



Summary

Efkarpon-Hellenic Super foods is a 'new generation' (vertical) cooperative involved in the farming, processing and marketing of four innovative agricultural products (gojiberry, black chokeberry, bilberry, and hippophae berry) according to organic farming standards. The Cooperative cultivates almost 100 ha using green energy and promoting environmental protection. Its priority is consumers' satisfaction, access into foreign markets and the improvement of its members' income. It comprises 115 members- they are all growers but of different professional backgrounds (professional farmers, free lancers, entrepreneurs, public servants). Efkarpon collaborates with the Harokopion University of Athens and ANKA S.A

Drivers

Efkarpon responded to the needs of innovative smallholders facing financial and land constraints (re: small and fragmented land ownership). The cooperative has created the conditions for its members to participate in a vertically integrated production scheme.

Innovative points

The innovation concerns an initiative that pioneered the introduction of super foods, esp. gojiberry, in Greece and Europe. It invested at the peak of the financial crisis and contributed to the revival of collaborative schemes in the Thessaly region, setting an example for other smallholders.

Timeline- Activities and Results

Efkarpon was an idea of two friends, a young farmer and an agronomist born in 2005 and initiated in 2011. The cooperative "Efkarpon-Hellenic Super foods" was founded in 2012.

There are encouraging results, however only small quantities of super foods have been produced thus far, which are easily absorbed by markets. Efkarpon super food has attracted the interest of both individual consumers and food companies. It collaborates with supermarket networks and is present at the national level. It exports in Cyprus and plans to expand in Middle East.

The coop plans to engage in both wholesale and retail markets and its processing unit operates on an annual basis. Also, it aspires to contribute to the development of rural tourism in the area.



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