

FARMA BASAŘOVI

Good Practice Collection



Introduction

Farma Basařovi is located in Prosečné in the Hradec Králové region in north-eastern Bohemia, nestled under the Krkonoše mountain range. It is a family farm managed by the Basařovi family, specifically by eight family members actively overseeing various farm activities. It is a multifunctional farm, also integrating a successful agrotourism business since 2016, hosting approximately 2000 guests each year, taking advantage of the picturesque landscapes surrounding the farm, which attract a lot of visitors. Even though the farm is hugely successful in tourism, they haven't sidetracked the farming business – instead, the increased income from tourism can help support various regenerative or sustainable practices, which may not have been financially viable otherwise. Their use of regenerative practices doesn't stem from that though – Mr. Basař has been motivated to implement this set of practices based on the soil profile and weather profile of the farm.

The Farm

The family Basařovi has been managing the farm since 1993. In the past, the previous generations of the family had been invested in farming for a long time, however the communist regime has put an end to it in 1953, when private farming was outlawed and their properties confiscated and made state property. The family started farming again in 1993 with just 23 hectares of land and 16 cows, however the farm quickly grew in size. In 2005, the farm sold their entire dairy cattle herd and instead purchased a new herd of meat cows mostly of the Aberdeen Angus breed. Afterwards, in 2006, they started planning the construction of a biogas plant, which was completed and launched two years later in 2008.

The Location

The farm is located in Prosečné in the Hradec Králové region in north-eastern Bohemia, near the border with Poland. However, most importantly, it is located right under the Krkonoše mountain range, one of the most popular destinations in Bohemia for tourists looking for an escape in the mountains and nature. The farm fully takes advantage of their location, offering accommodation to tourists traveling through the nature of the Krkonoše region. Their close distance to the Krkonoše National Park, where you can find the highest peak of the Czech Republic – Sněžka, 1603 meters tall – for example, means they can rely on a steady traffic of tourists. But, at the same time, it means the proximity to the tall mountain range will dramatically impact and alter weather patterns and the soil profile.



While Prosečné is located far up north (east) near the Polish border, the location is still very accessible – for example, just two hours from the capital city – Prague (130 km), connected mostly by highway, or 3 hours from the center of Moravia – Brno (245 km). For travelers flying in, the best option is to select the Letiště Václava Havla airport in Prague as their destination and taking the highway D10 in the direction of Hradec Králové.



Agricultural regeneration objectives

Apart from the touristic business, the most important focus of the farm is cattle breeding and meat production. The family is able to process the meat themselves. Due to the high quality of the Aberdeen Angus breed and meticulous and honest meat processing practices, the demand for the Basařovi beef has quickly skyrocketed, with interest both from afar and locally. To meet this demand, the family has greatly expanded their cowbarns capacity and found new possibilities of selling their products: at first, meat was sold directly at the farm; afterwards the sales were expanded to an on-line e-shop and lastly the family has acquired a set of modern vending machines, selling the meat products in a self-service store located in the nearby town Vrchlabí.

Thanks to their use of the biomass plant, they are able to recoup energy from cow manure. The biomass plant can be fed all sorts of organic material to produce biogas, which can be transformed into electric energy. Apart from electricity, the plant also produces digestate as a byproduct, which can be used as fertilizer. The fertilizer is afterwards used in the farm's own crop production. This means that the farm is able to greatly reduce the width of the production cycle and being highly self-sufficient – the meat is produced locally and fulfills a significant part of local demand; the animal manure is used to be converted into energy to run the farm and digestate to fertilize the crops and lastly a part of the crops also used to feed the animals, as well as supplying local demand.



Best Practice Focus

Due to weather conditions typical for foothills – high precipitation and strong winds – the soil on the farm is prone to high erosion and naturally has low water retention properties. This meant that heavier rainfalls could often lead to the flooding of the fields and killing the crops, often washing them away and sometimes even flooding farm infrastructure. To fight the elements, Mr. Basař decided to employ new strategies which help the soil to regenerate better and improve its health, leading to better water retention. He found that, specifically, no-till farming is very effective at improving the health of the soil. Instead of conventional tillage, crops are sown through the no-till technique, covered by eight species of cover crops, which are usually various legumes and oats.

Financial aspects of regenerative measure implementation

To see the positive effects of no-till farming and cover cropping, it took two years of practice with reduced yields, however after this period, not only have the yields stabilized to expected levels, an occasion to test the benefits of the improved water retention property of the soil had arisen – in September 2024, unusually heavy rainfalls lasting the consecutive days and following floods had hit the region. While much lighter rains would have completely flooded the fields in the past, after two years of regenerative farming practices, the fields were able to completely absorb the water, leaving the Basař family and their neighbors amazed.



Categorisation, keywords

This case study is an example of no-till farming and cover cropping.

No-till, cover cropping, soil health, water retention, soil erosion, high precipitation, soil nutrients, cattle breeding, meat processing, biogas plant



Advantages and disadvantages of no-till and cover cropping

Advantages	Increased soil health, amount of nutrients in the soil
	Increased water retention properties
	Reduced soil erosion
Disadvantages	Waiting period before positive effects take place
	Possible period of lower field yields
	Necessary to adopt different techniques or equipment suitable for no-till farming

Learning points

Knowledge	Knowledge of existing regenerative practices and their suitability for specific situations.
	Knowledge how to successfully perform no tillage and cover cropping, and which specific crops are suitable as cover crops.
	To install a biogas plant, a long waiting period for government approval is necessary, as well as specific knowledge of the applications needed.
Skills	Use the cover crops effectively.
	Learn to become less reliant on external supply, as the farm can produce many resources for its own operation.
	Use the products of additional infrastructure, such as a biogas plant effectively – power the farm with electricity and have a use for the biproducts, such as digestate for fertilizer.

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Regenerative Agricultural Practices for Environmental Rejuvenation and Sustainable Ecosystems on European Farms



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