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**MEMBER**

# Madrid KM Tierra - Agrarian Park and food hub

**Living Lab** Madrid KM Tierra | Spain



## Grupo Heliconia

Madrid KM Tierra promotes sustainability, resilience and diversity. It is an initiative based on strengthening local food system in the region of Madrid and shorten the distance between producers and consumers. The Living Lab (LL) increases the resilience of the agri-food-chain through the use of local products, the workers

nave fair conditions, the land is protected and dedicated to agricultural production to prevent urbanization.

## Aim

To promote agroecological practices in suburban horticulture by diversifying the income sources of the farmers through the implementation of a food hub.

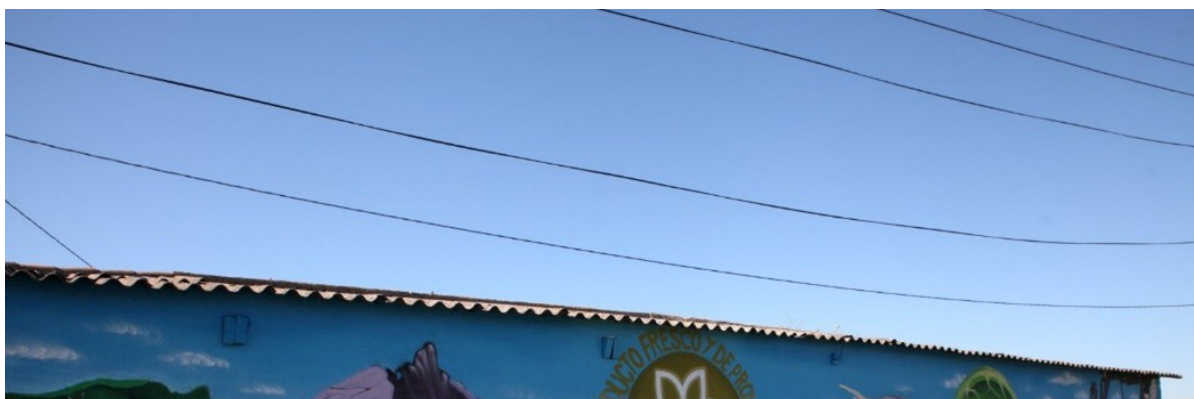
## Background information

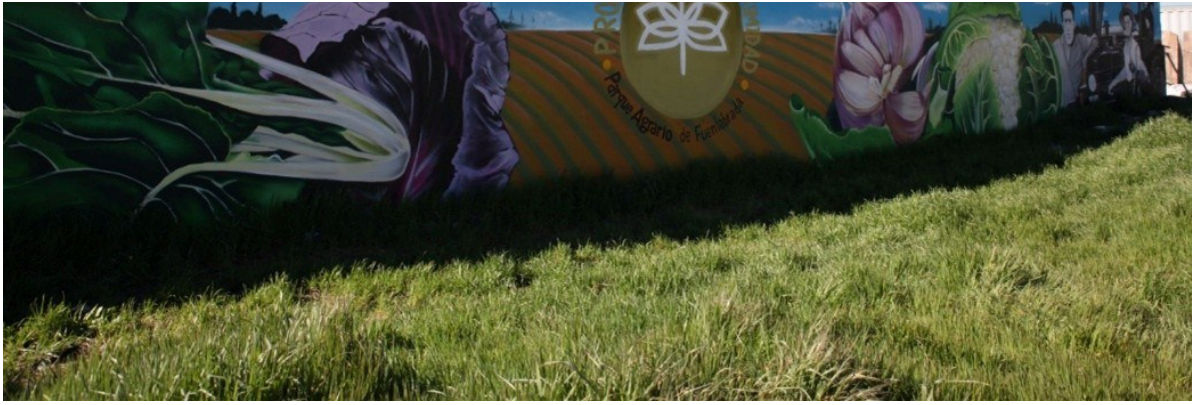
Heliconia is a cooperative consulting firm that specialized in promoting sustainability in the food system and integration of vulnerable collectives through training and work. For 15 years Heliconia has been promoting the importance of biodiversity and sustainable food systems through the implementation of several projects: the Agrarian park of Fuenlabrada, the Agroecological park of Rivas-Vaciamadrid, management of public school vegetable gardens.

Madrid KM Tierra aims to join two of these projects to strengthen the sustainability of the food system in the region of Madrid on social, environmental and economic levels.

The agrarian park of Fuenlabrada was implemented in 2013. The city council of Fuenlabrada hired Heliconia to manage the park, to advise farmers and to promote short supply food chains in Fuenlabrada. The agrarian park also has an experimental farm to test agroecological practices. There, Heliconia has created a company to train new farmers through a three-year program.

In 2023, a food hub was created to help farmers to sell their production for a better price. The food hub works with farmers from the agrarian park and from the rest of the Madrid region. The food hub is meant to become a cooperative with farmers as full partners.





Entry of the Agrarian Park in Fuenlabrada. Source: Madrid KM Tierra



The experimental farm with the region of Madrid in the background. Source: Madrid KM Tierra

## Funding structure

Funding is provided by Heliconia S. Coop. Mad.

## Activities

- Advise farmers on agrarian practices: lower the use of chemical inputs, rotate crops, test new crops, increase biodiversity.
- Advise farmers to diversify their income through the food hub.

- Attract new farmers through a training program for vulnerable people.
- Coordinate the food hub: process the production, be in contact with farmers and clients.

## Methods, stakeholder engagements and tools

The co-creative approach is widely applied on the experimental farms, through interaction with local farmers to test new products or management practices and provide advice towards agroecological management practices. The LL works furthermore with universities to stimulate co-creation and co-design activities. The food hub is involved with local authorities to foster production and consumption of locally produced products. The LL provide support in economic activities, e.g. negotiation of prices for small farmers, and distribution of produce in cooperation with retailers.

The LL is place-based with a focus on the agrarian park and the experimental farm as well as the local food system both within the region of Fuenlabrada with larger regional connection to Madrid.

## Achievements

- Creating a company to manage the food hub.
- Work with 40+ farmers all year long to channel their produce through the food hub.
- Training of two people to have a solid background in plot management.
- The experimental farm is a lighthouse of good practices in the region of Madrid.
- In two years, the food hub has managed to maintain a higher average price for farmers.

## Publications

<https://www.comunidad.madrid/noticias/2023/02/27/comunidad-abre-madrid-rural-primer-centro-espana-distribucion-comercializacion-productos-locales-intermediarios>

## Contact

## WEBSITES.

- <https://heliconia.es/agricola-salvia-produccion-horticola-de-madrid/> →
- <https://heliconia.es/project/agrohub-madrid-centro-de-innovacion-y-distribucion-alimentaria-regional/> →
- <https://parqueagrariofuenlabrada.es/>

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