

National Report

Spain

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SnailVille

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REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

ID	Reference	Title
1	2020-1-UK01-KA204-079017	SnailVille Proposal
2		

APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS

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1		
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1. Introduction

1.1 Project Context

Despite being among the most prolific consumers of snails in the world, European countries that consume snail meat do not produce sufficient quantities domestically and must instead rely on import to cover demand. Given this, in addition to its apparent profitability, rapid return on investment, and low capital required for an initial investment snail farming (Heliculture) could be a good fit for those who may be low-skilled, unemployed, farmers without substantial capital, or other who aspire to augment their income.

1.2 Project Objectives

The Snailville project aims to develop a heliculture training game for low-skilled marginalised adults that can help them set up cooperatives in rural areas. This training game will function as a single information point guiding a potential snail farmer on how to start a profitable business depending on their situation (financial capability, business skills, geographical location, etc.) by minimising the risks associated with traditional snail farming (snail diseases, egg hatching, formulation of the best feed, mortality rate).

The project also hopes to contribute to the preservation of the snail population in the wild by promoting heliculture.

1.3 Project Target Group

There are a few main target groups – most centrally low-skilled adults from rural areas that can support heliculture, heliculture enthusiasts, and of course snail farmers themselves. More broadly, assorted persons and organisations in the field of agriculture will be targeted, including for example university or college agriculture departments, government ministries or agencies relating to agriculture, or rural development organisations.

Aside from this, game developers may also be targeted for the more technical aspects of the project relating to development of the game.

2. National Report

2.1 The Objectives of the Report

The national report concerns the identification of the current state of play in the heliculture sector in each partner country, and in particular the identification of barriers that heliculturists face in each country. These national reports will form the basis of the Snailville training game, influencing its structure and content, that will guide users and target groups to gain the skills necessary for and surmount the barriers to success in snail farming.

Therefore, the National report will examine the current situation in partner countries with reference to snail farming and the barriers to successfully undertaking it (the "AS-IS" situation). The next step comprises the identification of the actions, skills, and context required for the ideal situation in which to practice heliculture (the "TO-BE" situation).

2.2 The methodology

Partners will conduct desk research on the current situation around heliculture and the barriers to it in their own country. They will identify qualitative and quantitative data to describe their national “AS-IS” situations, and may present good practices in the field that will be used as examples to provide motivation and ideas to the project participants.

Good practices from countries outside of the partnership will also be identified, setting out the TO-BE situation, with particular support from the domain experts on the project at UTH.

Lastly, a comparative report will be put together based on the findings of the National reports to identify the needs, challenges, and opportunities of the partner countries.

2.3 The results - Spain

2.3.1 Briefly outline the size, importance, and general context of snail farming in your country

As heliculture is a very recent activity in Spain as a formal way of farming, the available data is estimative. Although the consumption of snails is common and widespread, its commercialisation has always lacked regulated mechanisms and within the appropriate channels. This also made difficult following up the different farms, as most of them acted on an irregular basis due to the aforementioned lack of legal framework and support.

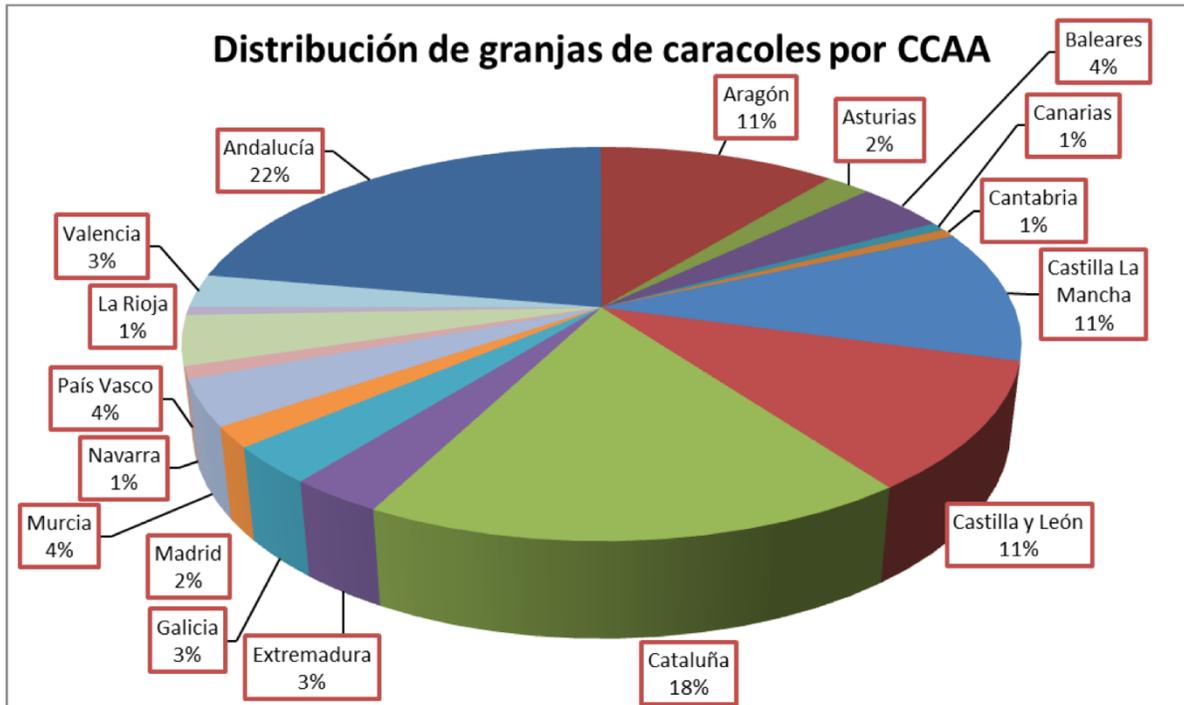
The available data is based on market studies and indicates an annual consumption of 400 grams of snails per person per year in Spain, which would mean some 16 million kg. per year. The majority of the production comes from the crops and wild environment; snails farms have an impact on barely 3% of the total snails’ market in the country.¹

However, due to the progressive inclusion and development of more regulations and prohibition of recollection of wild animals (Law 42/2007 on Natural Heritage and Biodiversity), in 2020 in Spain, there were 629 snails’ farms officially inscribed, from which only 293 are nowadays producing. All the producing farms must be inscribed in the so-called REGA (General Register of Livestock Holdings).² Concerning the areas in which the snail farming is more powerful, Andalucía and Catalonia should be highlighted as the communities where most of the farms are allocated; almost 40% of them³.

¹ Helicultural sector. (n. d.). Spanish Government. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

² Characteristics of Spanish heliculture. (2020). Spanish Government. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

³ Characteristics of Spanish heliculture. (2020). Spanish Government. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.



Distribution of the snails' farms in Spain. REGA and ANEC.

2.3.2 What laws or standards do heliculturists follow in your country (local, regional, national, or EU level)?

The heliculture sector, like other agricultural sectors, is covered by the single Common Organisation of Agricultural Markets regime, regulated by Regulation (EC) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 establishing the common organisation of the markets in agricultural products and repealing Regulations (EEC) No 922/72, (EEC) No 234/79, (EC) No 1037/2001 and (EC) No 1234/2007. In this case, as in the case of other minor products, there are no specific support instruments for this sector, so that the application of the Regulation is limited to general provisions and certain measures in crisis' situations.⁴

The national laws concerning heliculture in Spain are the general ones about animal health (Law 8/2003). There is no specific legislation about snail farming and this generates uncertainty in the farmers. This compendium of norms refers to all the animals, without specific reference to snails. There is a national association in charge of providing information, advice and consultancy, training etc, called National Association for Snail Breeding and Fattening.

There are not regional or local standards not any specific laws in Spain for snail farming.

2.3.3 What are the main barriers preventing people from starting snail farming, in particular as a business?

2.3.4 What are the main barriers preventing snail farmers from growing their business, earning money from their snail farming, or otherwise becoming more successful?

⁴ Report on Legislation on Food Safety in Heliciculture (n. d.). Spanish Ministry of Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Different factors affect the farmers and present barriers to conduct their activities. The most relevant barriers are the following:

- Spanish farms are competing with cheaper snails imported from other countries. The regions where they come from are mainly those of North Africa.
- The majority of farms have suffered episodes of high mortality and their owners had to close them, as a consequence of snail diseases.
- Lack of information from the state to know how to conduct the businesses.
- Lack of state aids and guidance for the sector.
- Lack of training and courses to start investing in the snail farming business.
- High investment in facilities big enough to farm the snails.

2.3.5 What are the particular strengths of the way snail farming is done in your country?

The main strengths of the sector in Spain are those referred to the quality of the produced snails. The way in which snail farming is carried out in the country follows the so-called 'mixed system', in which the snails are farmed in an indoor facility where the conditions are ideal for the reproduction and breeding of the snails. This system includes electronic systems to control the humidity and temperature conditions to increase the snails' production. Moreover, health measures are guaranteed by employing mechanisms that control the snails' health periodically.⁵

2.3.6 Is there any heliciculture-focused training offered in your country?

The Spanish National Association for Snail Breeding and Fattening provides guidance and access to reports on the latest news about heliciculture to the already inscribed farmers. However, there is not any formal training for starting a helicicultural business.

2.4 Conclusions

In Spain, the helicicultural sector is on the way to development. During the last years, the Spanish Government has created different institutions that are helping to regulate the existing farms, but the increasing demand for snail' meat makes necessary an update on the sector. The lack of help from the state in terms of specific regulations, formal guidance and pieces of training, etc. makes it difficult for the farmers to feel comfortable in the area and to attract new investors.

The project Snailville has special relevance for Spain, due to the necessity of training in the field of heliciculture as well as the need for boosting the sector.

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Spanish National Association for Snail Breeding and Fattening <https://ancec.org>