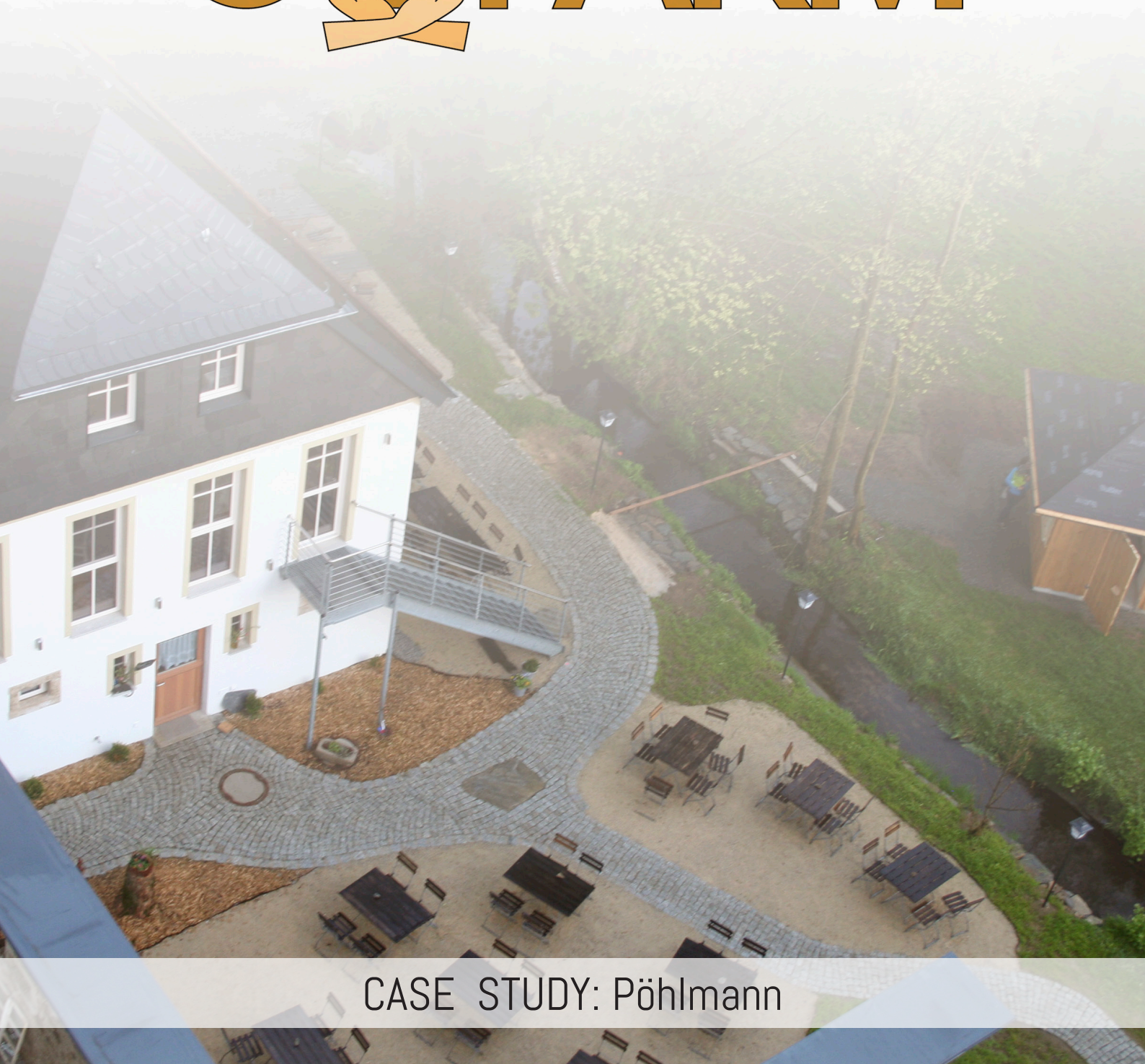


# COFARM



CASE STUDY: Pöhlmann

# Introduction

Mrs. Pöhlmann and her husband acquired the business from her parents in 2012. The output from the farm grew significantly during the 1980s and 1990s from 40 to 70 sows and to 120 acres of cultivated agricultural land.

In 1996, a biogas plant was built for the purpose of electricity production and this initiative was done in cooperation with an agricultural entrepreneur who was a friend of the family.

Furthermore, the management of the arable land has been undertaken with the mutual support colleagues in the region.

In 2016, after intensive planning and renovation, a farm-café was opened, where the home-made cakes are offered to consumers. Farm ice cream; cheese; and sausages from other farmers in the region are also offered on sale in the farm-café. The Pöhlmann family are involved in full time primary agricultural production, biogas production and the farm café.

## Basic information



Bauernhof-Café Geigersmühle; Geigersmühle 2; 95233 Helmbrechts.

Name Pöhlmann

Year of establishment Experience with cooperation activities in farming since the 1990s

Kind of cooperation Producers group

Number of farmers/ landowners/ entrepreneurs/ enterprises involved

2 In production 2 In marketing

Internet links <http://www.cafegeigersmuehle.de/index.htm>

# Farm Data

Area 120ha

## Description

The father of the present owner and manager (Mrs. Pöhlmann) developed the farming business during his stewardship and placed a significant focus on piglet production whilst curtailing the rearing of cattle.

Today the farm has 70 sows with the majority of piglets sold. However, some of the piglets are fattened on the farm. To make better use of grassland biogas the Pöhlmann family, together with a neighbour and agricultural entrepreneur established a GmbH & Co KG, in which both families hold equal shares. This was a very important step in the development of the farm enterprise.

Today, the biogas production system is more flexible with a power output of 700kWe.

In addition to the piggery, the residential building and farm café are heated by the biogas plant.

In addition to 3 family workers (Mrs. Pöhlmann, her husband, mother) there is one full-time employee (biogas) and two part-time employees (farm cafe) working on the farm.



# Cooperation Process Data

The farm has gained extensive experience in cooperation activities, especially in production and marketing.

## 1. Cooperation in production:

The company cooperates with a neighbouring family in the management of the bio-gas plant.

Both partners manage their own business. Tillage / crop outputs are used by the Pöhlmann farm as a feedstuff for the sows. Furthermore, the yields from the pasture are used for gas production. In addition to the two owners, about 20 additional farms supply crop yields to the biogas plant.

It took courage to decide on biogas in the form of an actual fusion as part of the gas production and electricity

production of the biogas plant, which represents a significant investment. The location was developed 700m away from the Pöhlmann farm.

## 2. Cooperation in marketing

In the farm café, good cooperation has been fostered with other farms who supply produce to the enterprise. Mrs. Pöhlmann sells her own produce along with sausage meat, potatoes etc from other farms. In many cases this is based on reciprocity. Other farm shops buy her noodles and eggs. There are no contractual arrangements for these transactions.

Ms. Pöhlmann, her husband and father were always open and proactive in all areas of cooperation.

She completed a course at a higher agricultural school and her husband is currently completing specialist training. The succession of the farming enterprise from one generation to the next can often be challenging but the Pöhlmann family have had a very positive experience. According to Mrs Pöhlmann 'good leadership, teamwork and high motivation will create a clear added value'.

To date, the family's experiences of cooperation activities on the farm have been very positive. It is very important to maintain constant communication with all stakeholders and to be continuously looking forward with respect to the development of the business

Constant development and optimization is important to Mrs. Pöhlmann.. This can only work when there is transparency and mutual respect and trust.

Cooperation is an opportunity for development, strengthening the network and supplier relationships.

With regard to the necessary competences for successful cooperation, Mrs. Pöhlmann outlines the following:

- Team work
- Strategic planner
- Excellent communicator
- Innovative

So far there have only been positive experiences with respect to cooperation activities. It requires clear agreements and selection of the right partners from the outset. A good criterion for selecting suitable partners is to observe which entrepreneur in the network can maintain good and effective communication.



## Advice/Recommendation

“ Start at the beginning, with what is given, and look ahead to the potential. If this is to be developed through cooperation, then proceed cautiously but determined. ”

“ Even different types can be combined in cooperation - it is crucial that the partners are reliable, and that good leadership and teamwork exist. ”

## Queries/Questions

- Even if the farmer is very successful in all his cooperation activities, it is recommended to start carefully. Do you agree?
- The farmer in this case study is engaged in cooperation activities at various points along the production cycle. In what ways, can a farmer generate value added from the outputs he / she produces?



## Key Words

### Cooperation Key Words

Marketing/sales  
Producers group  
Production

### Farm Key Words

Direct sales/short supply chain  
Livestock  
Pigs  
Renewable energies  
Tourism and recreation  
Traditional products/farming practices

# Partners



Limerick Institute of Technology:  
(Ireland)  
[www.lit.ie/rdi](http://www.lit.ie/rdi)



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[www.hofundleben.de](http://www.hofundleben.de)



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Confederazione Italiana Agricoltori Toscana  
(Italy)  
[www.ciatoscana.eu](http://www.ciatoscana.eu)



European Landowners' Organisation  
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[www.europeanlandowners.org](http://www.europeanlandowners.org)

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## Project Website

[www.cofarm-erasmus.eu](http://www.cofarm-erasmus.eu)



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