



AGILite

Developing the digital and entrepreneurial competences
of VET trainers to support agile entrepreneurship training



- URSA: Alqueva by-products recirculation units
- Alentejo, Portugal
- The project lasted between May 2018 and November 2018
- To address the problem of the low organic

URSA: Alqueva
by-products
recirculation
units

The initiative

The URSA project aims to address the problem of the low organic matter content in the irrigated agricultural soils managed by Empreendimento de Fins Múltiplos de Alqueva (EFMA). Different solutions can be applied to increase soil organic matter but, to achieve fast, measurable and sustainable results in the EFMA modern and intensive agriculture, the most applicable solution is to add organic fertilizer. To accomplish this solution, the project aims to create and develop a network of composting facilities to produce organic fertilizer with the available agriculture by-products. Giving wings to the circular economy concept, local farmers will deliver their by-products and take in return organic fertilizer to apply in their agricultural soils.

Time frame

The project started in May, 2018 with a six month deadline and involved the next six key actions: 1) Development of specifications and collection channels for the first/experimental URSA installation; 2) Facility implementation; 3) Experimental process and monitoring plan development, identification of soil necessities, experimental tests, and compost and by-products characterization; 4) Conception of a business plan; 5) Project communication and dissemination; 6) Project management and evaluation.

Areas of Focus

URSA project focus is to implement a twelve-unit constellation and then, as a whole, solve the soil low organic matter content and the correlated issues that affect EFMA environmental performance. This achievement represents a compromise based in resource efficiency, soil and water protection and agriculture by-product valorisation contributing to accelerate the transition to circular economy.



URSA

People Behind the Case Study

The URSA project was promoted by EDIA (Empresa de Desenvolvimento e Infraestruturas do Alqueva) in a partnership with ISQ.

THE JOURNEY

Finance

The project was co-financed by Fundo Ambiental.

Outcomes to date

The project created the first composting unit with the final goal of a 12 units constellation to proceed achieving:

Origins

Years without conservation agriculture led to a critical level of soil organic matter with a direct negative impact on freshwater resources, farming and ecosystem as a whole. It was necessary to find a solution to mitigate the negative impact of the low organic matter content on par with a solution to create a sustainable destination for the huge quantity of by-products with origin in the region.

Why it's relevant to AGILITE

The project was created to solve the soil low organic matter issue in the EFMA area of influence. To develop a solution the promoters identified focus areas.

This initiative is relevant to the AGILITE project because it practices the ideal of the “goods of today are the resources of tomorrow at yesterday’s resource price”. Following the circular economy principles.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION POINTS

As a result of this study, it was possible to conclude that it is urgent to change agricultural procedures to recover, improve and maintain a healthy soil and ecosystem. The local farmer’s feedback was very encouraging with a high interest in the valuable destination of their by-products and in applying the organic fertilizer in their own crops due to the understanding of the associated benefits.

There is still a long way to go to overtake the existing barriers and to disseminate the identified environmental and economic benefits.

MORE INFORMATION

Website: <https://www.edia.pt/ursa/index.html>

Contacts: <https://www.edia.pt/en/>



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