

FARMINFIN



Farming concepts and innovative
funding/financing

CASE STUDY

Werner and Martina Haase



INTRO

Werner and Martina Haase have been running the Leitzachtal goat farm since 1989.

Out of love for nature and in order to preserve our cultural landscape, Werner and Martina Haase have converted it to biodynamic agriculture in 1992.

In addition to 60 goats, 14 Murnau-Werdenfelser cattle are also kept, thus contributing to the preservation of a native breed that is threatened with extinction.

Since 2017, the farm has been a demonstration farm for organic farming.

Only green electricity is used at the farm.

The farm in the valley also includes an alpine pasture, which is managed from June to October.

Goat cheese, goat milk, cow milk is marketed directly and personally.

Additionally, the family welcomes visitors for farm holidays.

1. PERSONAL DATA OF THE FARMER



- ▶ **Name:** Werner and Martina Haase.
- ▶ **Birth year:** 1958, 1960.
- ▶ **Gender:** Male & female.
- ▶ **Education:** Master butcher as basic training; agricultural evening school (BiLa) in 2000.
- ▶ **Occupation:** Full-time farmer.

2. FARM DATA

- ▶ **Farm location:** Leitzachtal Goat Farm, Sandbichl 2+4, 83730 Fischbachau.
- ▶ **Farm Area in ha:** 22 ha grassland, 21 ha alpine pasture, 15 ha forestry.
- ▶ **Farm description:** The farm of Werner and Martina Haase was first mentioned in a document in 1477. The farm has been run as a family business for several generations. The current farm managers started keeping goats in 1989 and took over their parents' farm in 2000.

Out of love for nature and in order to preserve their cultural landscape, Werner and Martina Haase converted to biodynamic agriculture in 1992.

14 Murnau-Werdenfelser cattle are kept on the 22 hectares, in addition to the 60 goats, which are a native breed threatened with extinction. The whey produced during cheese production is fed to geese and domestic pigs.

Since 2017, the farm has been a demonstration farm for organic farming.

Only green electricity is used at the farm.

Goat cheese, goat milk, cow milk is marketed directly and personally.

The farm in the valley also includes an alpine pasture.

In addition to agriculture with direct marketing, farm holidays are offered.

The objective is the highest quality and only high-priced marketing in direct sales. For this purpose, the concept of participation certificates was also implemented.

The Haase couple has no children. They will continue the business as long as it is possible, for it brings them joy and continues to match their lifestyle.

3. FINANCING AND ACCESS TO FUNDING

The objective on the farm is to produce the highest quality of products, and only market them for high-price via direct sales. Currently, 100% of the farm's own milk is sold directly to consumers. All added value remains on the farm.

Of course, there are investment and financing needs in the agricultural business. In the area of marketing, it is important to be unique in the community, and to build and maintain lasting customer relationships. The Haase farm has set up an innovative financing mechanism through its 'profit participation certificate,' which not only guarantees financial security, but customer loyalty. Werner Haase sees the benefit with profit participation certificates also in the fact that people find each other and build a community. People suddenly see, "I am different, but by no means alone". Thus, on the farm, a newly found community is forged between farm manager and profit participation certificate holders. The existential fear for the farmer, and feeling of loneliness was also alleviated.

The concept of profit participation certificates was implemented in 2010 with the support of Spezialberatung. Here, people could invest 500Euro to 5,000Euro each in the Haase farm and thus secure an entitlement to a return. The return was not paid in the form of interest or dividends, but in the form of a voucher for farm products of the corresponding value.

This has achieved the following:

- Contribution to the financing of the Court
- Customer loyalty
- Appreciation
- Further external impact and attention

The farm managers are very satisfied with what has been achieved.

The profit participation certificates have a term of 5 years and can be terminated on an annual basis thereafter. In the period from 2010 to the present, there have only been a dozen participation certificate holders who have terminated.

The whole community is very happy.

The basis for this is the high quality standards that are set and met at the farm, not only for the products, but also for the way the farmers interact with their community, with nature and with the animals.

“If you want a profit participation certificate solution just because you can’t get along with the banks, then it’s the wrong approach. Alternative financing solutions are not economically more favourable, nor are they easier to handle. The demand for transparency and communication is high and maintaining relationships is very important.”

“In the implementation of alternative financing solutions, it is advisable to involve specialist advice with expertise in this field.”

“It is not possible with the village alone. It only works in conjunction with the city as well. Look for allies in the city!”

4. TRAINING NEEDS AND CONCLUSION

► **Training experiences and gaps:** While the basic profound craft training (master butcher) and the agricultural evening school were a basis to build on, Mr Haase recognises the need for access to robust training and information.

In addition, what is important is life experience and experiential knowledge based on it, which results from and builds on daily practice.

In particular, it knowledge acquisition also relies on exchange and consultation.

Specialised knowledge is necessary for the implementation of innovative financing instruments.

There are certainly individual farmers who can implement this themselves. However, this will not be the rule.

It is central to the success of participation certificates to maintain a high level of openness and transparency in the community.

Basic business skills are needed by a farmer in all cases to facilitate financing, such as preparing business plans and communicating the business idea and concept.

As a farmer, it is worth putting yourself in a position to present your farm to potential investors. To do this, it is essential to highlight strengths, and to present the overall situation according to the truth.

Basically, what is important for success is physical and mental freshness on the part of the farm managers, a strong foundation of values and a reflective attitude to always consider how things can be done better or more sensibly.

► **Final considerations:** It is important to emphasise that any form of financing - whether conventional via bank loans or innovative/ alternative - should be based on a functioning business.

Financing in general does not make sense if it does not finance an economically, ecologically and socially sustainable concept.

At the Leitzachtaler Ziegenhof, high quality standards in dealing with people, nature and animals are in the foreground. Without this basis, the implementation of the concept with participation certificates would be ineffective.

With the highest quality and the nature of this innovative financing, it is possible to create and experience real added value at the same time.

The farmer experiences a community that is no longer commonplace in the current agricultural system. This is about appreciation and the meaning of one's own activity.

The concept of the profit participation certificate can thus be described as a valuable vehicle at the farm.

It is an innovative example when it comes to access to land and finance for farmers. It is a suitable instrument to obtain financial support and at the same time to create and spread awareness.

Those involved as participation certificate holders and also the other regular customers build on many years of consistent work by Werner and Martina Haase, and know that they always experience fair treatment here.

In this respect, the concept of the profit participation certificate has a positive impact on farming on the farm and on the regional community that has been created.



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Project webpage

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PROJECT COORDINATOR



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