

Going organic: a new image for carp

FLAG: Oberlausitz
Saxony, Germany

Project overview

By focusing on organic aquaculture and improving the image of carp, the German region of Upper Lusatia is changing consumption habits and improving awareness of carp products among younger generations.



For many years local carp fishers in Upper Lusatia had been witnessing a decrease in the consumption of carp due to a lack of interest and awareness among the younger generations regarding the qualities of this fish. This problem was confounded by the KHV (Koi Herpes Virus) disease which impacts production levels and for which no solution has yet been found. In an effort to improve the environmental conditions in which carp were being raised and to promote a fresh image of carp, producers in Upper Lusatia decided to move to organic practices.

With the support of Axis 4, production methods were overhauled and a range of new fresh and smoked products were developed, in cooperation with a modern Saxon processing plant.

This initiative was accompanied by the creation of a common identity for their organic carp products. Marketing of the products is carried out jointly, and a small group of local fish farmers oversee the quality of the fish. The project also involved the design and production of consumer brochures and equipment to participate in relevant trade fairs to help producers promote their products. The project has led to organic self-service food shops being supplied with organic carp products for the first time in Germany.

Key lessons

- › **Relevance to FARNET themes:** Adding value, improving the image of fisheries products.
- › **Results:** Carp producers not only moved from conventional to organic carp production but they also developed four new products (e.g. fresh boneless carp fillets; smoked carp fillets with herbs or sesame; frozen boneless carp fillets...) and developed solid networking and communication among producers and retailers. This enabled them to win the trust and support of the local community and consumers. The project has also resulted in the creation of one full-time job, to coordinate production activities and marketing of the area's organic carp products.
- › **Transferability:** This project has proven the efficiency of coordinating efforts to develop a single corporate design for a group of local producers who have adhered to harmonised production standards. FLAGs around Europe can draw inspiration from this project, and in particular, those whose territories have a strong presence of inland aquaculture.
- › **Final Comment:** This project shows how Axis 4 can be used to build a network among individual carp pond fishers in order to exchange knowledge and methods and overcome cultural and environmental challenges.

Total cost and EFF contribution

Total project cost: €165 628

- › EFF Axis 4: €124 221
- › National/regional co-financing: €41 407

Project information

Title: Going organic: a new image for carp

Duration: The project was launched in 2013 and lasted 22 months

Case study date: April 2015

Project promoter

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