

THE INNOVATION JOURNEY

Petra Jazbec, a qualified primary school teacher, runs the Veles farm together with her husband Janez. The farm serves as a sustainable learning platform and provides space for volunteering and soft skills training.



Figure 1. Petra promotes volunteering and demonstrates sustainable development.

Her story goes back to her school days when Petra was already active as a volunteer. During her studies, she developed a passion for traveling, and met her husband Janez there. Together they bought an older farm in Šentjanž na Dolenjskem.

The farm, which covers nine hectares (half of which is forest), was initially intended for a family life close to nature. However, both Petra and Janez soon gave up their regular jobs to focus on the alternative development of the farm. They are gradually renovating the farm according to the principles of natural building. Janez runs courses on natural building, while Petra works mainly with volunteers, runs trainings for youth

workers and teaches alternative project management.



Figure 2. Volunteers on the Veles farm.

THE INNOVATION IMPACT

In eight years of working with volunteers, they have introduced young people to food production and life on the farm through various European projects. Despite initial financial difficulties and obstacles at national level, they have persevered and found support for their ideas from some social innovators. Their efforts have earned them the respect of the local community and created good connections with supportive organizations internationally. Their work is also reflected in the introduction of the national professional qualification for natural building. Some have even started similar projects in their own countries, with followers especially in the Balkan countries.

USEFUL LINKS

www.kmetija-veles.si/;

www.facebook.com/kmetijaVeles/?locale=sr_RS