

## THE INNOVATION JOURNEY

"Dobrote Dolenjske" (Dolenjska Delights) is a regional collective brand that emerged from a social initiative aimed at connecting producers and processors, creating added value in agriculture and developing tourism in Dolenjska.

Špela Smuk is the founder and development manager of Dobrote Dolenjske. She started her professional career in a travel agency and later became one of the founding members of an association in the municipality of Trebnje that focused strongly on rural development. As part of various projects, they implemented activities in the local community, e.g. setting up a local farm and craft market, encouraging farmers to register processing on their farms, etc. In 2012, they founded an institute under which they still operate today, with Špela taking the lead role.



Figure 1. Dobrote Dolenjske in Trebnje.

Today, the company offers more than 700 products. Some products are sourced directly from local producers and sold as is, others are repackaged, and

around 40% are processed and developed in-house. They adhere to the principles of known origin, local ingredients and quality control. In addition, they carry out various project activities, including the development of a regional culinary map of Dolenjska to bring tourists closer to the destination through taste experiences, as well as conducting educational workshops for children. Their social responsibility is reflected in the fact that they employ disadvantaged or hard-to-place groups of people.

## THE INNOVATION IMPACT

Dobrote Dolenjske is a regional collective brand, operating as an institute with 11 employees, a production and store unit in Trebnje, and boutique stores in Ljubljana and Novo mesto. Through their activities, they contribute to the promotion and support of agricultural production and processing. They have the status of an organization operating in the public interest in agriculture and in tourism promotion.

In addition to their impact on local self-sufficiency, they contribute significantly to the recognition of the region and the development of culinary tourism in Dolenjska. They have received numerous awards for their work (Gault&Millau, Agrobiznis, etc.).

## USEFUL LINKS

<https://dobrote-dolenjske.si/>

<https://www.facebook.com/dobrotedolenjske/>