



Food production

Action 4.2

FOOD POLICY

Basaldea municipal agroecological business incubator

KEY WORDS

Farm business incubator, agroecology, farming land

✓ OBJECTIVES

- To promote organic agriculture development in the territory.
- To promote the settling of new producers, facilitating access to the means of production.
- To support primary production commercialisation.
- To preserve local ecosystems.
- To connect local quality food production with the city consumption.

📄 POLICY DESCRIPTION

A political, technical and institutional consensus occurred on top of a set of favourable circumstances that facilitated the emergence of this initiative:

- Construction sector crisis and existing municipal land.
- Need to develop new sources of employment.
- Changes in consumption habits: growing interest on quality and local food products.
- A regional agrarian school in the territory.
- Creation of a land bank.
- Green ring in Vitoria-Gasteiz surrounded by an agrarian ring of about 11,000 hectares

This initiative is part of the Agro-food strategy. A diagnosis on the local primary sector was undertaken and improvement points were identified: generational replacement, preservation of farms and training promotion among other elements.

In 2012 the involved entities signed a collaboration agreement.

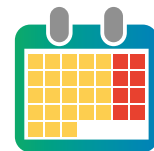
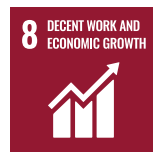
Between 2013 and 2017, the business incubator was defined, with the selection and setting up of 21 hectares of land, split up in 11 plots (1 - 1,5 hectares), equipped with irrigation infrastructure, 11 greenhouses and common services: parking space, toilets, changing room, shared tools and equipment, tool warehouse, washing and product handling area and information and counselling services.

In 2017, the City Council issued the first tender addressed to people with previous experience or education in organic agriculture presenting a business project and a viability study. Selected producers must become certified organic and register at the official farms registry and as a company.

The participation includes: the right to a 5-year land tenure, rent of 300 € per hectare per year (50% of the rent is subsidised by the City Council during the first year), free access to water and common services. Producers have access to specific training, to storage facilities and a selling stall in the municipal food market. Since 2020, there is also a direct sale spot in the farm.

A modification of the incubator's regulations is undergoing; one of the main changes being the extension of the land tenure term to 10-15 years.

CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



In 2013 the preparation of land and infrastructure started. The policy officially started in 2017 and is currently undergoing.

🏠 DEPARTMENTS IN CHARGE

Department of Economic Promotion, Employment, Trade and Tourism

CEA (Environmental Studies Centre) of the City Council

Green ring and biodiversity unit and rural area service (Department of Territory and Action for Climate)

Department of Agriculture (provincial level)

HAZI Foundation

Euskadi's Organic Food and Agriculture Council (*Ekolurra* - regional level)

Municipal food market





KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Professional producers

Territorial associations: *Bionekazaritza, UAGA, Natuaraba, Slow food Araba*

Arkaute Agrarian institute CIFP (regional level)

€ BUDGET

600,000 € were invested during the first 4 years of preparation of the project. Then, approximately 100,000 € per year.

BENEFICIARIES

4 producers (2 full time and 2 part time).

1 association: regional seeds network managing a cultivated biodiversity centre (6 people).

1 company: providing services for monitoring, managing and counselling in agroecology for the incubator (outsourced by the City Council).

2 employees for maintenance work.

2-4 interns per year.

80-100 consumer families.

ASPIRATIONAL QUANTITATIVE OBJECTIVES

To reach full occupation of the agroecological business incubator by 2030 (currently 4 out of 11 land plots are in use).

To create at least 7 new jobs and/or businesses linked to the production and distribution of organic agriculture products from the province by 2030.

To triple organic vegetable production in the incubator within 3 years.

To consolidate the food products direct sale point by 2024.

To integrate at least one pilot and/or innovative project adding value to the local agroecological agriculture.

To train at least 15 people per year on organic agriculture.

Overall aspiration of the food policies committed to The Barcelona Challenge:

<https://toolkit.thebcnchallenge.org/challenges/report/307>

STRENGTHS AND SUCCESS POINTS

One of the strengths is the collaborative nature of the project, which involves political consensus and implies collaboration between institutions and the primary sector.

At the economic level: creation of local employment and businesses linked to organic agricultural production and distribution.

At the social level: facilitate access to land and connect quality local food production to the actual city's consumption.

At the environmental level: reduce energy consumption linked to transportation and conservation of food products; increase local agro-biodiversity, as a key factor for resilience against climate emergency; and to maintain the local landscape common heritage, combining Vitoria-Gasteiz's agrarian landscape and its biological diversity.

OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS

Overall the level of interest and perceived value of agricultural work by society is low. As a consequence few people are willing to work as farmers.

Another aspect is the difficulty to make the incubator's producers work collaboratively. In order to improve that, specific support is required.

CRITICAL POINTS

It has to be taken into account that the administrative and economic management of such an initiative slows down the whole process.



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FURTHER INFORMATION

Basaldea website