

## **Annex II**

### ***Cases description***



***Social/Care Farming in Belgium***  
**State of the Art for “So Far” project**  
***(Social Services in Multifunctional Farms)***  
**EU FPVI**

Name of author: Joost Dessen

Date: June 20, 2007

Organisation: Institute for Agricultural and  
Fisheries Research

Address: Burg. Van Gansberghelaan 109/2, 8920  
Merelbeke, Belgium

E-mail: [Joost.Dessen@ilvo.vlaanderen.be](mailto:Joost.Dessen@ilvo.vlaanderen.be)

## Family Farm ‘tHofKoeDoe, Karin Quirijnen

<b>Reference</b>	Family farm ‘tHofKoeDoe
<b>Address</b>	Wetschot 34 2340 Beerse
<b>Tel.</b>	+32-3-312 06 80
<b>Fax.</b>	-
<b>e-mail</b>	info@hofkoedoe.be
<b>Web-site</b>	www.hofkoedoe.be

***“I have to go to the farm today, otherwise the farm will go wrong. They need me!”  
(a client)***

### Short description of the case study

#### Some key words

- dairy farm
- mentally disabled
- psychiatric patients
- trained therapist
- small scale

The farm of the family Quirijnen is a dairy farm in the province Antwerp (Flanders, Belgium). The farm has some arable land as well. They started a few years ago, and from Monday till Friday they receive a client. Most of their clients are mentally disabled, some have a psychiatric problem. The clients are given some tasks on the farm, such as taking care of the calves or feeding the rabbits. They feel very responsible for the farm. The clients are well integrated in the family, and are almost part of it. The farmer’s wife is a trained occupational therapist. She started green care for financial as well as personal reasons: it allows her to work on-farm, and it gives meaning to her life.

### Short description of the farm

This farm has 80 hectares of land (half pastures and half arable crops), and almost 150 milking cows. The farmer works full time on the farm, while the wife is responsible for the broadening of the activities, such as green care or educational activities.

They receive one client every day, from Monday till Friday.

### Starting with green care

Karin, the wife, is an occupational therapist, who used to work off-farm. Once her child was born, the combination of off-farm work, raising a child, taking care of the household and assisting in the milking, was too demanding. She preferred to leave the off-farm work, and started a care farm. Her main aims were threefold: 1. improving the quality of life of the clients, 2. promoting societal inclusion of people with a handicap and 3. creating extra financial revenue for the farm.

During the take-off of the care farm activities, they receive support from the Support Centre for Green Care, from some institutions and from other care farms as well.

The first client was an elderly man with dementia. This first experience was wonderful: there was a very warm contact between this man and the farm family. From then onwards, they have very different clients.

### Motivation

As a child, the farmer's wife used to live with a disabled uncle. Disabled people have always been part of her life. When the combination of children, off-farm work as an occupational therapist and assisting the farmer was no longer possible, she decided to start caring for people on the farm. It is the combination on one location of many interests she has. For her, the clients are not cheap labourers. They are particularly people who need care, and she can offer them what they need. It gives her a good feeling, and provides at the same time an extra income for the farm.



*“In the beginning, I ask a newcomer to do all kinds of things. And I observe what he likes or not. After a while I give him his ‘own’ task, for which he is responsible. You can see their self-esteem growing!”*

## A strong motivation to make the farm multifunctional...with Green Care as a starting point

The farmer's wife is very enterprising. After the establishment of care activities (including taking care of the calves, growing flowers, or gardening), in the beginning of this century, she is now developing programs for education on the farm. She wants to receive school children for diversified activities. It all fits into her idea of a farm where production as well as care and education go hand in hand.

She strongly believes in the healing aspect of social contact on the farm. Not only the plants or animals as such are important. Also the human relationships that develop between the client and the farm family members are important. That explains why she only accepts clients with whom she can establish a good relationship. 'We need a click between the client and myself' is one of her quality criteria. But once this relationship is established, the client is part of the family. They eat and drink together, have lots of fun and respect each other. Another criteria is the degree of independence of the client. As the wife has to take of her small child as well, she prefers clients who can be left alone on the job, without the need of continuous supervising.

**Table** – Main data related with green care on family farm Decoster-Baeyens

<b>Start of project</b>	Beginning of the century
<b>Number of clients</b>	5 (4 male and 1 female)
<b>Numbers of days per client per week</b>	1 day per client per week
<b>Working hours of clients</b>	Sometimes a full day, sometimes a half day
<b>Payment of expenses</b>	10 € / half a day (meal included)
<b>Subsidies</b>	40 € / day
<b>Special investments</b>	-
<b>Financial importance agriculture – green</b>	agriculture: 90% green care: 10 %

Cases description – Belgium  
Specific case: family farm Quirijnen

