

## AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS: SILVOPASTORAL AGROFORESTRY WITH HIGH NATURAL VALUE



Year of foundation	1998
Specialization	Breeding of beef cattle and sheep
Farm area	450 ha
Number of employees	2
Year of starting agroforestry practices	2008
Location	Šuja (district Žilina)
Web page	-

The organic farm of Tibor Papšo is located in the picturesque region of Rajecká Valley and is focused on **breeding beef cattle, sheep and in lesser extent breeding horses and swine breeding**. In addition, he is interested in **beekeeping**. Tibor is educated in agriculture and therefore his direction to nature and ecology was natural. He started working as a zootechnician, but he was not identified with industrial animal husbandry and therefore he decided to start **organic farming**. **Recently, he has planted dozens of solitary trees of obsolete varieties and landraces of fruit trees on his land.**

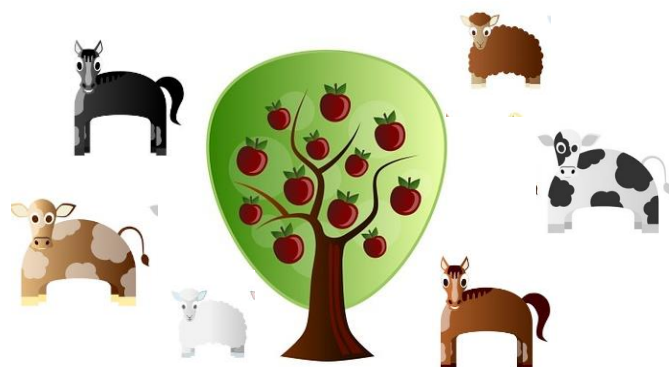


Tibor Papšo started farming on less fertile pastures and meadows, which were overgrown with natural seeding. Since his plots are relatively sloping, he left the boundaries and steep ravines partly overgrown with natural seeding due to water retention in the land.

Gradually Tibor selectively cleaned the overgrown plots and transformed them into pastures, but he sensitively left valuable tree species such as linden, ash, maple and cornel on the pastures. Some of these species he also planted individually. Step by step he started to plant fruit trees on pastures, where cows and sheep are regularly grazing. The whole farm is registered in organic production. Since Tibor is a sober conservationist and identifies himself with water retention in the landscape, he has started to **revitalize springs and watering places** on pastures. Nowadays, he manages a total of about 450 ha, largely permanent grassland with trees.



- After the implementation of agroforestry measures, the **pasture area was increased and improved, the aesthetic value of the landscape and water management were increased too.**
- Planting of trees created **half-shaded areas, where livestock can rest.**



Tibor operates a natural and traditional type of agroforestry system, as the natural conditions themselves predetermine this type of farming for this area. It is therefore a return to the original foothill farming focused on livestock and sheep breeding. This management is ideal for devastated meadows and pastures, often overgrown with natural seeding. Subsidies were not drawn for the agroforestry system or mechanization.

If anyone wants to farm like Tibor, he should have basic knowledge of botany and phytology, good knowledge of permanent grasslands management, knowledge of fruit growing and livestock breeding experience. As a farmer he would appreciate training in pruning of fruit trees, training of shepherd dogs, sheep training and protective equipment training for free-range livestock.

## DESCRIPTION OF USED TECHNICS DURING ESTABLISHING OF AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS

**A wood cutting machine was used for chipping of natural seeding. Some of the perspective trees on pastures were left and further approximately 150 trees were planted. Local obsolete varieties and landraces of apples and pears accompanied by cherries and true service trees were used for planting.**



## THREATS/CHALLENGES/RECOMMENDATIONS

- According to Tibor, **the biggest threats are poorly set legislation, unsettled ownership, unclear laws related to nature and landscape preservation.**
- **Drought and overpopulated wild animals** complicate farming in foothill areas.
- According to him, the challenge is to reach the balance without human intervention.

Tibor according his own decision operates a sustainable way of farming in habitats, where livestock grazing has a long tradition.

His farm is a demonstration of gentle and nature-friendly farming that is the creator of a colorful and valuable landscape, and as a silvopastal way it can contribute to the creation of an aesthetic, healthy and functional landscape. It is also evidence that such farming can be ecological, economically efficient and can also be used on relatively large plots of land.



## FUTURE PLANS

Tibor's future plan is long-term and sustainable management of pastureland, which are degraded and overgrown by natural seeding.

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Finally, Tibor adds:

**“I try to apply good and proven practices and I don't try too much change, because it may not end well”**

## KEY WORDS

silvopastoral systems, natural seeding, obsolete varieties and landraces, organic farming



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

