

# 2.5 Social Entrepreneurship and CE

## Good practice examples

e-module 2: Circular economy and food supply chain  
October 2021



# Three good practice examples

- Espigoladors, ES
- Friendly City Food Co-op, US
- Oleicola el Tejar, ES



# Espigoladors, ES

- Non-profit organization in Catalonia, Spain
- From Catalan "espigolar", "gleaner" in English
- Fight against food waste and losses, while empowering people at risk of social exclusion
- Founded in 2014
- Network of over 600 volunteers



Source: <https://espigoladors.cat/en/>

# Field of work

- Espigoladors works for three **social needs**:
  - Better food usage
  - Guaranteeing the right to a healthy diet
  - Creating job opportunities for collectives at risk of social exclusion
- Espigoladors' model is based on the **circular economy** principles: aiming to extend product's lifespan and maximize their use, while reducing waste generation
- The actions by Espigoladors are aligned with the following **SDGs** (Sustainable Development Goals):
  - 2 Zero Hunger*
  - 3 Good Health and Well-Being*
  - 8 Decent work and economic growth*
  - 10 Reduced inequalities*
  - 12 Responsible consumption and production*
  - 13 climate action*

# Activities 1/2

- **Gleanings:**
  - harvest of fruits and vegetables not suitable for the market
  - Volunteers
  - Through established agreements with farmers
- **Donation:**
  - Distribution of collected fruits and vegetables to social entities
  - 90-95% of the harvested food is donated to soup kitchens

# Activities 2/2

## - **Transformation:**

- Transformation of the recovered produce in preserves while giving job opportunities to people at risk of social exclusion, young people and women over 45
- 5-10% of the harvest
- Jams, creams and sauces under the brand “es imperfect”
- Can produce and package around 1,300 jars of jam per day

## - **Awareness:**

- Creation of a citizen movement through raising awareness and education
- Promotion of a change of social consciousness towards a culture of making the most of food
- Workshops in schools, courses, training, educational projects, awareness-raising campaigns about food waste, and CSR activities

“In Espigoladors we give  
second opportunities to ugly  
and imperfect fruits and  
vegetables and to beautiful  
people.”

# What they have achieved (as of September 2021)



**1380**

Tones of food recovered



**875**

Tones of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions prevented



**886**

Millions of litres of water saved



**4372992**

Portions of food served (300 g)



**115**

Farmers committed



**1370**

Awareness actions #idontwaste

# Lessons learned

- Measures for ecological and social sustainability can be combined in the circular economy model
- An ancient practice combined with new ideas can fulfill requirements from the 21 century
- A large network with different institutions, businesses, social entities and the agricultural sector allow such a big impact



# FRIENDLY CITY FOOD CO-OP

- The idea was started in 2006 by Steve Cook because of the need for a full-scale, natural and organic **grocery store** that focuses on **local** farmers and products
- Based in Virginia, USA
- In 2011, the first Friendly City Food Co-op opened its doors
- A business owned and **democratically controlled** by a large group of local owners



Source: <https://friendlycity.coop/>

# Field of work

- Friendly City Food Co-op is an **organic grocery store** committed to
  - being a locally owned cooperative
  - emphasizing on healthy food, local products and sustainably produced goods
  - creating fair and friendly relationships, a vibrant local economy, healthy and informed consumers
  - conscientious and sustainable use of resources.
- Neither profit-driven nor non-profit (profit is either reinvested in the store, to the members or invested back into the local community)
- Principles of equality among owners, enrichment of the community, and support of local sustainable products are valued

# Activities

- **Fighting food waste:**
  - Produce, sandwiches and salads that are not sold are donated locally
  - Produce that is not good enough to donate, is given to a garden project as compost
  - Some of the resulting produce is then sold back to Friendly City Food Co-op, to complete the sustainable cycle
- Friendly City Food Co-op Community Fund: Accepting donation requests from public for community-based events at the organic market

# The 7 cooperative principles (1/2)

- **Voluntary and Open Membership** – Co-operatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.
- **Democratic Member Control** – Co-operatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions.
- **Members' Economic Participation** – Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership.
- **Autonomy and Independence** – Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members.

# The 7 cooperative principles (2/2)

- **Education, Training, and Information** – Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees. They inform the general public – particularly young people and opinion leaders – about the nature and benefits of co-operation.
- **Cooperation Among Cooperatives** – Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.
- **Concern for Community** – Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

# Lesson learned

- Friendly City Food Co-op is based in the local community. That fact enables them to produce locally and sustainably and give back to the local community while trying to minimize the food waste
- An important part of social entrepreneurship is democratic decision-making and equality amongst the members and (local) community
- Organisations do not have to be non-profit or profit-orientated but can be neither



# Oleicola el Tejar, ES

- Second-tier agricultural cooperative
- Integral use of olive by-products
- Set up in 1967 by five cooperatives
- Today, there are 240 associated entities that process olives of more than 80000 farmers
- World's leading company in the sector



Source: <https://eltejar.sbssoftware.es/>

# Field of work

- Oleicola el Tejar's corporate purpose is the **integral use of the by-products** of the olive grove, especially the wet pomace resulting from the oil mill industry
- Usage of olive by-products to produce **renewable energy** (biomass)
- As a response to the evolution of the sector, the company is a pioneer in the incorporation of new technologies (e.g., in the extraction of pomace oil or use of the biomass of the olive grove)

“One man’s trash is another  
man’s treasure?”

# Olive oil industry waste recovery system

- Growing development of the oil producing sector
  - increase in the surface area dedicated to olive crop
  - improvement of the species
  - oil productions of more than 1,500,000 Tm
  - The total volume of waste generated in the harvest reaches 6,000,000 Tm
- Oleicola el Tejar developed processes that achieve the elimination of that waste without being a burden on the sector or the environmental conditions

# Giving new use to waste

- **Processing of the waste**

- The member cooperatives that produce olive oil bring their waste (“alperujo”), which is a mixture of vegetation water, solid parts of the olive (pit and peel) and fatty remains, to the facilities of Oleícola del Tejar.
- There, the “alperujo” is centrifuged to separate the oils, dried and the oil contents are being extracted.

- **New use**

- A part of the “alperujo” is used for animal feeding.
- From the rest, the orujo olive oil is extracted which is mixed with extra virgin olive oil and then used for human consumption.
- The waste of that extraction is exploited using combined heat and power techniques to generate renewable energy

# Lesson learned

- Oleicola el Tejar uses the waste from the olive oil industry to **generate biomass energy, animal food and a different kind of olive oil**
- **100% of the olive are used with no waste at the end – circular economy**
- Flexible adaptations to changes in the oil industry made them to leaders in their field
- It has produced 26,000,000 tons of biomass which have avoided the emission of 8,000,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.



# INDIVIDUAL/GROUP WORK

## **Working tasks – 2.5 hrs**

- Find three good practice examples in your country or in Europe.
- Choose one favorite example and sum up the key facts about this social enterprise.
- Explain it to one of your colleagues and describe the most fascinating aspects.

# CONSULTATION

## **Working task – 1 hr**

- Tell your supervisor what you found out so far and where you had difficulties.



# TRAIN-CE-FOOD project

<https://trancefood.si/en/home-english>

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