



DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMICS STUDY FOR DRY GRASSLANDS CONSERVATION IN THE HALOZE PROJECT SUB-AREA

In the project LIFE TO GRASSLANDS (LIFE14 NAT/SI/000005), as part of C.7 action, we prepared Development and Economics study for Dry Grasslands conservation in the Haloze project sub-area, along with all the required documentation to build a collective brand (CB) "From the slopes of Haloze" ("S haloških bregov/lazov") for the produce and products from the Haloze dry grasslands.

In July 2018, ZRSVN prepared a public tender for the Development and economics study for dry grasslands conservation in the Haloze project sub-area. The study was carried out by external contractor ProVITAL d.o.o. (Tanja Lešnik Štuhec, PhD) in cooperation with LIFE TO GRASSLANDS project partners and was conducted from April 2018 until December 2019.

The study contains a snapshot of the current situation in Haloze, a vision and action plan (model) for networking, logistics and marketing of products certified by the collective brand, as well as complete documentation (rules, corrections, evaluation sheets, application and application...) for granting the right of use of the CB "From the slopes of Haloze". The study will serve as a high quality basis for continuing to connect all stakeholders in the Haloze area and for the continuing effort to further develop the collective brand for Haloze.





1 CONTENT OF THE STUDY

PHASE 1: a record of the existing situation in PSA Haloze - supply and demand of products related to the dry grasslands and orchards on PSA Haloze, from agricultural and tourism field;

PHASE 2: a vision of the development and marketing for PSA Haloze – vision and model for networking providers of certified supplies with their own collective brand “From the slopes of Haloze”;

PHASE 3: an action plan for model of the development and marketing of products from CB “From the slopes of Haloze” to reach a developmental vision for Haloze area;

with **Starting points for a collective brand of products from dry grasslands** (“From the slopes of Haloze”) - to create targeted collective brand, which is based on products, originated from sustainable use of dry grasslands on Haloze area and **a complete documentation for the certification for the collective brand** (rules, corrections, evaluation sheets, application forms...).

1.1 Criteria for collective brand

Starting points for the collective brand are based on certain terms – criteria on origin of food product and materials to obtain the right of collective brand use:

1. Main criteria for products
 - Origin of all product ingredients must originate from Haloze region/area; **main criteria of origin are a term for entering the product chain**
2. Criteria of origin by product chains (dairy, meat, fruit, honey, herbal plants and craftsman’s and industrial products)
 - all food ingredients and materials must come from dry grasslands in certain share (%) and are extensively and sustainably produced/harvested
3. Quality Criteria for individual product

Additional criteria for products:

- must ensure appropriate quality,
- must meet statutory regulations and standards (HACCP...),
- applicants must be registered as legal or natural persons for a particular production or provision of services,
- products must be produced/harvested or equipped in a nature and people-friendly way; production must contribute to the preservation and promotion of dry grasslands,



- the production follows traditional production and recipes,
- the product is of above average /exceptional quality,
- the product is typical for the region,
- the product is an innovative/creative product from the region,
- the product packaging is made from naturally based materials,
- providers (farms, companies) should include promotion and sale of products from collective brand in their own offer.

1.2 Testing evaluation criteria

As part of an action, four test evaluations of different product categories (meat, dairy, fruit, honey, herbal plants and craftsman's and industrial products) were conducted with renowned external experts (Janez Bogataj PhD, Assistant Professor Mojca Korošec PhD, Tanja Lešnik Štuhec PhD, Tadeja Vodovnik Plevnik...) with a lecture on the quality of dry grass products, their added value and meaning/importance of branding.

General criteria for products

ORIGIN	SENSORY EVALUATION	OVERALL IMAGE	ADDITIONAL CRITERIA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Origin from dry grasslands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appearance • Color • Smell • Taste • Texture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Packaging • Labelling • Story • Selling price 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any previous product awards

Acceptance limits:	Max: 40 points (35 points, from 1 – 6)	Min: 25 points (27 % from 35 points, from 1 – 6)
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Minimal acceptance limits for:

1. origin of product: min = 5 points
2. sensory evaluation: min = 17 points
3. overall image of product: min = 3 points

TEST EVALUATION RESULTS: 136 products from 40 farms/companies, where 50 % products meet the criteria for the brand and 33 % products are registered and may already be sold.



2 ACTIVITIES and RESULTS

2.1 Activities

As part of an action, and also to increase economic interest in sustainable use of dry grasslands, we organized several partnership workshops (7), structured interviews with key farms (16) and agricultural consultants (5), communication and educational workshops, for landowners, local farmers and stakeholders (3), education and training courses for product processing (milk, meat and fruit) (10). We also conducted study visits to farms already producing and selling products and also filled more than 100 different questionnaires by farms and other stakeholders. We organized 5 workshops for the transfer of practices from PSA Haloze to other project sub-areas; PSA Pohorje (1x), PSA Gorjanci (2x) and PSA Kum (2x). There were more than 500 participants in all of the organized activities.





2.2 Results

- Identified groups of dry grassland related products from PSA Haloze – dairy, meat, fruit (from meadow orchards), honey, herbal plants and craftsman's and industrial products
- Model of the development, networking and marketing of products that arise from sustainable use of dry grasslands in Haloze
- Promoting products from grasslands at events (catering events in PSA Haloze), on the web (different websites and leaflet with a list of providers and offers of products from Haloze grasslands) and also with promotional local gifts
- Networking and involvement of farmers: more than 500 participants to organized events, more than 7000 calls, mails or posts, 386 farmers oriented towards grasslands preservation (signed agreements and owner permits)
- Networking with hotels, caterers, municipalities and different local associations and companies
- In 2019 newly established small grocery store with local products in Majšperk named "Haložanka"
- Networking with emerging gastronomic brand »Haloze - Land of a Thousand Hills« group (<https://visit-haloze.si>)
- Eco-milk from Haloze sold at higher price
- 5 new farms redirected to ECO farming
- Products are offered in local restaurants (apple juice in 3 restaurants ... + special offer „meal from local products“)
- Fruit processing is the main desire in registration of new complementary activities on farms
- The project enabled the acquisition of new useful knowledge and skills (60% of respondents)
- The project showed opportunities for marketing products from dry grasslands (60% of respondents)
- Farms started to recognize new development opportunities for farming on PSA Haloze (almost 50 % of respondents)
- New ideas and plans for complementary activities on farms (tourism development and meat processing).