



AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS: SILVOPASTORAL



Year of foundation	1998
Specialization	Organic farming of olive groves
Farm area	50 agricultural hectares and about 60 hectares of forest
Number of employees	4
Year of starting agroforestry practices	1996
Location	Camino del Puerto s/n. CP 23110 Pegalajar - Jaén (SPAIN)
Web page	www.aceiteecologicolacasona.com

It is an estate where olive groves were cultivated using a large amount of pesticides and tilling the land. **This farm has been converted to organic farming with pastures** that take advantage of sheep whose meat is also organic. In addition, oleo-tourism (tourism dedicated to see how oil is produced) has been implemented as an additional source of income.



Previously the farm was dedicated to the cultivation of traditional olive groves, completely dry land, with a traditional framework. There was no vegetation cover, the land was plowed and “weeds” were treated with pesticides. **The absence of vegetation cover meant that rainwater did not infiltrate and there was greater erosion**, in addition to not taking advantage of this important resource, already scarce in an area where rainfall is not abundant. The systematic and continued use of pesticides implied a loss of biodiversity and risks of crop toxicity.



➤ With this silvopastoral system a natural balance has been reached.



The activity began by taking advantage of some of the Administration's subvention **aid for conversion to organic farming, as well as aid for organic livestock**, but these grants have not been the main reasons for implementing this agroforestry system on the farm, since it has improved the performance to achieve a natural balance. Although the main income comes from agriculture, livestock also contributes economically. **Lambs are sold** which, as with oil, being organic, acquire a higher sale price in the market and are perceived by society as increasingly high quality and healthy products. In addition, **oleo-tourism has also been implemented**, with the aim of getting another line of business that complements the maintenance of the farm and consolidates the jobs.

In total there are 4 workers. On the one hand there are two operators, with agronomic knowledge, one of them in charge of the farm and another that helps, but without a higher degree. On the other, there are two university graduates, a forest engineer and a tourism graduate.

DESCRIPTION OF USED TECHNICS DURING ESTABLISHING OF AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS

The cultivation of olive groves is traditional, with 5x5 meters on average. Some olive feet have been implemented in areas where there is no tree vegetation. The predominant olive variety is the Picual and the new stakes that have been planted are of the Arbequina variety. The vegetation covers are permanent, so the soil is not plowed. It is done naturally with pomace and remains of leaves of the farm itself. It is chopped branches; they do not burn, and with which the wood is also contributed to the ground.



THREATS/CHALLENGES

- The main challenge is the commercialization of products. If the farm is not profitable it cannot be maintained. This requires that both organic oil and meat have reasonable prices in the market.

Thanks to the implementation of agroforestry practices, an unsustainable system has been passed from an environmental point of view, since there was an olive cultivation in which phytosanitary products were applied in a continuous manner over time, erosion and loss of soil and biodiversity, to a **much more sustainable system**. **It is necessary the support of the Administration through aid to achieve these changes and to perpetuate them over time.**

The cultivation of the **traditional olive grove, which currently occupies thousands of hectares in Spain, is not sustainable in many cases. Because they are not kept covered, they are cleared when many birds are breeding in them and are treated with phytosanitary products systematically by farmers.** It is necessary for the Administration's subvención (grant) to serve as a catalyst to convert traditional farms into much more environmentally sustainable systems, such as this silvopastoral farm, which offers quality organic products.



FUTURE PLANS

The main objective is that the farm is kept balanced, and that the production is fully packaged to get a better yield, consolidating the farm itself and the jobs. **They are taking out new products, work is being done to increase exports abroad and consolidate tourist visits to publicize a crop of these characteristics that adds value to the traditional crop.**

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Employees have taken courses in marketing and marketing accounting, etc., in addition to the qualifications listed above.

Farmer recommendation:

"It is necessary to advance in a greater specialization of the employees, increasing their knowledge in matters of commercialization and business management so that the exploitation is consolidated and has, every time a greater profitability, offering quality products that are recognized and valued by the consumer, since it is organic products. Respect for the environment is a plus to the product."

KEY WORDS

Silvopastoral, olive groves, sheep, olive oil, organic farming, tourism



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