

## JOINT FAMILY EFFORT FOR IMPROVED AND SUSTAINABLE RESULTS Juraj, Lucia and Marek Mačaj, Slovakia

### Generational Renewal

*Starting as a small potato and vegetable grower, Juraj Mačaj Sr., together with his children Juraj Jr., Lucia and Marek, built one of the most important agricultural holdings in Slovakia. This story of smart specialisation, cooperation with other producers and constant improvements makes the Mačaj family a successful example of generational renewal.*

#### Context

In early nineties, Juraj Sr. revived the farming tradition of his grandfather when he was given back the land through state restitution. With 50 hectares, he established a small farm specialised on potatoes and later on other vegetables. The farm had no employees, so only family were working on the farm. Involving the three children – Juraj, Lucia and Marek – on the farm since their childhood turned out to be a key aspect for the future success of the generational renewal.

The children obtained an education relevant to their family business. The oldest son Juraj, now the manager of the agricultural holding, studied economy. His sister Lucia undertook education in law, and is in charge of legal issues. The youngest son Marek, the chief agronomist of the holding, graduated at the agricultural university as his father and grandfather had done before him.

The farm has continuously grown. At the turn of the century, the company was already well established with ten times larger acreage and a stable production, and has started cooperation with retail chains, supplying them with their own production and also imported potatoes and onions all year round.

The family business, having the ideal composition of senior management with different specialisations and skills, prospered also due to multiple support from EAFRD which contributed to its constant modernisation and expansion.

#### Idea

When Slovakia entered the EU in 2004 and prices went down significantly due to

#### Location

Kráľová pri Senci, western Slovakia

#### Programming period

2007-2013

#### Measure

M123 Adding value to agricultural and forestry products

#### Funding (EUR)

Total budget 1,192,500€  
EAFRD 477,000€  
Private 715,500€

#### Project duration

2008

#### Project beneficiary

KRÁĽOVSKÁ s.r.o.

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higher competition, the producer cooperative Zeleninárska spoločnosť was established by the Mačaj family together with three other potato farmers. The main purpose was to help local growers in their efforts to maintain and develop sales of locally grown potatoes and vegetables on the Slovakian market, but also in the Czech Republic and in Hungary.

The Mačaj family realised that high skin quality is the key to maintain potato sales. They decided to invest in the processing of their production of potatoes and onions – upgrading their production with grading and packing equipment and the manufacturing of potato by-products with a focus on taste.



### Outcomes

The project for a new potato peeling line, equipped with precooling technology, a potato flake production line and potato cooling store was implemented in 2008. The newly acquired production capacity was 250 tons of peeled potatoes per month and 150 tons of potato flakes per month. In addition 2,500 tons of bulk potatoes was stored. This has significantly contributed to adding value to the agricultural production and future maintenance of market revenues.

Nowadays the Mačaj family is one of the most important potato and vegetable suppliers in Slovakia. Besides the key commodities, potatoes and onions, they have also been engaging in other vegetable production (parsley, cabbage and garlic).

Juraj, Lucia and Marek, who all now have their own children, realise the importance of raising the next generation to succeed them. Therefore, in order to keep the continuity of the family farming tradition, they have been involving the children in the farm process since their childhood.

