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Open field day – Tamburello farm in Sicily, Italy

On 27 October 2017 at the Tamburello Farm, an open field day was held in order to share knowledge with other farmers and interested stakeholders about climate-friendly practices being implemented as part of the SOLMACC project, a European project involving three countries, Italy, Germany and Sweden and four farms for each country; particularly in Italy two are horticultural and two in wine and olive groves.



Project Solmacc (Foto D. Fontanive).

The meeting was held in the presence of managers of the farm (Francesco Lo Sicco), AIAB technicians, vice president of AIAB Sicilia (Filippo Salerno), farm's agronomist (Daniele Agosta), technicians and farms and by the presence of a V class of the Secondary Education Institute "Don Calogero Di Vincenti" in Bisacquino (PA).



Photos of the participants at the Open Day at Agricola Tamburello (Foto D. Fontanive).



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During the day, the project was presented and what are its objectives, such as lowering greenhouse gas emissions, raising awareness of issues such as: the containment of erosion of the soil, the reduction of working in the soil and the protection of water resources through the implementation on farms of innovative and virtuous practices.

In the first part of the meeting to welcome guests was the son of the owner of the farm Francesco Lo Sicco, who illustrated the family business mission and his satisfaction in participating as a farm to such a an important research and experimentation project in the agricultural field and how such programming can affect business development.

In illustrating the farm has strongly pointed out the importance of being certified organic since 2007, as this method offers to the ecological benefits, management and business, especially for a company like his in which the entire chain production is completed. The second intervention was by AIAB Antonino Modaffari, who after AIAB's presentation focused on some of the crucial points of agricultural activity and on the role that farms, especially small and medium-sized farms, play in the management and development of the territory and how the association's role in the planning and designing research projects is useful for the development of a farm. This development is in many facets linked to innovative farming techniques, biodiversity conservation, business management and marketing.

In conclusion he wanted to remember how the SOLMACC project is nothing more than the implementation of AIAB's work for over 25 years as an association of producers, technicians and consumer-citizens, networking the biological movement and, above all, representing organic producers through the promotion of organic farming as a model of sustainable development, based on the principles of safeguarding and enhancing resources, respecting the environment, animal welfare and the health of those who consume it. Finally, Modaffari thanked the institution's head teacher "Don Calogero Di Vincenti" for having accompanied some of his students to visit the farm and to cover the event as if it were a lesson in the field, underlining the importance of preparing a agrarian institute can make it to future technicians or business leaders.



Olive grove and vineyard in Farm Tamburello (Foto D. Fontanive).

The presentation of the project is due to Daniele Fontanive, coordinator AIAB of the Solmacc project.

In presenting the program it has been mentioned that the farms involved are 12, four for three different countries (Italy, Germany and Sweden), and how incentives for innovative farming practices can be useful for environmental conservation and how many farms albeit varied and different from each other can work together in a conservation project in different territories. Nell'elencale the objectives of the project greater emphasis was given to interventions in farm, limiting the processing and reuse of some of the waste materials from the farms.

All biodiversity reduction and conservation operations bring, Fontanive reiterated, to better farm management, reducing costs and working in some cases. By implementing good agricultural practices, these also lead to better plant



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health management as plants are less vulnerable to the various adversities (fungal attacks, harmful insects, etc.), which is particularly beneficial for organic farms.

A brief thanks and greeting was given to participants from Filippo Salerno, vice president of AIAB Sicilia, recalling that Sicily is one of the first three regions in Italy for the number of organic operators and per hectare for bio, adding that this method is important for the agronomic management of the Sicilian farms, thanks to the areas particularly suitable for agriculture and the innumerable typical / traditional cultivated products.

The on-field visit, conducted by the farm technician, gave an opportunity to illustrate how to implement the methodologies for implementing good agricultural practices (proposed by the project above all in the management of the olive grove), assessing from now on the visual difference of a terrain with minimal processing and permanent grass, unlike one worked with normal agricultural procedures. The farm is about 60 hectares, of which 30 are cultivated with vineyards, 15 are olive trees and 15 are arable land.

The most representative vineyards are Nero D'Avola, Perricone and Inzolia, but are also cultivated Syrah, Merlot, Chardonnay and Petit manseng. The agricultural management of the vineyards provides for minimum workings between the rows and the overflow with legumes, in addition to the normal phytosanitary management during the various stages of ripening the grapes. Plants cultivated with olive trees are handled with minimal tillage techniques, with almost completely abolished works, except in special cases. The varieties present are the Nocellara del Belice and the Biancolilla, from which the farm produces two different oils, for organoleptic qualities..

In both olive groves and vineyards, leguminous seeds are utilized for the overhang and range of files, so as to facilitate the ordinary management of the plants, especially at certain times of the year, where special agronomic treatments are required. The fertilizers have been almost completely eliminated, as antiparasitic treatments, especially in the olive grove, explained the company technician, thanks to the innovative techniques that during this years of experimentation are bringing biodiversity into a state of equilibrium such as reduce attacks by harmful insects.

While vineyards still need to be treated, even preventive, in order to avoid the risk of loss of production and quality of the product. Several comments have been raised by the participants regarding the technical and economic aspects of the project and the management of the company.

At the end of the informative day, the farm has set up a buffet to give the participants a taste of their products.



Vineyards Tamburello (Foto D. Fontanive).



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