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Organisation: Rural Support Service – Paying Agency for EAGF in Latvia

Title: Building in house capacity working with Sentinel data, Latvian experience.

For the analysis of Sentinel data for administration of EU funds for agriculture and rural development Rural Support Service (RSS) is building a capacity and know-how within the institution. The work has created some synergies as the RSS is also responsible for on the spot checks and maintenance and update of LPIS.

The main focus of the work so far has been as regards monitoring of activity carried out on agricultural land as well as crop detection. Also the results are used for update of LPIS and solving disputed issues with farmers. However heavy rain falls affected Eastern part of Latvia just at the beginning of harvesting season. RSS got a task from the government to survey the damage caused to the farmers by the excessive humidity and flooding in these areas. The experts working with Sentinel data could rapidly switch their work to detection of flooded areas. Radar data were overlapped with parcels and crops indicated by farmers. This resulted in considerable reduction of rapid field visits for damage detection. Such approach could not be implemented if the work was outsourced under procurement process and strict contract.

The effective use of technologies allowed for the RSS to pay out state aid to the farmers affected within two month after the flooding took place.