



Ilze Lipska
(the host Juris also joins at some moment),
Manager of
"Absolūts ēd",
hostess



Upon arriving to Ilze's organic certified farm, one can see the living house, packaging premises and numerous greenhouses. Ilze says that six years ago this was just a meadow without any buildings. The dream about a self-sufficient farm emerged 10 years ago, however, it has not been fully attained yet because there are no hens in the farm. "I am not sure if I would do anything like this once again," the hostess laughs. As regards the idea about having a farm, Ilze "blames" her husband. At the time when the couple got married, the husband brought Ilze to show his mother's land, and this was the time when today's hostess experienced the feeling of being at home there. The plan of expanding the family and the wish to have an activity where everybody can join definitely contributed to taking this decision. The work at the farm started with half a hectare of land. Now the farm consists of 4 hectares and 2 additional hectares are rented. This meant that the farm would not be able to compete in wholesale on the market. At that time supermarkets "were the winners of the market" and the consumer was used to satisfying any wishes there instead of consuming food available during the relevant season, but Ilze and her husband Juris were prepared to change.

By comparing greenhouses various improvements of each newer version can be seen. Ilze explains that, before the farm

<http://www.absolutsed.lv/p/par-mani.html>



"By presenting our idea that seasonal food should be eaten we "are fighting the windmill" and quite often people are used to thinking that something can be ordered and grown for the next day."

– ILZE:

was developed, the main goal had been to build a construction for long years of service, however, there were always details that could be improved – starting from ventilation to placement of plants. The same applies to the household areas which are not placed under the roof, so that the farm would use the minimum amount of resources; also all vegetables are planted at different times and different places in order to find the most suitable conditions without using any chemicals. The farmers plan to construct tanks for collecting rain water.

The hostess reveals that one of her basic positions is not to receive support from various funds because when there is no support one should focus more and this does not cause dependence on external funders (which often results in irrational activities for the sake of producing reports). This choice usually is not appreciated by agriculture advisory institutions. However, Ilze considers that detailed calculations help evaluating which vegetables are worth growing and which are not. This is because provision of subsidies and various other aid mechanisms has resulted in that vegetables and fruits are turned into low-value products in the eyes of the society and are often sold at a price which is considerably lower than the costs. The problem is that various less direct costs, for example, environment and health impact, are mostly not included assessments of such industrial farms.

The farm "Absolūts ēd" offers various products grown in Latvia and delivers them free of charge in Riga and nearby areas. Boxes of seasonal vegetable containing a broad range of vegetables is their signature product. A large part of the products specially grown in Latvia is offered exclusively by the farm "Absolūts ēd".

Considering the climate, such boxes are available till autumn when boxes of pumpkins and micro boxes of green products which are available all the year start prevailing.

