



RDP Projects Database (PIKSE)

Postcard Template (MS Word 2003)
Version 2a – September 2010

Project Title: Preservation of the viniculture techniques in the vineyards of Santorini

'At a glance'

Notes

Project Theme:

Choose an item:

Environment and Sustainable Land Management

Please select **only one theme** per project using the **drop-down menu**. Click once on the grey <text box> for options.

Sub-theme:

Preservation of Rural Landscape

Please enter **one sub-theme** into the grey <text box>. Please ensure that the sub-theme corresponds to the Project Theme above – see **Annex 2** of the Guidance Note

Keywords:

Biodiversity

Preservation of historical rural Landscape

Environmental friendly cultivation

Island

Wine- Traditional vineyards

Please select **up to 5 keywords** per project from **Annex 3** of the Guidance Note and insert into the grey <text fields> as appropriate.

Country/Region:

Greece - Island of Santorin - Region of South Aegean

Please insert the **name of the RDP territory** where the **project is located**

Final Beneficiary Type(s):

Choose an item: .Individual farmers

Choose an item: .Individual farmers

Please insert **up to two final beneficiary types** using the **drop-down menu**. Click once on the grey <text box> for options.

Project Cost:

Choose an item: > €500 000

Please select **one of the cost ranges** from the **drop-down menu**

RDP Measure(s):

214

Please **insert the RDP measure code** into the grey <text boxes>. Provide **ONLY** the numeric code (e.g. 312). Please **DO NOT** insert the title of the measure

Duration:

2007

Please insert the **official project approval date** (month/year)

2013

Please insert the **project completion date** – actual or estimated (month/year)

Last Updated:

14/2/2011

Please use the grey <text box> to insert the **date (dd/mm/yyyy)** when this postcard is completed.

Postcard Author:



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Rozi CHARITOPOULOU

Please insert the **name of the person that produced the postcard**

Main Postcard Text

Please note that you may enter the text below in English or any other official EU language. The ENRD Contact will arrange the necessary translation into English.

Background (maximum 150 words):

The island of Santorini belongs to the Cyclades and is situated in the Aegean Sea. It is of volcanic origin and is located about 200 km southeast from Greece's mainland. It is the largest island of a small, circular archipelago consisting of other small islands (Thirasia, P. Kammeni, N. Kammeni) which bears the same name. It forms the southernmost member of the Cyclades group of islands, with an area of approximately 73 km² and a 2001 census population of 13.670. Santorini is essentially what remains of an enormous volcanic explosion, destroying the earliest settlements on what was formerly a single island, and leading to the creation of the current geological caldera. The island is the site of one of the largest volcanic eruptions in recorded history: the Minoan eruption (sometimes called the Thera eruption), which occurred some 3.600 years ago at the height of the Minoan civilization.

The island represents one of the 3 most frequented touristic destinations in Greece. The main activity is tourism.

Wine making in Santorini dates back thousands of years to the 3rd millennium B.C. The excavations in Acrotiri Village, one of the most important prehistoric settlements of the Aegean, revealed findings like burnt vines or decorations of grapes on ancient pots proving that vine cultivation was very popular at that time in the island. What makes the island of Santorini so unique is the special ecosystem, created by the continuous explosions of the local volcano and the lava that burned the rocks and made the land absorbing, porous and rich in porcelain. The land of Santorini is anhydrous, since it rains rarely. The 3.500 year tradition in vine cultivation and the art of wine making is maintained nowadays by different winemakers who cultivate approximately 1.100 Ha of vineyards that represent about the 1/3 of Santorini surface. Cliff vineyards in Santorini are spreading out on different ground levels, forming the distinctive "pezoules" (terraces) which were made by the producers so that it is easier for them to cultivate and to maximize the effectiveness of rainwater.

The secret of successful grape cultivation on the island lays in the trapped humidity as well as the morning dew produced by the evaporation of the sea in the site of Caldera.

The vineyards are not linear. The vines are scattered, close to the ground. For thousands of years now, the local producers have invented a unique way of pruning, the so called "kouloura" (curl). Its shape resembles to a round basket that protects the soft and tender grapes from getting damaged by the island's strong winds.

Coming off the sea, the nocturnal fog brings much needed water to the vines during the hot summer nights and together with the refreshing northerly winds provide excellent growing conditions for the creation of the superb Santorini wines.

Objective (maximum 100 words):

The main objectives of the project are: a) the preservation of traditional agricultural practices, which are likely to become extinct under the economic pressure on land use, b) the preservation of biodiversity of especially endangered ecosystems like volcanic islands, c) the soil protection from erosion and severe weathering conditions d) the protection of indigenous vineyard varieties.

The island provides some unique Grape varieties. The most important ones are: a) Athiri (one of the most ancient of Greek grape varieties), b) Aidani (another ancient Greek grape variety mainly found in the Cyclades Islands), c) Assyrtiko, d) Mandilaria (red among the varieties richest in colour, indigenous to the region of the Aegean Sea, probably one of the oldest varieties in Greece), e) Mavrotragano (red, near extinction not long ago, is local cultivar on Santorini that is in the midst of revival by some of that Island's most earnest producers).

Some of the most wellknown AOC (Appellation d'origine controllee) Santorini wines include Assyrtiko - Dry White Wine, Nykteri - Dry White Wine, Visanto - White Wine Naturally Sweet Name of Origin of Superior Quality Santorini (the most traditional wine of Santorini well known since Byzantine times). Thus, by providing financial incentives through subsidies under the Agrienvironmental Measures the vine farmers will benefit and continue their agricultural activity. Also the use of "pezoules" helps to prevent soil erosion. Furthermore, the wine making industry enables the development of activities providing the diversification of the economic structure of the countryside.

Main Activities (maximum 150 words):

The main obligations / commitments that the farmers undertake for a period of 5 years, are:

- They must be farmers owning vine yards in the selected areas (islands of Thira and Thirasia)
- They must be farmers maintaining the traditional way of cultivation and pruning

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- They must maintain the "pezoules" (terraces), the stripes and hedges of trees (in group or lines), the fieldmargins in their vineyards
- They are not allowed to use herbicides or fire
- They must follow the rules set by national and European legislation

The subsidy given accounts for 900 €/Ha/year. During the project period, a report describing the activities and the environmental commitments is delivered and the responsible authorities have to set up a control mechanism in order to ensure compliance with the commitments (the same applies to all Agrienvironmental Measures).

Results and Benefits (maximum 150 words):

The project has been announced in 2006 as part of the Agrienvironmental Measures of the 3rd Programming Period (Measure 3.15) and the first beneficiaries have signed the contracts in 12/2006. The overall budget accounts for 2.956.050€ and there are 605 vineyard owners with 657 hectares participating. Another call will be announced in 2011, in order to allow the rest of the vineyard owners (out of a total of 934) on the islands to participate in the project. As a result the participation of the total area of 1.138,5 hectares is envisaged, thus allowing the cultivation of the traditional Santorinian vineyards. The upcoming call will have a budget of 2 Mio. € and there are 400 hectares expected to be introduced in the project.

Since the main economic activity on the island remains the tourism, the preservation of the agricultural landscape is a difficult task. Taking into account that the average price for land is estimated to be 250.000 €/hectare one can consider it as a challenge to maintain the land for cultivation.

The well organized Cooperation of the Santorini Winemakers (SANTO) has enforced their members to participate in this project. As a matter of fact the Association initiated the start up of the project (their efforts go back in 1998) aiming at the preservation of the rural activity and the preservation of the historic wine making in the area. So it must be concluded that the main success of the measure was the targeted and common efforts of the interested parties to maintain their traditional activity.

The environmental benefits cannot be exactly estimated yet, as the implementation period is too short to allow identification of soil and water quality improvement (chemical measurements must be conducted). But we can count as positive effects the continuation of the wine activity together with a broad establishment of the unique Santorini wines in the wine world (awards for Santorini wines).

In the annual Decanter World Wine Awards competition of 2010 the Santorini wines got a lot of Medals, eg: Estate Argyros Santorini 2009 – Estate Argyros Vinsanto 1989 Gold medal for Argyros Estate Assyrtiko 2009 Silver medals for the Santorini Winery 2009, Gaia Wines Assyrtiko wild ferment 2009 Argyros Estate Atlantis.

Lessons Learnt (maximum 100 words):

- The active involvement of the interested parties is a guarantee for the success of a project
- The production of quality products is an incentive for the maintenance of traditional agricultural activity
- Environmental benefits are best met when economic interests are also considered

Further Information (enter text or attach any additional documents):

Project Location:

Southern Europe	Please provide more specific information on the geographical location/scope of the project e.g. a project in Estonia might be described as in Võru County, South Estonia
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Project Cost:

2.956.000 € (EC contribution: 2.512.600€, national contribution: 443.400€)	Please insert the total project cost, including if known the breakdown into EU + National + Private funds
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Other Additional Information:

Contact Information:

Project Website:

www.agrotikianaptixi.gr (for the whole programme RDP Greece 2007-2013), also
www.santowines.gr for information on Santorini wines

Contact (Name and E-mail):

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MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT & FOOD - Directorate for Spatial Planning & Environment Protection

Language(s) for communication:

EL-EN

Please return the completed postcard to postcards@enrd.eu together with a) any relevant photographs and b) any additional documents that you wish to be linked to the postcards.