



MILK-ED

MODERN AND INNOVATIVE ONLINE-BASED  
KNOW-HOW ON EUROPEAN DAIRY PROCESSING

# CASE STUDY HR-05

*In love with  
milk industry!*



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## 0. Intro:

In a small town Kusanovec which is located not far from Dugo Selo, in the eastern part of Zagreb County, is the cheese factory "Kusanovec". The hundred-year-old family tradition of home-made cheese production continues the next generation of family farm production "Zadravec". If the road takes you to their area, they will be happy to host you and show you how cheese and other dairy products are produced in the traditional way with the highest standards. You can also visit the meadows surrounding the farm and look at young and older cows to make sure that the milk obtained for the production of top-quality delicacies is domestic and that it comes from healthy dairy cows. Dairy products of the Zadravec family can be found in the Zagreb market Dubrava or on their doorstep. The Kusanovec family cheese factory is open for business cooperation in the development of its economy and wider offers in new markets.

## 1. Personal Data

1.1 Name:

**Romina Zadravec**

1.2 Birth Year: 1978

1.3 Professional background:

**Full time farmer**

1.4 Education:

**Secondary**

## 2. Farm/Enterprise data

2.1 Address/coordinates:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Obiteljska+Sirana+Kusanovec/@45.8209517,16.3426083,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x47666f3f38c56dd1:0x448d217358aeaf7a!8m2!3d45.8209517!4d16.3448023>

2.2 Farm Area in ha:

30

2.3 N<sup>o</sup> of workers on the farm/enterprise:

	Full time	Part-time/seasonal
Family members	5	0
Other than family members	0	0

2.4 Farm/Enterprise description:

Various types of home-made cheeses and dairy products from their production are obtained from home-made milk from their own farm. The family farm owns about 20 cows that live in an untouched environment and are fed raw materials from their own pastures. This makes their dairy products taste "traditional" and "homemade". Of the many products, we should point out soft cheese in the type of Feta, then cheese in the type of Škripavac, Kusanovečki Prevelec, homemade Skuta, homemade fresh cheese and cream, then cooked cheeses with various homemade spices, hard, semi-hard and smoked cheeses. Confirmation of the quality and gastronomic values are the many awards, medals and diplomas they have earned in various competitions. The awards are the result of their love for the countryside and domestic production, care for cows and the clean environment that surrounds us.

2.5 Website and social networks accounts:

<http://www.sirana-kusanovec.hr/o-nama.html>

### **3. Multifunctional farming activities related to dairy processing / Innovation related to products and/or processing**

They are currently building a cheese tasting room within their family farm and they are also planning to focus on rural tourism in the near future and the improvement of sustainability of their main activities. There will always be a need for farming and food production so they believe that their activities could be sustainable in long run, but also should be further developed in this regard. They are a member of the Association of Small Cheesemakers of Zagreb County (Sirek) and the Association of Small Cheesemakers of the Republic of Croatia (SirCro). The main objective of both associations is to: promote and develop the production and consumption of autochthonous and other cheeses and other dairy products on family farms. Till now they didn't win any medals for innovation, but they won gold medal for cooked cheese on the 12<sup>th</sup> International Käsiade Cheese Festival in Hopfgarten, Tirol (Austria).

3.1 Advice/Recommendation:

"In addition to expertise and knowledge in dairy production technology, the main guiding principle on our family farm, and in our opinion the most important thing, is to remain persistent and consistent with yourself and your production principles. It took us a lot of time, finances and patience to create the successful family farm we have today. Also, the cooperation with other entities in dairy sector (professional advisors, as well as other family farms) to keep up with novel trends in technology and market demands we find of great importance."

### **4. Considerations, training/competences involved and queries/questions.**

4.1 General considerations:

To implement multifunctional farming activities, they received counselling in terms of milk processing technology, cows breeding, milking practice, and animal health that was provided by university professors from the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Agriculture and Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. Also, they passed different trainings and seminars regarding milk processing technology, animal breeding and nutrition, HACCP implementation, and EU funds application training. Despite that, the main challenge still was a price competitiveness related to Croatia membership in the EU, and large investments were needed to keep up with demands. To upgrade the dairy, they withdrew funds from measure M04, sub-measure 4.2. "Support for investments in processing, marketing and / or development of agricultural products", operations 4.2.1. "Increasing the added value of agricultural products" of the Rural Development Program of the Republic of Croatia for the period 2014-2020, financed from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). They have the great support from the Advisory Service of the Ministry of Agriculture through seminars and trainings about cows breeding and health, and cheese production. Since dairy „Kusanovec“ is approved under special conditions with the corresponding veterinary number and have all the principles of HACCP (prescribed by the Food Act, NN 46/07) strictly enforced in the production of cheese and milk, all employees passed basic trainings and seminars regarding HACCP implementation. As part of the Association of Small Cheesemakers of Zagreb County (Sirek) and the Association of Small Cheesemakers of the Republic of Croatia (SirCro) they also participated in several international professional fairs and expert visits to other dairies where have had opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge regarding cheese technology and improvement of their processes. Market difficulties were also the main reason to start with the rural tourism on their family farm, and as well to develop some new products to be more attractive to customers and to promote values of traditional cheese making.

#### 4.2 Training/Competences (Skills, Knowledge, Attitudes) especially relevant for the process:

Continuous work on oneself, along with the non-formal education in processing technology, law, finance, and marketing is found to be an unavoidable part of any farmer that wants to become successful. In addition to expertise and knowledge in dairy production technology, one should remain persistent and consistent with his production principles. Also, the cooperation with other entities in the dairy sector (professional advisors, as well as other family farms) to keep up with novel trends in technology and meet market demands is necessary. The big limitations in education are training related to tourism management which would be of great importance for the involvement in rural tourism. Given the problems they have encountered in the market because of the high government levies and costs, there is also a need for education and training related to business management and finance with an emphasis on the banking sector and application for EU funds and state aids.

## 5. Photos



