



Quinta do Norte



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Description and framing of the associations involved in Quinta do Norte project

The property currently named Quinta do Norte, was a farm (Casa do Gaiato) that housed orphans or children and adolescents deprived of a normal and stable family environment. These children have developed agricultural activities on the farm as an occupation and, at the same time, producing plant and animal products for domestic consumption, providing almost all the food needed.

In the course of time, the building was being damaged and there was no funds for its rehabilitation. In that way, the Casa do Gaiato, gave the management of the farm to Secretaria Regional do Trabalho e Solidariedade Social – SRTSS (a governmental department), in exchange for new residences, located in the city, for the reception of children and adolescents who were in their care. So, they would have better access to schools and health care.

In turn, the SRTSS gave the management of the farm to ‘Cresaçor’, giving rise to the project of ‘Quinta do Norte’. This project was committed to the involvement of various associations with social nature, located in Ponta Delgada city. The associations that currently are partners in the project of the ‘Quinta do Norte’ are:

ARRISCA – Regional Association of Rehabilitation, is an association that helps people with drugs dependencies through a systemic and integrated model of long-term care.

As a partner of the project, the ARRISCA promotes occupational rehabilitation and social inclusion through the ‘Quinta do Norte’. There, they can recover the farm and can do agricultural activities, under a governmental program named Prosa.

Associação Norte Crescente, promotes the integrated development of the parishes of North Coast of Ponta Delgada, especially in the following areas: social, cultural, sporting, economic, environmental, youth and education. Is committed to creating an educational farm and with developing actions for the training and retraining of the unemployed and of young people in the northern part of the island. It is also

committed to tourism and with the development of production units associated with the agricultural entrepreneurship center.

Besides the activities related to the agriculture, this association englobes some of the infrastructures of the project, that intends to open a social canteen to serve about 60 meals to elderly and needy.

Associação Novo Dia, develops social support activities with accommodation, proposing, since its foundation, the development and implementation of structures, initiatives and actions, in order to respond to the reality of social exclusion that exists on the island of São Miguel. It works with disadvantaged communities, aiming at social inclusion through support provided on the street and in emergency reception centers and temporary.

This association will be present in the project through the use of apartments already constructed, in order to be used by people who were homeless and are in a phase of social rehabilitation. In addition to the stay, they will be entitled to a portion of land to install their vegetable garden and also will have to participate in agricultural activities of the farm.

Casa do Gaiato de São Miguel – Work of the Padre Americo in the Azores, aims to welcome, educate and integrate into society children and young people who, for whatever reason, found themselves deprived of normal family environment.

The Casa do Gaiato as a partner of the project, should contribute with two agricultural officials and provide animals – cattle, pigs and poultry – for the development of farming activities.

TETRAPI – Educational activity center, SA, is a certified entity, under the European Union's normative acts, in the formation of human resources especially in the service of the Azores. Strives consistently and continues, in the personal, social and professional training of human resources, investing in people with spirit of perseverance, willingness to learn and entrepreneurial initiative.

As a partner entity of the project, the TETRAPI, is responsible for the training to be conducted within the farm. Aims to provide the farm with infrastructures and

equipment required for the proper development of professional courses, namely: Beekeeper, Technical Gardening, Technical Agricultural and Technical Livestock. It is also expected to utilize the space of the farm to develop training in organic farming in after work.

Cresaçor - Regional Cooperative Solidarity Economy, CRL represents the network of solidarity economy, aimed at increasing access to education, to training and preparation of job, through the Social employment Market and the access to micro-credit. It also supports the creation and sustainability of social economy initiative, and the promotion, valorization, marketing and distribution of their products. Besides that, provides economic and financial consulting service to the sustainability in particularly of the micro business of social inclusion.

As a partner of the project, the Cresaçor helps with the property of Quinta do Norte, and she has to apply to all regional, national and European initiatives of funding for its implementation and operation. Is the entity responsible for the management and coordination of the project, offering a superior technical.

Description of the physical space of the farm

The farm is located at Rua do Monte Alegre, parish of the Capelas. It is made up of four main areas: the buildings, the production of birds, rodents and pigs, the forest and the pasture and the orchard area, with a total of about 90 thousand square meters (Fig.).



Fig. 1 – Buildings.

The building area is made up of five facilities, which will be rehabilitated for the utilization of the various associations involved in the project. Will be created practice rooms, classrooms of characteristic handicraft workshops here on the island, dormitories and a lab that will serve as a showcase for the activities related to agriculture and the environment.

The orchard is characterized essentially by having apple trees, pear trees, orange trees, lemon trees and bananas trees, of regional variety. There are also small areas of horticultural crops (Fig.2).



Fig. 2 – left- Orchard, **Right** – Horticultural crops.

The area of production of birds, rodents and pigs is a set of parks for the creation of pigs and a general park for the creation of poultry and rabbits (Fig.3).



Fig. 3 – Chicken coop.

All animals shall be distributed by the associations.

The pasture and forest area represents about 50 percent of the total area of the farm, and is being used by a herd of 10 cows for milk production that is for consumption by Casa do Gaiato (Fig.4).



Fig. 4 – Cows.

A future vision of the Quinta do Norte.

The Quinta do Norte presents a huge growth potential and the possibility of involving the entire community in this process. So here are some of my ideas of how I predict and idealize the future of Quinta do Norte.

Creating a learning farm.

Currently, in Portugal, the children and young people no longer have contact with the rural surroundings, losing all kinds of healthy experiences that comes with the contact with the environment.

To this end, priority is to rehabilitate all the spaces allocated to breeding, empowering them minimum conditions of hygiene and safety for both animals and people (Fig.5). Currently, is being rehabilitated the space for bird creation. It is my objective to use native species as much as possible, because they are more resistant to disease and pests, besides giving to know the genetic heritage of our region. By other way, we can use the surplus of the crops to feed the animals, and utilize the eggs, meat and milk to the institutions involved in the project, thus lowering the costs with the power supply.



Fig. 5 – Before and after the chicken coop.

In addition to the animal aspect, the learning farm will be equipped with greenhouses for the production of vegetables (Fig.6). Is already under way the rehabilitation of the fruit orchard of regional varieties.



Fig. 6 – Greenhouse.

Create a composting Center that would use the remains of the greens and with the addition of animal droppings from the learning farm to create a compound that would be used primarily in the production of mushrooms and then would serve as fertilizer for the orchard and vegetable crops (Fig.7).



Fig. 7 – Beginning of compost center.

The whole farm will be certified on organic farming and after delivery and supply of the products to the associations assigned to the project, they may be placed on the market generating some revenue for the farm.

Creation of a center of observation of birds and bats.

We are fortunate to have at the Quinta do Norte several native and migratory birds. So with the creation of an observation deck, the installation of nests of bats and bird in the forest zone, will allow the observation of these animals by the community. In addition, these animals bring the benefit to control insects and rodents in the learning farm.

Creation of a center of Aquaponics

The creation of this Centre would be in partnership with TETRAPI and has as its main objectives the teaching of an alternative form of crop production and a delivery of fish to the project partners. This project will be accompanied with training action open to the community, in order to provide the tools to they can produce in your home a vegetable protein associated with the production of fish, encouraging healthy lifestyle habits and providing benefits to household economy.

Creation of green spaces and living for the community

The former Casa do Gaiato was a location with many flowers, and this is the memory of many people who visit us today. So is an objective, the rehabilitation of all green spaces around the buildings, making them more flowered reminding how this farm was in the past. To do so, would be created a technical gardening course, where the people could have a professional expertise with consequent opening of the doors to the labour market. Besides that, the surrounding area of the farm buildings could be cared during practical lessons.

Empower the farm with a pedestrian path for all zones, with the correct identification, allowing to combine a practice of physical activity with bird watching and cultures traditional Azorean.

Preserve the Azorean culture

Creation the workshop of arts and learning, which will have small regional handicrafts workshops, namely: pottery, weaving, wickerwork and embroidery. The rehabilitation of these workshops perpetuates the knowledge of the ancestors to the younger. In addition, the vast majority of the materials that will be used in the art workshops will try to be produced in the farm.

Social concerns.

It is intended that the community in general be another project partner, creating conditions so that they can make use of the space in order to have a place where they could have contact with the rural surroundings and with Azorean traditions, and a place to socialize.

In addition, it will be created a community garden, offering small plots of land to citizens of the parish, to the cultivation of products for own final consumption.

All farm workers, will be the individuals who are being accompanied by some associations partners of the project, thus allowing their labour market integration and social and cultural rehabilitation.

Environmental Concerns

We intend to create conditions to capture rainwater for water supplies for crops and for washing of animal parks..

Decrease the soil preparation with heavy machinery, thus allowing the reduction of fossil fuel dependence and decrease soil erosion.

Creation of a Center for renewable energy and composting

Installation of solar panels for water heating and installation of two small wind turbines to generate enough power to supply all the buildings.

Conclusion

In short, it is intended that the Quinta do Norte becomes a place where the community, in general, can enjoy the contact with nature and with the old Azorean traditions. We also want to be a center of socializing, learning and preparation for the labour market, especially for people with some sort of dependency and for young people of our community.

Promoting a sustainable agricultural production, preserving the environment, as a way to satisfy the alimentary needs (plant and animal foods) of the project partners.