

The background of the project:

The Farmers' Market in Szimpla Kert is organised by SzimplaCity Ltd and Agri Kulti Ltd every Sunday, in the current form since 10th June 2012. Szimpla Kert was the first ruin pub in Budapest, It was voted 3rd best bar in the world by the voters of Lonely Planet. The key in its operation is that the income from catering is used for cultural programs as colourful as possible and always for free. Agri Kulti Ltd was established by one of the owners Gábor Bertényi to organise a similar farmers' market in Nagymaros. Several other NGOs dealing with rural development, protection of the interests of small scale farmers assisted the starting of the market, research background was provided by the Department of Human Ecology of ELTE. The market is organised in the building and garden of Szimpla Kert in 14 Kazinczy Street, Budapest every week.

The project aim:

The primary aim of the project is to provide a stable and low-cost opportunity for Hungarian traditional small scale producers to sell products, a reliable food source and cultural programs for families mostly for the citizens of the 7th district and promoting short food chains and sustainable small scale farming. The basic concept has been enriched with elements: the most important is the fund raising which operates on two platforms. One is carried out by the volunteers of Budapest Bike Maffia, they collect food donations from the customers of the market and they deliver it to families with several children (usually) by bike after the market closes. The other is the Common Pot, which is open to NGOs, they can apply for an opportunity to cook through a tender. During the market they cook for around 200 people, the food is made from ingredients one can buy at the market, and then they sell it collecting money in an honesty box. This event doesn't only mean money donation but also an opportunity to promote their activities and it is ideal for teambuilding. Our aim is to make the market not only a place for shopping but cultural programs for families for people who visit us. That's why there is live music and creative programs for kids all day long for free. The interior of Szimpla Kert is designed that people can enjoy the atmosphere of a café, sit down, chat or even enjoy the purchased products.

Organisation process:

The operational tasks are carried out by two people during the week, one is on behalf of SzimplaCity Ltd the other is on behalf of Agri

Kulti Ltd. The tasks are: coordinating the stallholders, admission of new stallholders, their monitoring (family visits), managing the Facebook page, coordinating graphic and printing works, media relations, coordinating applicants for the Common Pot, preparing the cooking, organising next week's programs. Both SzimplaCity Ltd's and Agri Kulti Ltd's management take part in the decision making and policy forming processes. The emerging topics are discussed during the market meetings every Wednesday. On Sundays the market requires more people: other than the organisers, there are handymen who make the spatial transformation in the morning, help the stallholders to (un)pack, during the day there are more bartenders working than usually, at the gate there are sub-contractor guards to deal with the traffic and not to let dogs in during the market. Our volunteers assist with the cooking, the programs for children and information management.

Market budget:

Our aim is to help small scale farmers not to have disadvantages compared to bigger producers so the fee for vendors is only symbolic, 1000 HUF per occasion. As a comparison: at other markets in Budapest this fee is between 8 000 and 30 000 HUF. This is the only income of the market, it has to be mentioned that the income in the counters is far below the costs (manpower, programs, etc) of the market. These things considered, the market cost 250 000 HUF every month for SzimplaCity Ltd, this cost doesn't include the wages of the organising employees. This is not because of bad management but a conscious decision and the result of the above mentioned policy, the organisers doesn't want to make profit of the market. Up to now we haven't received any state, municipal or other support, only SzimplaCity Ltd supports the project financially.