



## Mechanised cork extraction method

### Introduction

Gosuber project, developed from 2018 to 2020, has been oriented to improve cork harvesting efficiency. The absence of mechanization in cork extraction work, or cork removal, is one of the main problems that affects subericulture, that is, forestry applied to cork oak forests.

### Approach and main results

Cork harvesting continues to be carried out in the 21st century as it did more than two hundred years ago, manually, with the help of the axe and a leverage, which points towards a necessary modernization.

The conditions in which cork harvesting is carried out make this profession unattractive for new generations, due to the temporary nature of the work, the difficulty involved in handling the axe (it requires strength and skill), and the danger of the work (sometimes involves climbing the trees). As a consequence, specialized labor is scarce and aging, and in addition, they work with serious security deficiencies.

New procedures have been sought by changing the way that it is usually done, bringing new machinery on, and upgrading security and health practices, as well as introducing new complete logistic process through last technologies and adapted procedures. Main results have been materialized in a mechanical cork harvesting guide.

### Lessons learned









One of the most important parts of the project, the mechanization of cork harvesting, has a long development path ahead. The introduction of electrical machinery in cork harvesting still requires a deep awareness effort regarding the occupational safety and health of the cork remover's work. Only with the professionalization of the sector, and at the hands of the administrations, would technological advances be possible that would make us forget about the axe. The technological evolution of the electric saw and the battery is already causing this change.

The information presented in this factsheet was developed by the FOREST4EU partner, drawing on the innovations and knowledge generated by the indicated operational group with their explicit authorization.

### Further information

<https://gosuber.es/>



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