

Currican: artisanal canning

FLAG: Mariña Ortegal
Burela, Galicia

Project overview

Three women from Spain set up their own company in Galicia helping to preserve the tradition, particular to the area, of canning local fish and seafood in glass jars and selling their products in specialised gourmet shops.



Burela is a small fishing village in the north of Galicia with a long tradition in seafood canning. Nowadays, however, artisanal canning has lost its importance and few people in Burela still master the traditional art of canneries. In 2012 Nuria and Nieves were two unemployed women when they heard about Axis 4 financing. With long experience of canning local albacore for family and friends, they contacted their local FLAG to help them turn their idea of canning local fisheries products by hand into an innovative and profitable business.



The project itself consisted of fitting out premises with the equipment necessary to prepare and jar scaled-up quantities of local fisheries products (ovens, fridges, autoclave for sterilising jars, work surfaces etc.) as well as the business support needed to set up their company, Currican. The FLAG also linked up the project promoters with the local municipality for further assistance in complying with health and safety prerequisites. With a third partner, specialised in marketing, the ladies went on to develop 15 hand-made products, 8 in the first year, including albacore tuna in olive oil, and 7 more products in the second year, such as octopus in olive oil. The marketing expertise of this third partner was

vital for getting their products placed in a number of markets and Currican is now selling its products in gourmet shops all over Galicia, as well as in specialised shops and department stores in other parts of Spain such as Madrid, Asturias, Huelva, Bilbao, Alicante and Barcelona.

Key lessons

- › **Relevance to FARNET themes:** Adding value to fisheries products, support to business, new fisheries products
- › **Results:** The project has seen the creation of a new company, and 15 new canned fisheries products. Since the start of its activity, Currican's production and sales have steadily increased: 2 100 product units were sold in 2012, 11 500 in 2013 (the first full operational year) and more than 15 000 units in 2014. The company obtained a turnover of €65 000 in its first full year and €75 000 in the second year. This has led to the creation of 2 new full-time jobs as well as 2 part-time jobs during the tuna season from July to October.

Highly motivated by the results achieved and the different markets accessed around Spain, the promoters looked into the potential of launching their products on the international market, signing a new contract at the end of 2014 to export their canned products to Mexico.
- › **Transferability:** This type of project could be transferred to other coastal areas with a strong fisheries culinary tradition and where women entrepreneurship is encouraged. Indeed, the experience could be useful for other women who would like to develop new processed fisheries products adapted to the local context and tradition. However, for successful placement of the product in the marketplace, previous expertise in product development and marketing is extremely important.
- › **Final Comment:** Currican illustrates how, combined with advice and the right expertise, small scale initiatives can use Axis 4 to preserve and further build on a local tradition to successfully launch new fisheries products on the market.

Total cost and EFF contribution

Total project cost: €53 165

- › EFF Axis 4: €23 909
- › National / regional co-financing: €7 965
- › Private: €21 291

Project information

Title: Currican: artisanal canning

Duration: August 2012 – March 2013

Case study date: January 2015

Project promoter

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Editor: European Commission, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Director-General.

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