

Hernádszentandrás - where the bioculture changed the life of the village

Hernádszentandrás is a small village in Hungary with 445 inhabitants. It is situated 35 kilometres from Miskolc, on the halfway between Kosice and Miskolc.

Some time ago this village lived on cultivation, which was booming, but after 1989, when there were a lot of changes in the political system, the most part of the inhabitants became unemployed.

They hoped through the years, that perhaps somebody will think of them, too. They waited for the external help, but it had no effect, so the solution - like in other cases - was born on the spot.

The inhabitants permanently paid attention to tenders, looked for partners, so Gábor Üveges the mayor of the village found a programme in 2009, which changed 25 people's, 25 families' future directly, and it changed the whole life of the village indirectly.

They won 28 million Hungarian forints to learn biocultivation and whereupon they could go back to the lifestyle, which meant welfare for the whole territory through the centuries.

"...For the people in Abaúj the past grows from the soil, and the future does it, too..."

Under the quality control of the Biokontroll Hungária Ltd., people created a model farm, which was based on the plants grown locally, and later in the same year there was a ribbon cutting ceremony of a BioKitchen. It was considered the biggest success by them, that 25 people learnt all the tricks of the biocultivation, and it could be an excellent example for other villages, too.

Hernádszentandrás became BioSzentandrás

The eighteen-month programme finished in May 2012. But the work continued in BioSzentandrás, even it started more intensively. By spring 2013 Hernádszentandrás - this tiny underprivileged village - became one of the biggest ecofarms all over the northern region.

The bioprogramme not only changed the life of the community along River Hernád, but it formed people's way of thinking.

They falsified with their work and activities, that organic food must be a kind of privilege. They rendered available the original, rural, ecologically controlled vegetables with their "Open Garden and Loyalty" programme by prices for people, who live in the county and all over the area.

The biomodel farm and the bioteam became famous and recognised all over Hungary. They cooperated with famous people like András Szőke, Róbert Bede, the Republic rock band, their partners were the Ecological Agricultural Research Centre, they have excellent relationship with organizations beyond the Hungarian borderline, for example on the outskirts of Kosice and with the agrarians and the students of Corvinus University in Budapest.

BioSzentandrás became a supplier of the restaurant called Anyukám Mondta (My mother said) in Encs, which won the best restaurant in the countryside of Hungary award.

People in Hernádszentandrás made a greater stride ahead: they involved the facilities of the public employment in 2013.

They have two and a half hectares of tillage, they grow vegetables in six big walk-in plastic tunnels, and three small ones since spring.

They worked out the environment-friendly system of the heating of walk-in plastic tunnels, and they involved more cellars to improve the capacity of storage.

The supply of their products raised, they grow 25 kinds of vegetables, they started to naturalize herbs, there were ten times more of original French lavender plantations, the berries are going to become productive this year.

They started to make refined vegetable specialities, which was able to create by a tender to implement a refining works in summer 2013.

The bioculture moved the civil sphere, too. There are not any houses, where there would be a wasteland around.

Women looked for and found their grandmothers' recipes in the draws, so the guests who arrive at the village, people who visit exhibitions, festivals, can try not only the biovegetables, but they can try the tastes of Szentandrás.

People who originally were born in the village, but they do not live there now, join this work too: they established the BioSzentandrás Club, and its members spread the fame of the bioprogramme all over the country and beyond the Hungarian borderline.

BioSzentandrás catches the facilities of the publicity, which is offered by the press and the social media.

Whereupon more and more families, schools, communities at workplaces in the towns are interested in the bioculture, and Hernádszentandrás has a better and better relationship with them.

The village welcome everybody, who is interested in biolifestyle in the countryside.

In the "Open Garden" programme adults, children, families, who want to aim the biofarming as a goal, get any pieces of information about it.

The Hernád-walley Special School has been working for four years here with excellent references from all over the country - it works for disadvantaged children and their families - and the "BioSzentandrás Project" became a part of the syllabus of this school: this project brings up closer everything to children, which are natural and healthy.

It is planned to organize a summer lifestyle camp, where children from Hungary and abroad get acquainted with life in the countryside and its unusual magic.

*"...The countryside is the only one store for Hungary,
the only one hinterland, the land of restart.
It is the place, where you can touch the silence,
and you can create the whole of the nature - which was destroyed by the human civilization,
where the harmony of the scents and the tastes are the daily reality,
that you can desire instinctively, where you live gladly... "*

Gábor Üveges
Mayor of Hernádszentandrás

Contact for Additional Information :

Gábor Üveges, mayor

Telephone: +36 20 3922784

e-mail: uveges.mail@gmail.com

E-mail: hernadszentandras@gmail.com, uveges.mail@gmail.com

Website: www.hernadszentandras.hu, www.bioszentandras.hu

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bioszentandras>

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