

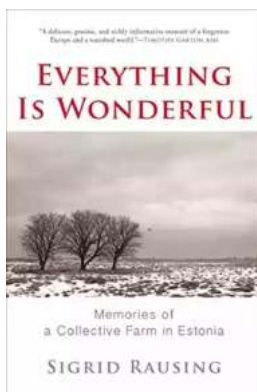
Exploring the Fond Memories of Collective Farming in Estonia

Do you remember the times when we used to work together on the collective farm in Estonia? Those memories hold a special place in our hearts and have shaped our lives in so many ways.

The collective farms, or "kolhoosid" as we call them in Estonian, were an integral part of our country's history and played a significant role in the agricultural development of Estonia. These farms were characterized by communal ownership of land and shared cooperation among farmers.

Early Days of Collective Farming

In the early days, the collective farm system was embraced as a means of increasing agricultural productivity and enhancing the overall well-being of the rural population. The idea was to create a system where individual farmers could pool their resources and work together towards a common goal.



Everything Is Wonderful: Memories of a Collective Farm in Estonia by Greater Than a Tourist(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 2206 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 246 pages
Lending : Enabled



This system allowed for the efficient use of machinery, tools, and other resources, enabling farmers to cultivate larger areas of land and produce more crops. It also provided a sense of solidarity and community as farmers worked side by side, sharing their knowledge and skills.

From the 1950s to the late 1980s, collective farming became the dominant form of agricultural organization in Estonia, shaping the lives of thousands of people. Families who had previously owned small plots of land now became part of a larger collective, working together to ensure the success and prosperity of the farm.

Life on the Collective Farm

Life on the collective farm was both challenging and rewarding. Farmers worked long hours, often starting at the crack of dawn and continuing well into the night. They toiled under the sun, tilling the soil, planting crops, and tending to livestock.

But despite the hard labor, there was a strong sense of camaraderie among the farmers. As they worked side by side, they formed deep bonds of friendship, supporting one another through both the joys and struggles of agricultural life.

Meals were often communal, with everyone gathering in the farm's canteen to enjoy a hearty lunch or dinner together. These meals provided an opportunity for farmers to relax and socialize, sharing stories and experiences from their daily lives.

Children growing up on collective farms had a unique upbringing. They witnessed firsthand the hard work and dedication put into the farm, learning essential skills

and values from an early age. Many of them developed a strong appreciation for nature and a deep connection to the land.

Changes and Transition

In the late 1980s, with the winds of change sweeping through Eastern Europe, Estonia saw a shift in its agricultural system. The collective farms were gradually dismantled, and a new era of privatization and individual ownership emerged.

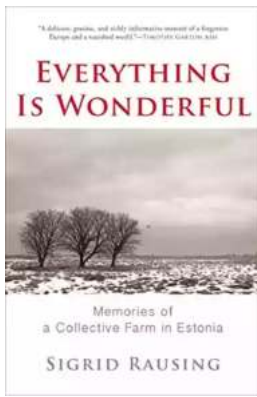
While this change brought opportunities for individual farmers to have more control over their land, it also marked the end of an era. The collective farm system had its flaws, but it had provided a sense of security and community for many generations.

Today, the memories of collective farming in Estonia live on. They are cherished by those who experienced that way of life and serve as a reminder of our shared history and the strength of solidarity.

As we look back on those times, we can't help but feel a sense of nostalgia for the days spent working together on the collective farm. It was a period of both hardship and camaraderie, shaping the lives of many Estonians and leaving a lasting imprint on our country's agricultural landscape.

Memories of collective farming in Estonia evoke a range of emotions. They serve as a testament to the resilience and determination of our people, who worked the land together and shared a common vision for a better future.

While the collective farm system may no longer exist, its legacy lives on in the hearts and minds of those who were part of it. The memories of communal work, shared meals, and lifelong friendships will forever remind us of the power of unity and working towards a common goal.



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“Pages of dreamlike prose explore Estonia’s terrible Nazi-Soviet past, the trauma of dictatorship, and how memory processes that trauma.” —The Financial Times

A Times Literary Supplement Best Book of the Year

Just like it was taken for granted that houses could be abandoned and slowly decay, so it was taken for granted that people died in prisons, and that it was possible that no-one would really ever know the cause of death. This is the nature of totalitarianism . . .

In the early 1990s, after the collapse of the USSR, Sigrid Rausing completed her anthropological fieldwork on the peninsula of Noarootsi, a former Soviet border protection zone in Estonia. Abandoned watch towers dotted the coast line, and the huge fields of the Lenin collective farm were lying fallow, waiting for claims from former owners who had fled war and Soviet and Nazi occupation.

Rausing’s conversations with the local people touched on many subjects: the

economic privations of post-Soviet existence, the bewildering influx of western products, and the Swedish background of many of them. In *Everything Is Wonderful* Rausing reflects on history, political repression, and the story of the minority Swedes in the area. Here she tells her story of what she observed as she lived and worked among the villagers—witnessing their transition from repression to freedom, and from Soviet neglect to post-Soviet austerity.

“A delicate, precise, and richly informative memoir of a forgotten Europe and a vanished world.” —Timothy Garton Ash



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