



## Some information about:

### University of Florence

<http://www.unifi.it/>

The University of Florence can trace its origins to the Studium Generale, which was established by the Florentine Republic in 1321. Initially, Civil and Canon Law, Literature, and Medicine were among the subjects taught at the Studium, and various famous scholars were invited to teach there: Giovanni Bocaccio was asked to lecture on the Divine Comedy.

However, the importance of the Studium was fully recognized with a Bull by Pope Clemente VI in 1349, in which he officially authorised the Studium to grant regular degrees, extended the Privilegia maxima, and established that the first Italian Faculty of Theology would be in Florence.

In 1364, with Emperor Carlo VII, the Florentine Studium became an Imperial University. However, when Lorenzo the Magnificent gained control of Florence and much of Tuscany, the Studium was moved to Pisa, in 1473. Carlo VIII moved it back to Florence from 1497-1515, but with the return of the Medici family it was once again transferred to Pisa.

In spite of these moves, many teaching activities continued in Florence, and scientific research found substantial support in the various Academies of the time, like the Crusca and the Cimento.

Only in 1859, when the Grand Duke was exiled, were all these separate teaching activities reunited in a suitable system called the Istituto di Studi Pratici e di Perfezionamento; a year later this was recognized as a full fledged university by the Government of Unified Italy.

In 1923, with a special Act of Parliament the Istituto was officially denominated a University.

Later, the new University was organized into the various faculties: Agriculture, Architecture, Arts, Economics, Education, Law, Mathematics, Physical and Natural Sciences, Medicine and Surgery, Pharmacy, and Political Science. The Faculty of Engineering, where 2-year courses had been offered since 1928, was added to the 10 faculties in 1970.

### Istituto Agronomico per l'Oltremare

<http://www.iao.florence.it/>

The Istituto Agronomico per l'Oltremare provides support and consultancy to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the agricultural field and, as such, works in the field of the Development Cooperation in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

At present, the institutional tasks of IAO can be synthesized as follows:

- Identification, formulation and implementation of development projects
- Applied research
- Consultancies
- Documentary and publications services.

The IAO was founded in 1904 by a group of fervid tropics scholars. Initially it was called "Istituto Agricolo Coloniale Italiano" (IACI). The principal aim of the Institute has always been that of creating a centre for the study of tropical environments and agriculture and training of personnel. In 1938 the name changed to "Istituto Agronomico per l'Africa Italiana" in line with the times. In the immediate post-war period the Institute, under the guidance of Prof. Maugini, was charged with providing technical agricultural assistance for Italian emigrants to Latin America. In 1953 the Institute, with the suppression of the Ministry for Italian Africa, passed under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Law n.430 of 24/4/53), even though officially it received its present name in 1959 (Law n. 404 of 11/6/59). The Institute currently is regulated by Law n. 1612 of 26.10.1962, Law. n. 49 of 26.02.87 and D.P.R. 12.04.1988, n. 177.

The General Director is Alice Perlini.

### **ARSIA**

**<http://www.arsia.toscana.it/>**

ARSIA was set up by the Regione Toscana (Regional Government of Tuscany) in 1993 as an instrument of technical support for the diffusion of technical and technological innovations for the purpose of achieving regional policy goals regarding sustainable development. Through ARSIA, the Regione Toscana has organised resources, projects and services regarding the development of typical local production, rural development and product quality, respect for the environment and respect for the landscape. With these objectives, ARSIA represents an operational technical instrument for the region's agricultural world, capable of providing a valid support for the evolution of economic development as well as the cultural and professional growth of agriculture in Tuscany as a whole. In its intent to support agriculture, the Agency works towards ensuring the transfer of innovations, responding to market challenges by ensuring a proper link between Universities, public and private research centres and technicians working with farms who require an efficient information and training system in order to sustain present growth rates. In order to fully carry out its role of intermediary between research and production, ARSIA has rendered operational a series of services for technicians, agricultural operators and local bodies, which can realistically offer qualified assistance in the various sectors of Tuscan agriculture: the production, processing and marketing of agricultural products, as well as technical and technological innovations to protect agricultural operators, the environment and consumers. Amongst the various services set up, particular mention should be made of the Centro Regionale di Documentazione Agricola (Regional Agricultural Documentation Centre) as well the Centres providing Training and Refresher courses for technicians.

The Administrator is Maria Grazia Mammuccini.

### **Coordinamento Toscano Produttori Biologici**

**<http://www.ctpb.it/>**

Coordinamento Toscano Produttori Biologici (CTPB), is the Tuscany association of organic Producers, founded in 1983, which include more than 400 farmers (producing every kind of traditional regional products: wine, olive oil, cheese, meat, pasta, fruits and vegetables, sauces, marmelades, honey and many others). Who work strictly observing the EC regulation on Organic Agriculture (EC Reg 2092/91).

CTPB, is one of the founders of AIAB (Associazione Italiana per l'Agricoltura Biologica) and is member of IFOAM (International Federation Of Agriculture Movements) and AMAB (Associazione Mediterranea Agricoltura Biologica).

#### **WHAT WE WORK FOR**

- Promoting organic agriculture;
- Selling the organic produces of our associates;
- Running our farmshop chain;
- Promoting rural tourism exclusively in organic farm;
- Offering technical assistance to our associates;

- Organizing buffets to promote organic food;
- Coordinating projects on organic agriculture by order of the Government or of private companies (i.e. the project “Organic Agriculture in the Natural Parks of Toscana” by Order Of Regione Toscana);
- Coordinating the International Forum on Organic livestock husbandry;
- Working in the interests of our associates, collaborating with Regional and national Government;
- Carrying out reserches on organic Agriculture and Marketing in collaboration with the University;
- Organizing seminars, courses and meetings on organic agriculture;
- Offering collaboration to all those institutions, public or private ones, who need it and ask for it
- And many other activities.

### **Useful information for the field visit on:**

#### **Mugello area**

The Mugello is a hilly-mountainous region located in the North-Eastern sector of Tuscany, in the province of Florence. In this region livestock farming is very diffuse, so much so that the area is the most important point of reference for the Centrale del latte (Dairy Centre) di Firenze, Pistoia and Livorno and the Centro Carni (Meat Centre) of the Agricultural Cooperative of Firenzuola.

The extensive character of the agriculture and the traditional high quality of the systems of production have created a widespread interest on the part of both producers and consumers regarding agricultural production in general and that of livestock in particular that is respectful of the quality of the environment.

#### **Cooperativa Emilio Sereni**

The farm is a tenancy co-operative (whose members are salaried) directed at the breeding of dairy cows.

The co-operative has operated as a certified organic farm since its conversion which took place between 1992 to 1995. Its entire production is bought by the Centrale del Latte di Firenze, Pistoia and Livorno.

The farm employs 13 full-time agricultural workers.

The President is Giuseppe Pietracito, who actually is also the President of Breeders Association of the Florence and Prato provinces.

The farm’s surface (being rented) is 352 hectares (156 ha agricultural area used).

280 heads of the Italian Holstein breed are being raised and the daily production of milk is 35 quintals. The milk possesses 3.55% fat, 3.13% protein and 200,000 somatic cells per milliliter.

The livestock farm is managed with open housing.

The stable’s dimension is 100 meters in length and 20 meters in width, with an external paddock (3,800 square meters) partly of which is in ground and part in cement. The areas of movement are in cement.

In total the edifices used for the livestock constitute 1,666 square meters of covered surface with a fence external to the stable for the livestock that totals 3,800 square meters (1,428 square meters in cement and 2,436 square meters in land).

Investments for the animal welfare:

1. boxes for the nurse cows and the calves,
2. cow brush for the lactating cows
3. fans in the stable supplied with climatized humidifiers.
4. pasture for the dairy cows: 2,5 hectares of pasture upon irrigated land,
5. pasture with wood shelter for the steers and dried off cows: 2.5 hectares of land for grazing upon irrigated land,
6. stable’s flooring has hexagonal cement blocks that offer good grip to the animals.

*(source: C. Contini, et al., 2003 presented at SAFO 1st workshop).*

### **Agricultural Cooperative of Firenzuola (CAF)**

The Agricultural Co-operative of Firenzuola (CAF) is a joint-stock co-operative founded in 1972 by a group of breeders from the Commune of Firenzuola (in the Province of Florence).

The purpose of the Cooperative is to slaughter and market the products of the Cooperative's members, with particular reference to livestock production (cattle, swine, sheep and goats).

The Cooperative, after a difficult beginning, has grown over the years and is now a secure point of reference for the farms of Mugello.

The institutional activity has been realised over time through the opening of the following points of direct sale:

Firenzuola – Piazza Agnolo, 7

Borgo San Lorenzo – c/o Supermarket DiMeglio

Scarperia – via Roma, 61

S. Casciano Val di Pesa – Piazzale Aldo Moro, 2

Vicchio – c/o Centro Carni Mugello

The President is Piero Galeotti, a breeder. The Director is Filippo Ciapetti.

Right now the CAF (Agricultural Cooperative of Firenzuola) links about 130 agricultural farms stationed throughout the area of Mugello and high Mugello. These farms are directly run by the owner and his family, rarely is outside manual labor employed.

The principal aim of the farms that are member of the Cooperative is that of valorising the production of mountain-grown goods where it is not possible to practice intensive agriculture.

The organic livestock farms are 15 in number and all use closed cycle breeding, which is to say they themselves produce calves and fatten them on the farm.

The herds (most of them Limousine, Charolais, Chianina and Romagnola breeds) are raised from Spring to Autumn in mountain pastures. The calves are weaned at 6 to 8 months and are slaughtered at 18 to 20 months of age.

Almost all the farms make use of the derogation relative to the structures and the use of the pastures, and for now they almost always hold the calves in boxes for the entire period of fattening.

The animals are predominantly fed organic products produced by the farm itself, such as grains and hay. Few farms use silage, and almost no one is in derogation for the utilisation of 10% of conventional foods.

With its very own technicians, the CAF carries out inspections that are added to those of the Bodies of Control (ICEA, CCPB, IMC, etc.).

The aim is that of increasing the organic livestock farms of Mugello to produce almost exclusively organic meat in an area particularly favourable to extensive, high-quality productions.

In 1997 the CAF began to manage the Public Slaughterhouse of Borgo S. Lorenzo in order to confront its own slaughtering needs, and also those of the other breeders penalised by the closing of other communal installations.

Since October of 2000 the CAF manages a new slaughterhouse (Centro Carni), created by the local Mountain Communities, with a modern slaughterhouse for cattle, sheep and swine, attached to a laboratory for the cutting and preparation of meat products, with the community recognition EC 2417 M (macellazione/slaughtering) S (sezionamento/cutting) P (prodotti preparati/prepared products).

The new structure of nearly 2000 square meters is recognized as suitable for the slaughtering and production of organic meat (Bdy of Control CCPB) and IGP (Indicazione Geografica Protetta) for the white beef of the Central Apennines (Vitellone Bianco dell'Appennino Centrale).

### **Azienda Valdastra**

**<http://www.valdastra.it/>**

The agricultural farm of Valdastra, the property of Doctor Adriano Borgioli, is found in the commune of Borgo San Lorenzo, in Mugello, a few kilometers from Florence.

In the 15th century the villa of Valdastra ('vallis ad astra' as it was called in the placenames of the time), the edifices and surrounding lands were the property of Bernardetto de' Medici, cousin of Lorenzo the Magnificent. The Medici family, native of Mugello, had many properties in the area, and a short distance from Valdastra there still exist buildings and various other testimonies of their presence.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century Valdastra passed to the Padri Serviti della Santissima Annunziata, dependents of the Convent of Montesenario. Confiscated by the state in 1867, the villa and the farm were acquired by Cavalier Evaristo Piani and by the Noblewoman Marianna Gandini, who adapted it as their residence.

The villa of Valdastra holds decorations of the Liberty period of remarkable worth and is part of a "liberty walk" that includes palaces, churches, private and public residences in Mugello.

The actual agricultural farm is divided into two parts: a level part made up of fertile irrigated fields along the Sieve river where grain, fodder and garden-type goods (potatoes, cabbage, beans) are cultivated; the hilly part is instead used for pasture for the raising of cattle. The wood thicket and high brush constitute an excellent habitat for both settled and migrating wild game that also make the Valdastra an interesting faunal and hunting farm.

The type of breeding is mainly based upon pasture and only in the winter are the cattle placed in two modern stables with free housing.

Today the agricultural farm of Valdastra is comprised of nearly 300 hectares of seed crops and pasture (UAA) and 200 hectares of woods; always attentive to its improvement, it presents itself as practicing an organic agriculture, certified since 1988 (Body of Control AIAB/ICEA).

The breeding of cattle (organic since 2001) was initiated by Adriano Borgioli in 1964 with about 20 head of Bruna Alpina. In 1986, the nearly 100 head of Brown Swiss, double aptitude to produce meat and milk, were exchanged with a breed exclusively used for meat: the Limousine. 100 steers of the highest genealogy were acquired by the expert cattle selectors from the French Massiccio Centrale (Central Massif) as well as bulls chosen from the French Genetic Center of Lanaud with the aim of bettering the genetic patrimony and of qualifying the breeding at a national level, privileging the "Elevage" line. The Etendard and Glaieuil bulls were well known and highly appreciated by the Italian breeders. In the last few years Danish bulls were also acquired, bettering the objectives of selection regarding the livestock farm's patrimony.

With the purpose of augmenting the level of quality and the welfare of the animals, the management of the livestock farm has evolved over the course of the years, placing particular attention upon the better use of the structures and the farm's own fodder production. In stables without individual fixed stalls and pasture, today the herd is comprised of 320 head, managed in groups of about 30 head a piece divided by gender and age; there are 120 cows and each head is electronically identified with an endo-ruminal microchip. The farm's own production of fodder and grains is more than sufficient for integrating the diet of the herd. The births are mainly concentrated in Spring and Autumn.

Since 1988, the selected breeds have been under the control of the APA (Breeders Association) of Florence and have won awards at national and international shows. Among many it has represented the Limousine breed at the Verona fair and some cattle from the Valdastra represented Italy in Paris and Luxembourg.

The annual production averages about 110 calves; about 10 % of the females are retained for breeding. About 40 are sold for reproduction, while the rest are fattened and slaughtered as organic calves by the Agricultural Cooperative of Firenzuola, of which Valdastra is a member since 1977.