**F27 - Interview Farmer, male, 33 years old, Jaen 26-11-2021**

**Could you introduce yourself?**

I am [name], in Europe are a lot of [name]’s. A name that originates from the Barbarians. I grew up in a small village with 1500 inhabitants, I did my education in the village. I went to primary school, secondary school and then university. I studied business administration and when I stopped studying, I saw how the labour market was here in Spain and I looked at the opportunities that I had. When I stopped studying, we were just getting out of the crisis of 2008, and the characteristics of that crisis were low prices, low salaries, uncertainties, no stable labour conditions. The mentality of the generations before us, they experienced the civil war here, with a lot of uncertainties, scarcity of alimentation. The mentality of those generations was to save money and work a lot, and a lot of attention was put on education. So in a lot of rural areas, people saved a lot of money and worked a lot, and also what they did was buy. A lot of people bought land, so a lot of people own land. And I was lucky that I had some land, so I decided to continue with the family tradition.

**So this land is from your family?**

Yes that is from my family.

**And how old are you?**

I am 33

**Since when are you working in the field?**

Well, since I was little. When I was studying, every weekend I went to my village, to work, and also during the holidays, like the Christmas holidays. When I was in the university, all my friends were studying those holidays but I didn’t, I had to work in the olive fields, because that is the harvest period. I always did, and when I finished my studies, I started working full-time. I do that now for several years.

**How many hectares do you have?**

What I have in lease is about 30 hectares.

**And that is your property?**

No it is not my property, it is from my father. I lease it.

**Could you describe a day for us?**

Yes, but that depends a lot on the day and time a year. If I am working in the field or in a time when the harvest season is over. I can describe both to you. Well, during the harvest, I don’t get up that early, because in my area it is very cold, and there will be ice in the morning. The olives will become wet and you cannot work. So I get up at 8, I have breakfast and prepare the cars and all the things that are needed. I will search the workers and go to the field where we harvest the olives. We work the whole day and stop to eat. And when we are finished eating, we start again until the working day is over. Then, luckily I have my father that can help me out, my father brings the workers to their homes. But I have to stay, I stay and when they stop, I need to put the olives into the truck, with a machine that I have. I load them and when I am finished, I will take it to the cooperative to weigh. And at the cooperative there will be a line, you need to wait. So there will be days that I am finished early and days that I finish late. So sometimes I am done at 18.30 and sometimes at 21.30. Depending on the day. When I return to my home, I prepare the cars, the gasoline, I sometimes need to repair things that are broken, which happens a lot. There is a lot of uncertainty, because you depend a lot on the machines, but when they are broken, you cannot use them anymore. And your workers need them. So you need to have various machines so the work doesn’t stop. So every day is an adventure because you don’t know what will happen. You don’t know what will break down, at what time you will be finished, there are a lot of factors. With this work, there are a lot of things that break down, that is what I like the least of this work, because when your machine is broken, a lot of times you cannot continue working. And you have some workers, who cannot help it if something breaks, and they normally work from 9.00 to 17.00 and they want to finish their working day, it is not their fault. So that delays a lot and also causes some worries. And that is what I like the least. But yes, that is our daily reality and we need to confront it with the most optimism as possible.

**And what do you like most, or enjoy most in your day?**

What I like most is to move around and to do the physical work. I’m not a person that sits down and tells others how to do their work. I like to work. If it is needed to carry the olives, I do it, if it is needed to hold the machine, I do it. I like to do everything and understand everything. Because I am the boss and I need to be an example for the workers. I don’t scream, but I give the example by working. That is my philosophy. I like to work.

**Are there also things you would like to change or improve?**

Yes of course, for example the bureaucracy in Spain. They don’t let you do a project, they don’t let you progress. They delay a lot and always ask for money. Everything that you need to arrange, it costs you money. Luckily I studied administration and I can do a lot of things myself. But any paper you need to arrange, it costs you money. Here in Spain we have a big problem with the civil servants. For example, a while ago I wanted to lease some land, and it takes months now for them to respond. I put the request in May already, but until now, in almost December, they are still studying it. I don’t know yet if I can harvest that land or not because they are studying it. They are delaying it, they delay every project you want to do. What happens. It stops you, whatever project you want to do and you depend on a civil servant who is willing to get up or not get up that day, work or not work, that frustrates. And until today I am waiting for their response. That is a big problem that we have here with the administrations, that they are slow and incompetent. Maybe because the problem is, that people studied, but once they arrived at their jobs, they sit down and don’t want problems, they don’t want to work too hard. And we all pay and need to deal with these problems.

**You said that you go to the cooperative, are you also active there in a role, or in another association?**

No, I am only member of the cooperative. I could have had a role, but because of my character, I am very proactive, I like to do things. For example, that doesn’t have anything to do with agriculture, but it does say something about the culture. In my village, in Campillo de Arenas, we have a festival. A large part of Spain was occupied by the arabs and the kings of the North of Spain did a conquest to conquer the South, the conquered Jaen, Cordoba, they conquered the arabs. So what we organize is a representation of that battle, between the arabs and the Christians. I have been secretary of that association for years, where we used a lot of money. I have fought a lot with the administrations/government, because they were very jealous of our initiate. What happened, that makes you tired, there will be people that are not as involved as you are, there will be people that criticise you. I was there for 12 years, in that association, but I left.

So if they would ask me to become part of a cooperative or another initiative, I would reject that, because I don’t have the same energy and illusion to put in a new project. Because of that reason. Within associations, we have a very peculiar habit, I don’t know if that is something Spanish or something human, but we have the habit to throw stones at any initiative and at each other. That we fight a lot with each other. It is a cause for that the society, or projects, don’t move forward. The fights between one member and another, and that is a problem within associations. They don’t move forward because of that. The people that really want to move forward are held back by those that don’t want, or that are very conflictive. That is a big problem we have here.

**Is that also a problem in your cooperative?**

For sure, yes. We have a lot of problems.

**Can you give an example of that?**

Yes, for example about the time schedule to weigh the olives at the cooperative. There are people who would like to start later and those that would like to start earlier. There we have a problem, people fight. It is not the same, to have the factory open until 22.00 o’clock in the evening, because you need to contract extra people to receive you olives. It is an economic problem and because of that people say, no I don’t want that it will be open until that late, because it will cost more, and people that say, but I want to work more and until later. So we have a problem. It is one example.

**And how are these conflicts resolved?**

In the assemblies, we vote and the majority gets it. Or that the board, of 5 or 6 persons, decide. Often, a lot of issues they don’t want to take to the assembly because that will result in more conflicts. So they will decide what to do. And the rest will accept that decision. That is the solution. The problem arises when within that board people are also fighting. There are a lot of problems like this.

**You said that you live in a small village, all your life.**

Yes I live there the whole year, since I was little. Only when I was studying, I lived in Granada. I studied at the university there. But in the weekends I returned to my village.

**And how is the life in your village?**

Very quiet, the problem of rural Spain is that people are leaving the villages. There are no opportunities, there is no work. The younger people don’t want to live there. So who stays? Older people. There are no initiatives, no leisure, no stores, no banks. So it becomes more difficult, because you need to have some services, culture, banks, stores with food, which is basic. And this is reduced a lot, or the opportunity to choose between different products. For example, you cannot decide which bank you use, no you can only choose 1. So there are not a lot of opportunities. The equality of opportunities doesn’t exist.

**So a lot of young people leave the villages?**

Yes I think from my generation, we are left we 2, and my class was with 25 people. And only 2 of them stayed.

**And why did you choose to stay in the village?**

I chose because I like it a lot, since I was little I am working in the field. It is something that I know and like. And second, like I said, when I finished my studies, Spain was in a very severe crisis, our financial system was very bad and we had a very precarious labour market. Salaries very low. And I had the opportunity to become my own boss, decide my own time schedule, the salary was not bad. So for me it was a good and dignified job opportunity.

**What do you think is necessary for the people, and especially younger people, to stay in the villages?**

Look, the people don’t stay in the rural areas because of a lack of job opportunities. What happens, that is a topic that worries us a lot, not only Spain but in the rest of the world. And I think it is caused by the multinationals and big companies. The majority of times, the only things they want is maximize benefits, and they don’t care about the people working for them, they don’t care to lay off people. What happens, where is it more profitable to have a company, in the city, because there all the infrastructure is close. Before, the economy we had, before all these big multinationals came, small companies, that were very dispersed over all areas of Spain, that generated a lot of employment. It is true that those companies had higher costs, but because they generated a lot of employment, we could live. What happens now, they are maximizing benefits and reduce the costs, of every type. And what happens, expulsion of workers and concentration of work in certain areas. I think this is not only a problem in Spain, I think this happens everywhere. In Spain we used to have a middle class, with good income, with their own companies. And we transformed to a society with few entrepreneurs and a lot of people that are dependent on these big companies. So, we have to see until what point, I think that there are a lot of companies that have more income than certain countries. So we need to replace that, as a society we need to think about the redistribution of this money. It is an oligopoly right now, are we moving towards a monopoly or towards more smaller enterprises with more people working in it. These are models that go against the wellbeing of people. What happens in the rural areas, job opportunities come from these multinationals or from the government, in the work of civil servants. And if these jobs are only in the cities, what is left in the rural areas? The people in the villages have no other option than leave the countryside. And that is also a danger for the environment, because we need to take care of it. If your nature is not taken care of, for example by cattle, they clean the mountains. Now, the mountains are dirty, nobody takes care of it. What happens, if there is a fire, all will catch fire. The rural environment is abandoned, and on top of that, there are no job opportunities.

**And taking care of the environment, is that something you are conscious about in your work for example?**

Yes, the EU, thanks for CAP, they oblige us to have certain conditions in the field. It is called ‘pago verde’ green pay. Part of the money they pay us, because we are farmers, there is a part, pago verde, that gives us certain conditions. For example, you cannot burn the fields before sowing. And you can also not stir the ground in areas with slopes/hilly areas, because that will cause erosion. And with the rains now, it rains just a little, but strong. If you move/stir the soil, and it rains, the top layer, which is fertile, will go down to the river. There will 2 problems. 1 you lose fertile ground and second, you pollute the river. That is a big problem for the environment.

A solution that the CAP provides, is that we are not allowed to do that, because that will generate problems.

**Do you receive this pago verde?**

Yes

**Do you also have cover crops?**

Yes, I also have that.

**With who do you live in your house?**

My parents created one floor/apartment for me in their house, but the majority of the time I live with them.

**What kind of energy sources do you use?**

What we typically use is electricity, gas and we use a lot of wood, to heat and also orujillo. I have central heating, and I heat the house with wood and orujillo.

**You buy that from the cooperative?**

Yes, we withdraw it from the same cooperative. They weigh your olives, and when they pay you after the olive oil sales, they deduct that money from your sales. So you don’t need to pay for the orujillo, you just get a little bit less paid for your olives.

**And what quantity do you use?**

About 2 trucks, so that will be about more than 2.000 kilos, a year. We have a big house. But I don’t only use orujillo, I also use wood from the olive trees. I complement both things.

**Do you use all the wood that you generate?**

Yes, and what I don’t use, I sell, for example to the bakery. The bakery in my village still bakes the bread by using wood fire.

**Do you know the price of it?**

For 1 truck, or landrover car, is 60 euros.

**So you live in the villages, do you go out often, to other places?**

Yes, my villages has the luck that it is in the middle of Jaen and Granada. It is 20 minutes away from Jaen and about 25 minutes from Granada. I like Granada more than Jaen, also because I studied, there, and a lot of my friends live there. I use to go out often, but not in the harvest period. But in the other times of the year I go out often. But during harvest not. Because you need to get up early, it is hard work and when you are finished, you only want to rest. Maybe I go out in the village, to get a beer or a tapa, but I won’t go to bed later than 12.

**Do you live 100% from olive cultivation, or do you also have other income?**

Yes, only from olive cultivation.

**Can you live well from that?**

Yes, but that is also because I do a lot of work myself, and also my father helps me out, so that saves money. He doesn’t charge me. And thanks to that, my balance between costs and income is quite well. But if that would change, I would have less income. But for now, I can live well from it.

**Do you also have possibilities to save money?**

Yes I do

**If you could earn more money from olive cultivation, in what way would you like to spend that?**

It depends on the time. Now for example, I don’t have a car. So for me the priority would be to have a car. I already have a house, so I don’t need to spend money on that. So now I would like to spend it on a car. It depends on what level of your life you are in, and what you need. I do have a car, but that is to work, I don’t have a car to go out to the city.

**So for example now, that you come to Jaen, you use the car from your work?**

Yes I use that car, and that goes maximum 80 km/hour.

**Are there things you would like to achieve, do you have dreams?**

Yes, but I can summarize, to live well, to have a family, be healthy, and not much more. Maybe, if these multinationals didn’t exist, didn’t put interest in our lands, maybe than I would like to buy more land, to be able to stay working in the fields. But I don’t do it, because I don’t know if these large multinationals are going to buy the land. So now for example, the EU is investing a lot of money also because of covid, and how do they spend it, on renewable energy. And the big companies are now buying land to put solar panels on it. These are big companies, it is difficult to go against them and finally. And there won’t be any young people left to work on the fields and finally, that land will go to the big companies. And me, as smaller scale farmer, I cannot compete with them, that is not profitable. And because of that, I am not buying new land.

**Because you are afraid that that land will be bought by a big company?**

I am afraid that my exploitation won’t be profitable anymore, not viable anymore. Especially in the area I live, with mountains. The costs are higher than in another area. If big companies will come with a lot of machines, and optimize the process, and have a lot of benefits and low costs, than my land won’t be profitable anymore, I cannot compete. Finally, or the land will be abandoned or I don’t know what will happen.

**And does this happen already?**

This year, they are sending out cards with information about solar panels and that they want to buy land to put them on. And they want to buy all land. So imagine that all your neighbours will sell the land, what will you do? You will stay alone, that is impossible, you can’t do anything. And you should know that the majority of people owning land are older people, that don’t work anymore, or have someone to work on their field, and they don’t have a new generation to take over, because they left the villages. Those people, in a majority of the cases, don’t have another possibility than to sell their land. They don’t want to, but there is no other option, but there are no young people to take over. So the big companies will buy the land, they will hire people from Africa, and that’s it. And when they are the owners of the alimentation, they can ask any price they want, because they own it. And you need to buy it. The law of supply and demand will be broken, because there will be a lot of consumers and only a few producers. And these producers can put the price they want, and the consumer, that needs to buy food, has to pay it. For that reason, the EU needs to, one of the reasons that the CAP emerged is after the second world war, in the world wars everything was destroyed, they needed to rebuild everything. People were hungry. In the Marshall plan, where the US gave us cereals and other primary materials, what happened, Europe always had the fear not to have sufficient food, they gave money to the farmers, so they are sure that we are never without food. But Europe is facing this issues again, if they want food with high quality, healthy, with good agricultural practices and that take care of the environment, to stop climate change, that is important, because it is our house. We depend on the environment for the air we breathe and the food we eat. Therefore the CAP is important, to take away this uncertainty if there will be sufficient food or not. Now they will destroy that, because at this moment, not a lot of people want to be farmers. You want to eat? Well, pay me.

**So, if I understood it well, you would like to invest in more land, buy more land, but now it is too uncertain to do that?**

Yes I would like that, but I see the future very uncertain, so I prefer to invest maybe in an apartment, or in living better, or maybe in machinery, tractors, things like that, than in land.

**And what do you do in your free time?**

I like to read a lot, the history. The majority of the time I am reading and I also like to go out a lot. I like to travel in Spain and Europe, before corona I travelled a lot. I like culture a lot, visiting other cities, learn more about the history, and enjoy.

**Do you think you have sufficient free time?**

That depends on which month, during the harvest there is no free time. But I have a lot of free time in June, July and August. From September onwards it gets busier.

**Do you feel satisfied or happy?**

Yes, I feel happy now.

**Do you also have worries?**

Of course, the main worries I have are about the things that get broken during my work. I also see the problems that we have in our society and that worries me as well. I see the problems that we have in the countryside, there are companies that want to occupy our land. I worry about that. I think we are in risk, often I think, because I have my studies, that I could become civil servant, to have less worries, and not work. But well, I like to work. But yes, I have this uncertainty for the future that I see bad.

**How is you physical condition?**

I feel well, I do a lot of exercises, also in my work, which is physical. I feel good. I had covid in April, but almost had no symptoms.

**How is your relationship with your community and your friends?**

Very good, I am a very social person. In the rural areas, we were with 25 of my age, and we are still in contact, we do a lot of things together. We have a lot of contact. Every weekend we come together, when there is time. During harvest, I never see my friends, but after that yes.

**And are there things you would like to change in that sense?**

The equality of opportunities, it is not the same in a village than in a city. I would like to have more opportunities for leisure in my village, but that doesn’t exist. But we have alternatives for that, be more in nature, go hiking, see the birds, feel nature, learn about the animals and nature. We don’t have leisure from theatre, cinema, but we do have this relation with nature, that people in the cities don’t have.

**This equality of opportunities, you refer to this, to leisure?**

Yes, I don’t have the same access, living in a rural area or in an urban area. I need to take the car and drive 60 kilometres. It is not the same opportunity. That is also a reason why people are not really considering to live in a village and from agriculture. It is not attractive.

**We have been talking about different topic, and now we would like to discuss these topics, one per one, what importance these have in your life, for you to live well. And we would like to ask you to categorize them in most important, medium important and less important. These are topics that are all important, but we want to know how you would categorize them, relative to each other.**

**Starting with spirituality, does that have a role in your life?**

Spirituality you can understand in different ways, in the sense of religion, it does not have a lot of value in my life. But the freedom of consciousness and to be free, that is really important. For me religion, is not that important, but the individual rights of people is really important.

**Ok, so you put it on top (!!!)**

Yes, depending on how you see it. I see it as the rights that people have to have the sexuality they want, or religion they want, the freedom of opinion. That is really important.

**And do you believe that you have this freedom?**

I yes. For example, I was active in a political party and I felt free, I could exercise my freedom and do what I wanted. Freedom of opinion and to do what I believe what is good.

**And education and critical thinking**

That is super important (!!!). Look, it you don’t have critical education, people can manipulate you. So, to have your own criteria, your own mentality is very important, to take decisions.

**And mobility?**

It is important, it is a right that we have, but since I have it, so I don’t give that much importance to it, because I see it as an achieved right. If I didn’t have this opportunity, I would put it higher. But we have the opportunity to travel through whole Europe.

**And satisfactory work?**

It is very important. To have dignified working conditions is indispensable to live well, to have your live how you want it.

**Do you think you have satisfactory work?**

For now I have yes, I would like it that it was less hard, that I would have less cold during the mornings. I would like it to have more wellbeing, because it is physical work and I have a lot of worries. It is sacrificial, but at the same time I am also proud and I feel satisfied.

**Free time and leisure**

It is important, well everything is important. But because I have it, I will put it in the middle (!!)

**Public participation**

For me that is fundamental, that is what I say, if you don’t have freedom of expression, of opinion, of sexuality, I think that is really important as a person. (!!!).

And these (the cards in the middle and below) are less important because I already have them. At the moment they will take them away, I will put them higher.

**And these thing? (that he put on top)**

I have them but I think they are in danger. These are fundamental pillars and I really don’t want anyone to take them away.

**Why do you think they are in danger?**

I think that there are extremist political parties in Europe that have certain representation, that don’t like democracy, that don’t want people to decide for themselves. They have a form of life that they want to impose on others. I see these in danger, because in Spain with this profile, on both sides, and in Europe, for example in France that worries me a lot, or in Germany, they have a large representation.

**And social relations and social support?**

It is important, but it is not something I am lacking now. I am very social, I don’t have any problems with it, so therefore I am putting it here.

**And security?**

That is vital, to live in harmony and develop yourself. To have no insecurities. If there are for example a lot of robberies and they rob my machinery, I cannot work. And there are always insecurities, and for that reason I think we need to take care of that, we need to be careful.

**Do you feel safe now?**

There have always been robberies in the history of people, always, sometimes more or less. I feel safe, but they robbed things from me, small things, machineries. It is bad, because I need to buy it another time, so I am worried about it sometimes. I am also worried about the extremes now in Europe, in the public life, that we don’t have this security and this freedom anymore.

**And self-expression?**

I am not that worried about it, because I have it. And maybe if you have it, you don’t value it that much. But if I wouldn’t have it anymore, I would put it high. But for now, I will put it lower. Maybe I repeat myself a little bit, but since I don’t have any problems with it now, I won’t put it on top. If it would disappear yes.

**And mental health?**

That is very important, for people that have depression or something. I am very healthy in my mind and in my body, it is very important, but since I don’t have that problem, I put it in the middle.

**Care for the environment**

Because I think this is at risk, I will put it on top. It is very important.

**Physical health**

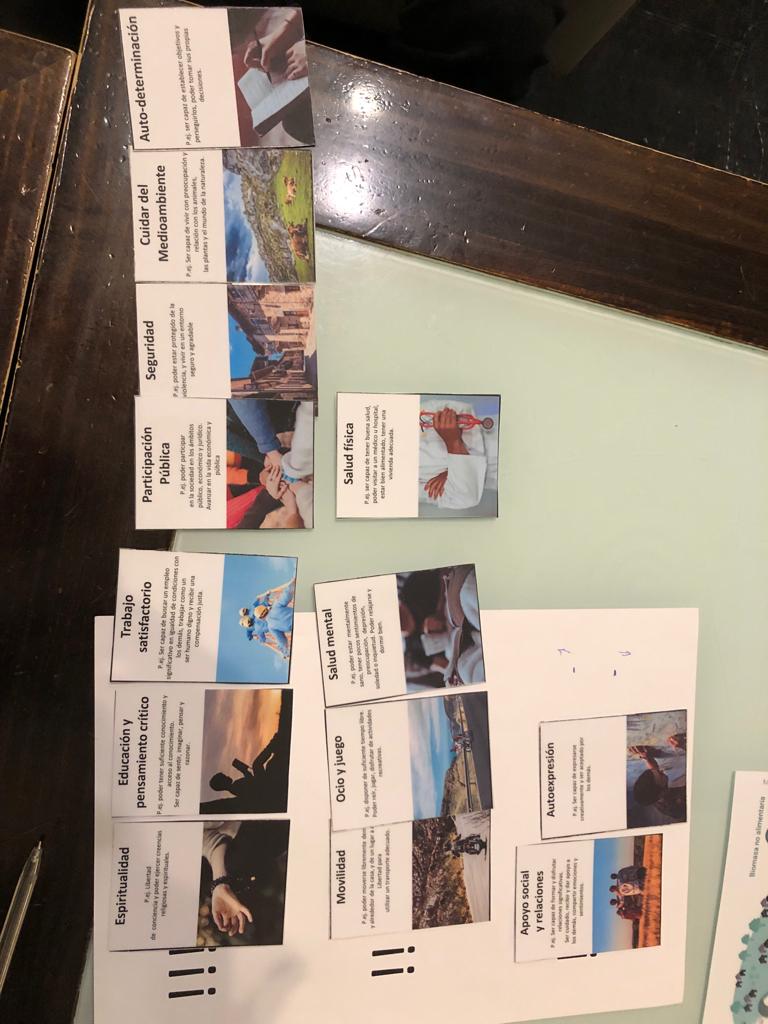
Without physical health, you cannot do anything. I am afraid that I will get an illness or something, I don’t have it now, but I am worried about it. I will put it here, because if your physical health is not good, you cannot do anything.

**And finally self-determination**

To take your own decisions, that is very important. That you can decide on your own goals, and your own way of living. Yes, this is very important.

All is very important, but these (the middle and lower rows) I am less worried about, so I put them lower. The rest I put above.

**Yes I understand, so you put those cards on top where you are more worried about**

Yes, I see that they are in danger. The others I have or I am not worried about.

**Picture of the capability cards:**

**Finally we have some questions about your field and what you do with the subproducts.**

***Showing the biohub concept.***

This is the ideal system. But what happens, this system is not viable for big companies, because this has some costs. They are interested in chemical products, because that is cheaper. For us farmers it can be interesting, if the consumer is willing to pay for this and it can deliver income to us. But there is companies that won’t be interested.

What do I do now? Where I can, it is not possible everywhere because of the terrain, I chip the rests of the pruning and leave it on the soil to decompose, that will provide some nutrients to the soil.

Other subproducts from the olive oil process is already used, like orujillo. It causes a lot of smoke, but still, it is utilized.

**And the rest that you cannot chip, what do you do with it, do you burn it?**

Where the tractor cannot enter, I burn it, but the ash does not have the same nutrients for the soil, but I don’t see another option.

**And why are you doing it the way you do it now?**

Because it is shown that it is beneficial for the soil, and it is much easier. I see only benefits, because where I leave the pruning rests on the soil, the humidity stays there, water is not evaporated that much. So it brings nutrients to the soil, the sun doesn’t evaporate water, and also more herbs and grasses grow.

**And do you own the machine that you use to do the chipping?**

Yes, I don’t use it for all my fields, but where it is possible I do it.

**And do you also use the machine in other fields, of other people?**

No I don’t, because I have a lot of work myself. But there are people that only do this type of work. The majority of the people in my area do it like that, chip it and leave it on the soil.

**If there would be a possibility to sell your pruning rests, that you now leave on the fields, would you be interested to sell it?**

Yes, these pruning rests they can put in packets, and it can also be used to burn in calefaction at home for example. Like pellets. That is very well, because it doesn’t take that much space. It could be an opportunity, but there is no alternative in urban zones currently, because gas is very easy to use. Pellets take up space that don’t exist in the urban areas, and then you need to clean it. So people don’t want to use it.

**And if there would be an opportunity to sell your pruning rests, would it matter to you if a company would come to your land and take the pruning rests, or that you would have to take it to one place, for example to the cooperative?**

I hope that that would be, that a company could come and take it. That would be ideal. It would be another subproduct from the olive production, that can provide added value.

**Ok, thank you very much. Is there anything you would like to add or share with us?**

Well, you’re welcome. I think that a large part of the society maybe is not aware of the work behind every product that is produced, the energy that is put in a product. I think it is not well valued, also farmers are viewed, socially, as inferior. A doctor or civil servant is looked at better than farmer. But farmers have an important role to play. In this role, people always see it as inferior, on the last place. But alimentation is vital to live, the society needs to know the work that is behind that, and also value it. There are people that don’t value the quality and the work behind it, and pay very low prices. People need to value it more, we need to eat three times a day, it is crucial to live. That is what I would like to say.

**Thank you very much**