

SUPURBFOOD is a research project funded by the European Commission's 7th Framework Program. It aims to contribute to the development of sustainable modes of urban and peri-urban food provisioning.

About the project

Until recent, short food supply chains and multifunctional agriculture were considered to be part of the rural development realm. However, this project looks at these topics from the perspective of urban rather than rural development. Short food supply chains have been advocated as a means to reduce the environmental impact of the agro-food system. However, to improve the ecological performance of the agro-food system other flows ((e.g. nutrient, water, and urban waste) need to be considered as well. In the current context these aspects are usually treated separately. This project will treat them in an integrated manner.

Approach

Research will be carried out in seven European city-regions (Rotterdam (NL), Rome (IT), Ghent (BE), Vigo (ES), Bristol (UK), Zürich (CH) and Riga (LV)) in collaboration with a diverse group of SMEs to further innovate in urban and peri-urban food provisioning, nutrient, water and waste management, and multifunctional use of urban and peri-urban space. Finally the project will also establish links with researchers, policymakers and SMEs in these domains in developing countries. This will be organised through a process of dialogue, sharing of experiences, exchanging of best practices and joint learning.

More information

www.supurbfood.eu



What is RoomeR?

RoomeR bvba is an inspired producer of an alcoholic beverage based on elderberry flowers. On a global beverage market with only a few big international companies, RoomeR wants to profile itself as a local, small-scale, authentic company. The close link with their customers in the metropolitan area is of essential importance, as well as their image of being environmentally friendly.

Who is involved?

Maarten and Jeroen Michels, two brothers, started in 2004 with the production and marketing of RoomeR, after 15 years of experiments in grandmothers attic. They now have a staff of 6 people and deliberately collaborate with sheltered workplaces.

To grow and collect the elderberry flowers, the company works together with (bio)farmers and private people, enthusing them to rehabilitate the Sambucus Nigra in the peri-urban region. To bottle the drink the company works together with social services and to supply it they work solely with short chain delivery to local pubs and specialist shops.

RoomeR is WISE, a work integration social enterprise where disadvantaged people are employed. RoomeR signed a charter for diversity and enhancing as such the socio-economic viability.

What are their objectives?

Next to the commercial objective of marketing their beverage, they aim at producing locally and authentically in a natural way.

They acknowledge the importance of personal relations with the actors in the short supply chain and producers of elderberry blossoms. They are strong in the organisation of their logistics.

They include vulnerable people in their organisation.

They care for the environment. They have a bottle deposit system and have different actions per year that fit in the environmental charter of the Flemish Government.

Where is Roomer located?

Roomer works with local farmers in the peri-urban regions of Ghent. They stimulate farmers to start agro-forestry with elderberry trees. They have a dense network with local sale points of the Roomer aperitif. Because of their very efficient marketing strategy, the fame of their beverage is spreading to the rest of Flanders.



Lessons from Roomer for SUPURBFOOD:

- ✓ Roomer has a strong business plan that helps them to be viable in a competitive and global market.
- ✓ They were able to embed locally the production of a commercial product.
- ✓ Roomer has an integrated vision on different sustainability aspects such as labour (they work with disadvantaged people), environment (have different action plans) and short chain supply.

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