

BEST PRACTICES

Sericulture (Silk Farming)

Institutional information

Name of contact person: Stella Kazana Masoura

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Name of institution: - (Hobby)

Region and Country where the case study took place: Agioi Trimithias, Cyprus

Website: n/a

Facebook (link): Χειροτεχνίες στελλα

Twitter (link)

Linked In (link)

Google + (link)

Media

Logo

Summary

Explain your case in one or two sentences

Mrs. Stella Kazana shared that she started practicing [sericulture] in 2000, with silkworm eggs. Initially, the eggs were put in the refrigerator and are taken out in March every year. This year [2020] they were taken out on March 25. They need three weeks to start hatching into larvae (caterpillars), after they are taken out of the refrigerator. Then, the feeding starts for 40 days. The hatching silkworms are black. Silkworms eat only mulberry leaves. They grow up on summer savory wood where they create their cocoon; then they are put into boxes with a cloth, and a piece of tulle above it to lay their eggs on. In about 15 days, the moth emerges from the cocoon. Those moths then mate with each other and make eggs. A moth will lay about 400 eggs each time. When first laid, all eggs are beige and then they turn black [which means they are fertile]. Afterwards, the cloth is closed into a bottle and stored into the refrigerator for one year – until March 25 of the next year. I use the silk for creations.

Background information: How was the situation previous to your actions?

Stella shared with us that silk has existed since ancient years. It was discovered in China and is being used everywhere. In Cyprus, it was a domestic programme. All households had a loom and silkworms because they made silk. Nowadays, everyone involved in sericulture are non-professionals. There are no organised factories or government departments for silkworm breeding; and there is no dedicated ministry department for guidance (only the Department of Plant Protection and Beekeeping). There are only some weaving lessons at the Cyprus Handicrafts Centre.

What were the needs you identified?

Stella suggested that there should be a dedicated ministry department for sericulture, like there is for plant protection and beekeeping, at least for guidance.

What solution you found to cover those needs?

As mentioned before, in Cyprus there is no ministry department for sericulture. Therefore, Stella suggested the development of an association or organisation that will take out the silk thread and make silk clothes, as everybody involved in silk farming is autonomous individuals who usually do not have the tools or machines needed to take out the silk thread.

What actions did you take to reach the solution?

Stella mentioned that she personally contacted on the phone different units in the government many times. She told us that at some point, efforts were made to bring scientists from Bulgaria to plant mulberries, but at the end nothing happened. Currently, there are no developments on this issue.

If any, which partners or other organisations did you involve during the process?

Stella said that she did not involve other organisation in the process.

What were the main problems or difficulties you had to face?

Stella told us that there was no response, nor guidance from the government, for example regarding the diseases of the silkworm. She learnt everything on her own. In Cyprus, there is indifference about silk farming; however, those involved in sericulture are creating their own things and products. For example, she made hair for dolls but also jewelry, trays, and more.

What is the situation now, after your actions?

Stella said that situation is the same as it was 20 years ago.

Main lessons learned along the way? *

Stella said that during these 20 years, she learnt how to handle silkworms properly; how to feed the silkworms; how to protect them from diseases; how to make creations, jewelry, crafts, trays; how to handle the silk, i.e. in warm water. She also added that you cannot buy silkworms. She told us that everybody involved in silk farming got their silkworms from others, like she did; and gave cocoons to others many times.

Annex:

Max 3 Images

Other related resources