. This summer, a Mlekomat(milk vending machine) will be planned to set up next to the tourist information center in town, making it easier for tourists to purchase and experience the products.



Good Practice Story:

Destination description

Brief background of the destination.

Zlatibor is the most visited mountain resort in Serbia with a 130-year history of tourism, located in the municipality of Cajetina, 230 km from the capital Belgrade in western Serbia. Zlatibor is a region of spectacular landscapes, meadows, fields and pine forests, where three air currents merge to create a very healthy and unique air. For domestic travelers, the region is well known as a destination for health tourism, ecotourism, sports tourism and, during the snow season, winter sports. In Zlatibor, there are a lot of tourist attractive. Zlatibor is a destination for all generation. In recent years, the number of foreign visitors has increased gradually, some from neighboring countries, Asia, Europe, the USA and the Middle East. Local gastronomy is also an important factor in Tourism of Zlatibor. Thanks to the ideal climate and nature for livestock, the people of Zlatibor produce meat and dairy products that are unique to the region. They continue to produce these products according to their traditional ways and recipes.

Issues faced

Problems/issues solved with the Good Practice Story.

There are records of sheep, goats and pigs being raised in the Municipality of Cajetina area since around the 16th century, and livestock farming has long been a popular activity in the area. In mid-19th century and even later, raising cattle for trade was mostly developed in Zlatibor. However, in recent years, permanent decrease of the milk price and introduction of quota by big dairy companies force dairy producers on the territory of municipality to process milk surplus into cheese and sour cream which, due to the legal regulations, can be sold only at the green markets or through other channels which cannot absorb full quantities of the products. Therefore, dairy producers were forced to decrease milk production and cattle stock. Also, there were frequently salesman in the market who misuse the good reputation of the products from the region, selling cheese and kajmak named as Zlatiborski, although they have not been produced in Zlatibor. That misled buyers and harmed reputation of the traditional dairy products. These factors brought a direct harmful impact on the position of the dairy producers, decreased in the number of cattle and milk production and ultimately led to further decline of the dairy production to the region. For the purpose to protect small producers who are facing abovementioned difficulties in sustainably way, the project of "Naša Zlatka" was launched .

Methods, steps, and tools applied

Solutions implemented to address the sustainability problems or issues.

-The Municipality of Cajetina decided to launch a support program limited to producers who raise less than eight cows (livestock). In order to protect the local product and develop sustainable routes, the municipality designed the system to buy milk from registered farms from the territory of Cajetina and founded a new regional dairy brand, "Naša Zlatka" within the Eko Agrar DOO in September 2017 in the village of Kriva Reka. (Eko Agrar DOO was established in 2011 for the implementation of strategic goals of the Municipality of Čajetina in the field of agriculture, stated in the adopted planning documents (Strategy of Local Economic Development of the Municipality of Čajetina, Sustainable Development Strategy of the Municipality of Čajetina). Dairy is part of the EU-funded "FROM HILLS TO DAIRIES" project, which aims to strengthen the value chain of milk production in the cross-border area of Serbia - Montenegro. It is equipped with state-of-the-art equipment for processing 1,500 liters of milk per day into traditional products of this region, cheese and Kajmak. They pay the small producers 60-63 dinars per liter and organic producers 95 dinars for the purchase. This not only generates income for the producers, but also motivates them to become producers of local branded food products.

-In 2016 -2018, the EU-funded "FROM HILLS TO DAIRIES"(CBC SRB - MNE - CBC Programme Serbia – Montenegro/ 175.357,91 EUR) cross-border cooperation and sustainable rural development project, which aims to strengthen the value chain of milk production in the cross-border area of Serbia– Montenegro took place. Throughout this program, they could improve conditions for development of dairy sector as an opportunity for economic growth of rural rea, strengthened production capacities of individual farmers from the area in terms of quality and quantity of milk production. The lesson learnt from this project was putting together as “Primena Dobre Odgajavacke prakce u proizvodnji mleka (Application of Good Breeding, Practices in Milk Production)”, instructions such as ideal conditions of barn, feeding cows and milk hygrines and it is distributed to the farmers in the regions. In addition, for the need of the positioning of the dairy productions in the market, visual materials were created.

Key success factors

Critical elements that led to successfully solving the issues.

- Conditional restrictions limiting producers to eight cows or less, operations to pick up milk from them and the creation of original branded products using the latest technology also led to opportunities to produce new forms of local traditional products in Zlatibor. Branding through this has had a synergistic effect in the tourism sector, as food is one of the key determinants of a travel

destination. The main mission of "Naša Zlatka" is to preserve tradition and produce healthy, high-quality dairy products in Zlatibor, but it also results in branding the entire region.

- Collaboration with the tourism-related stakeholders (restaurants and hotels) was the perfect way to provide an opportunity to offer this directly to travelers. The products of "Naša Zlatka" are very unique and genuinely local product. The best approach to the traveler is the creation of opportunities to actually taste the products at the destination.

Lessons learned

Challenges faced while implementing the Good Practice and their solutions.

-In the beginning, farmers' production levels varied, and efforts were made to improve the knowledge and quality of small-scale producers through workshops and training for producers.

-Due to the declining population of the village, there were few producers, but the local government provided agricultural support funds, which helped to attract young people back to the village.

-Eko Agrar could purchase more milk but the problem is the limit in capacity. There are more farmers who want to cooperate and customers to buy the products. To solve that problem, the Municipality of Čajetina is planned to fund and create a new dairy in Kriva Reka, with a capacity of over 20 tons. It will be 10 times larger than the existing one that will remain in the service of organic milk production. Also, opening a modern tasting center where everyone will be able to taste the milk, cheese, cream is planned. At the moment, if you visit village of Kriva Reka, you can directly purchase the products for home use but there is no place yet in the center of Zlatibor. Plans are underway to install Mlekomat as well as to secure regular sales channels in the future.

Achievements and Results

Direct and indirect results of the Good Practice.

-One of the key elements was Eko Agrar's trademark of the guarantee "Good from Zlatibor". It is a trademark registered and acknowledged by the national level. It increases the placement and consumption of local products in the tourist offer of the municipality of Čajetina, encourages the development and production of groups of local products, raises the level of quality of marked products and tourist services, preserve authenticity and tradition, creativity and innovation. This trademark also applied to the products of "Naša Zlatka".

-The present subcontractors of "Naša Zlatka" are 40, and they are satisfied with the existing system and none of them quitted. 8 out of them are organic farmers now. In the future, we hope that all farmers will become organic farmers and that the dairy will be recognized for its organic products.

- About 60 kgs of kajmak and 220-230 kgs of cheese are made per day. As much as 90% of it is bought by Zlatibor hoteliers, and the rest by owners of smaller markets. "Naša Zlatka" has made 5 different types of cheese(mladi, zreli(different time), with herb, and with paprika) and kajmak.

-For the promotion of the products, "Naša Zlatka" exhibit at local events such as Prusutijada (Dried meat fair) in Mackat and other food fairs in Belgrade and neighboring countries. Also, together with Zlatibor Tourism Organization, exhibit at the travel fairs.

-Mlekomat will be set in the king's square (Kraljev trg) next to tourist information center in the center of Zlatibor this summer in order to support the sales of the products for the visitors. Milk will be sold 300-400 dinars for one bottle(1L).

Tips for other destinations

Your suggestions or recommendations for other destinations facing the same issues or implementing similar solutions

-Creating the local Trademark to protect local brands was very supportive factor to be to protect local famers and also motivate them to continue to engage in that field. It is also great promotion for the tourism as culinary travel (local gastronomy) is one of the most important factors nowadays.

-Installment of Mlekomat is one of the ideas that will be low-cost offer and easy to reach approach to both locals and tourists. As its location will be next to the tourist information center, Zlatibor Tourism Organization can support and promote it effectively.

Recognitions and Additional references

Recognitions and awards the Good Practice received and supporting evidence.

Good Food & Wine Festival 2021,2022,2023. - Belgrade (Šampion društveno odgovornogposlovanja) Naša Zlatka kajmak i sir (ekoagrar.org)

Насловна | Привредно друштво за развој пољопривреде Златиборски Еко Аграр ДОО Чајетина (ekoagrar.org)

(44) MALI PROIZVOĐAČI SU BITNI! Mlekara "Naša Zlatka", Kriva Reka - YouTube

Dobro sa Zlatibora - brosuratrojzicna jun 2021 finalcdr.cdr (ekoagrar.org)

Cajetina - Eko Agrar brosuratrojzicna.cdr

- Пројекат From hills to dairies 2016-2018. | Привредно друштво за развој пољопривреде Златиборски Еко Аграр ДОО Чајетина (ekoagrar.org)

Zlatibor - Ukusi Zlatibora na "Gastro karavanu" u Zaječaru

Zlatibor - Zlatiborski delikatesi na Festivalu srpske trpeze

