

Business case ID Card



Title: Hornuddens trädgård - a stepping-stone into the labour market

Name of the company: Hornuddens trädgård

Country: Sweden

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Website: www.hornudden.net

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDsM-mq2w_w

Background

Hornuddens trädgård (= garden) is located in the middle of Lake Mälaren, between Strängnäs and Enköping, about 80 km from Stockholm, Sweden. This is a family farm run by a couple (Karin & Mats) as the third generation. Hornudden's history backs to 1928 where it was a farm with fishing, gradually started to grow vegetables. During the 1960s, a greenhouse and several sheds were built to grow vegetables and flowers.

Karin and Mats took over Hornudden in 1990 and converted the open fields to organic. The owners wanted to contribute to a good world for future generations by growing organic, serving delicious foods, drinks, and sharing their experience and knowledge as well as having fun together!

The company's business model is changed over time, expanding its organic business base, organic café in their garden, as well as organic indoor restaurant and marmalade and salsa processing. Moreover, they run CSA (**community-supported agriculture**) boxes, which not only the people but also the municipality of Strängnäs and the restaurant Himmel & Pannkaka in Upplands Väsby have been the part of this network (member).

Furthermore, they have recurrent education and volunteer training from the nearby area, all around the world but also students in their own kitchen. The company has been in its current form since 2009 and today, its numerous activities have formed a unique business model.

Main activities

The company follows the CSA model in its farming system. CSA is new in Sweden and in general, is an alternative socio-economic model of agriculture and food distribution that connects the producers and consumers allowing the latter to share the harvest of a farm or group of farms. Sharing garden means a close relationship between the Hornudden as a producer and customer as a consumer. Being part of the shared garden means that producers and consumers share opportunities and challenges together. On the one hand, the consumer/member can influence what grows and pays for things like transparency and environmental oversight, and on the other hand, financial security is created for the company as a producer. Because customers buy a share of the year's cultivation and pay in advance, it allows the company to cover start-up costs and lets them invest in new crops as well.

Vegetable production is the centre/cornerstone of the business, and therefore, partnership with private actors has been important for the company. As an example, they buy manure from a neighboring dairy farmer who is certified organic (together with other purchased organic manure) so that they can use it in the soil to grow vegetables.

The company has 1,5 employees year-round (in addition to Karin and Mats), and the number of them increases to 20 during the intensive summer months.

Overall, the vegetable production, restaurant, and CSA boxes as well as education and training of volunteers and students together with the water treatment plant/purifier have made the business a unique entity. As the owners point out, their novelty is the entire business together which makes the company both a business in monetary terms but also a social enterprise with volunteers and occupational training, as well as with the environment in mind (organic farming) linking a variety of activities in a circle.

Market

The company's customer segments have changed over time together with the change of a Swede into a more conscious and mindful consumer. This is a local business and



today, most of its customers are +30 years old, with an academic degree, living in the city, who are interested in organic farming and the environment, and want to eat healthy foods.

When it comes to the vegetable boxes, customers can choose the option that suits them. This means that they can choose seasonal boxes, combination boxes (spring with seasonal boxes), or even seasonal boxes suitable for small or single families. Boxes of vegetables are sent to nearby cities such as Enköping, Hornudden, Mariefred, Sanda, Stallarholmen, and Strängnäs. A new location, Eskilstuna, has been added for 2021 as well. They also try to have a weekly box of at least seven different vegetables at a fixed total value.

The company communicates more digitally with its customers. They use social media such as Facebook and Instagram, and also believe that the best way to communicate is to act in a way that makes newspapers want to write about the business and the work they do.

Challenges

Hornudden's trädgård is regulated by KRAV (organic certification), which is applied to their vegetable production and their processing. In addition, since they are running a restaurant, café, and a shop, there are rules and regulations related to the environment and health, alcohol monitoring, and fire supervision.

Funding

The company has access to private credit through its local bank and at the moment, has a project application in the process through their local Leader office.

What makes this case innovative?

The key resource of the company is a combination of full-time and seasonal employees together with the volunteers, internships, or occupational training that all contribute with experience to all their business activities. They create rural jobs and exchange knowledge and ideas that can be incorporated into their business. In fact, along with vegetable production, Hornudden's trädgård is a social business since they have people of many ages coming to their farm for either work, internships, or occupational training. Therefore, the company is in many ways a stepping-stone into the labour market.

Furthermore, the company's business model has customization options. They have organic products and through their restaurants and shops create added value to serve the customer's choice. Their turning point is to have quality goods that, instead of focusing on quantity, create a good relationship with the customers.



Key takeaways / Lessons learnt

Hornudden's trädgård is a member of WWOOF (Worldwide Opportunity of Organic Farms). This means that they accept volunteers and trainees from all over the world. Origin and age vary among those who come to the company, but the interest in people and ecology unite. Developing is an important part of the business, regardless of whether it concerns someone who is there and helps them for three weeks or looks to the future of the entire business.

Hornudden stands for durability and quality, and the owners have placed their mission on credibility, development, and role modeling, as well as talking more about resilience, rather than sustainability.

The company wants to be more diverse than it is now, rather than growing and expanding into a larger market. They have planted one-hectare of apple trees to use for their processing (marmalade, salsa, etc.). An important social project has been running during 2019-2021 and will be finished at the end of 2021 with support from the local Leader office.

Impact

The company has strived to lessen its impact on the environment. The restaurant and shop, along with the nearby greenhouse have been heated for 10 years, by the lake Mälaren, with a “**heat exchanger**” that allows them to heat both spaces and guests. Karin and Mats have also installed separate toilets that are passed on to their own treatment plant, where they are converted into manure that can be used as fertilizer. Moreover, all food residues and some plant residues are placed in the compost site and converted into nutrient soil. Furthermore, they are fossil-free while they use HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) for all vehicles in the company.

The company also creates rural jobs and has employees and volunteers from far and near. There is a great variety, not only vegetable production but also other activities, and not just for the people but also a nursery for volunteering, training, and many conscious consumers around. In addition to direct jobs (salaries, taxes), the business creates rings on the water in the form of inputs for vegetable production (manure) or sales of goods in the farm shop (marmalade and salsa) but also as a nursery for the municipality (the occupational training).

