



AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS: SILVOPASTORAL



Year of foundation	2010
Specialization	Animal husbandry - beef cattle ("Hungarian Simmental")
Farm area	50 ha (30 ha pasture + 20 ha meadow)
Number of employees	1
Year of starting agroforestry practices	2010
Location	Somogy, Zselic
Web page	https://hu-hu.facebook.com/pg/SoBorsTanya/videos/

Cattle farm with 30 "magyartarka" (Hungarian Simmental) cows and breeding stock. Currently, breeding of cows belonging to meat breeds. **The sale of calves** is the main source of income and, in the future, the development of breeding stock for the production of breeding animals. Using **extensive grazing systems based on extensive agroforestry system**. Transformation of **forested areas into wood pastures**.



The farm consists of two major pasture areas: the Farm and the Great Range. The “Farm” is about 10 hectares (6 hectares of own property + 4 hectares of leased land), established between 2007-2012 in an enclosed garden at Szenna. Previously (about 10-20 years ago) this area was characterized by multiple uses (meadow, arable land, forest, orchard), then it became abandoned, uncultivated. Over time, **self-forestation took place with a mixture of black locust, oak, maple, elm and various wild and noble fruit trees, as well as mixed shrubs and grassy understorey typical for non-grazed areas.** Many dried up trees could be found in the area. The other part of the area is the “Great Range” (about 20 ha leased area). The village of Szenna was once a public pasture. It was also not cultivated and grazed for about 20 years, and was characterized by **very advanced self-forestation**, with the tree species and shrubs listed above. **The current owner treated most of the area 5 years ago with stem crusher, leaving larger trees and smaller groups of trees in the pasture. Since then, the shrub layer strengthened, mainly mixed with prickly tarragon, wild rose, and soft undergrowth characteristic of the non-grazed area.**

In the “Farm”, farmers started cleaning the area in 2007. They have been herding since 2010, mainly **with cattle and horses, but also for the first 5 years with goats. Currently only cattles and 2 horses graze in the area.** Meanwhile they cut the trees and shrubs to make the area more like a woodland and divided it into 7 „pasture gardens”. Two of them are flatter, more open areas with less trees. With regular organic fertilization, higher grass yields have been achieved over the. The other five pasture areas have higher percentage of woody cover, the largest of which contains 1 ha of forest. This latter is used for summer pasture. These areas are more hilly and not fertilized, so the grassland now contains grazing species but has poorer grass yields. The farm buildings were established here, with wooden structure stables and paddocks, serving as a central service unit of the farm. In the “Great Range” the farmers have been shepherding for three years. This area is crossed by a stream separating the smaller (5 ha) deep-lying, tree-less part of the area. Here they set up the animals' winter shelter based on a paved road and the animal paddocks. The other larger area (20 ha) is on the other side of the stream and is currently not sectioned. They fertilized part of it for the first time this year, also hoping for better soil life and higher grass yields.



- By providing the right environment for the animals' natural habitat, the farmer expect higher resistance and productivity, **better social behavior patterns (herd mentality), and more complex nutrient supply in this type of production.**



They trained themselves, informed and gathered experience from other farmers, and then starting their agroforestry system. No financial support was used.

As a competency, they consider the existence of a close-to-nature, no-till approach and a habitat-based animal husbandry approach to be an important basis for this type of farming. Knowledge of the natural flora and fauna specific to the area, knowledge of environmentally friendly maintenance technologies is necessary for success.

DESCRIPTION OF USED TECHNIQS DURING ESTABLISHING OF AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS

For the first cleaning of the „Farm” area farmers used a hand-operated motor mower and a brush cutter. Some of the pasture areas has been **fertilised regularly with organic matter** in order to achieve higher grass yields. The farmers did not rotate the soil, only fed with organic fertilizer, thereby enriching the soil's wildlife. In addition, **they did some harrowing.** In the “Great Range” **the farmers have been shepherding for three years and since then they treated it intermittently with stem crusher to suppress highly prickly shrubs.** They continue **fertilisation**, hoping for better soil life and higher grass yields. **Everywhere there is an electric shepherd's fence and grazing in sections.** Their animals can go out to the pastures (to move and peck) in winter, too, which also promotes the health and well-being of the animal and enhances the quality of the meat. As most of the area has been restored from a forested area, **new trees were planted only in the center of the farm (fruit trees and linden), staked and isolated from the pasture with an electric shepherd in order to protect the seedlings from grazing animals.**



THREATS/CHALLENGES

- **Area-based support schemes currently penalize grasslands containing wooded areas, as the eligible area is greatly reduced.**

The technologies described above have increased the biodiversity of the areas, the nutrient levels and the micro-community of the soils. Our animals have a strong, stable body, which is the basis of productivity and reproduction.

Nature proves to be a very good ally if we are not exploiting it, but supporting it and seeking symbiosis with it.



FUTURE PLANS

Continuing the work started by gaining new knowledge. Creation of a “magyartarka” (Hungarian Simmental) nucleus stock.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

„Love of nature, endurance, humility. Building an alliance with nature.”

Roland Pósa, farmer

KEY WORDS

wood pasture, renewing abandonment area, family farm, traditional landuse, cattle,



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

