Farm Emiliano Brandimarte Az. Agr. (Sibillini Ranch)

1. Introduction

The Brandimarte family has been breeding horses for more than 30 years on the plateau of Castelluccio di Norcia 1,450 mt above sea level under the mount Vettore 2,476 mt, the highest pick of the Sibillini Montains. Emiliano’s grandfather started this activity of horse breeding and sale in 1985, when the only animal breeding in the area was based on sheep and the most of inhabitants were shepherds. The farm is based on 30 ha rented as pastures for horses, cattle, donkeys, and goats, while sheep breeding was abandoned due to frequent wolf assaults. 3.5 ha owned by the Brandimarte family is dedicated to hay and 2.5 ha to production of the famous Lentil of Castelluccio di Norcia (PGI).

2. Promoter profile



First Name
Emiliano

Last Name
Brandimarte

Birth Year
1988

Gender
Male

Education

High school

3. Farm Profile











Address
Pian Grande di Castelluccio, 06046 Norcia (PG)

Country
Italy

Farm area in hectar
36.00

Date of establishment of the farm
1985

Date since when the promoter owns/rents the farm
Sun, 01/01/2006 - 12:00

NUMBER OF WORKERS	**FAMILY MEMBERS**	**EXTERNAL WORKERS**
Full time	1	2
Part time	0	0

Farm description

The farm consists of 36 ha, 6 ha company's property and the rest rented, mostly made of pastures. In a small part of the property (2.5 ha) the famous lentil of Castelluccio di Norcia

(PGI) is produced. The main animal breeding is based on horses, around 60, trained by Emiliano himself, with the help of his uncle, for riding school and trekking. A bovine breeding started in the very last year as a complementary activity based on Chianina race (White bullock of central Apennines (PGI)) and half-breed cattle, currently 9 heads.

Website and social network links
Facebook

4. Multifunctional/sustainable farming and European Agricultural Landscapes (EAL)

Multifunctional & sustainable farming Key Words
Quality/Organic/Certified production
Tourism and recreation related to EAL

Free Text

Adventure as inspiration and resilience as way of life are the keywords for this family farming engaged to maintain and valorize the surrounding mountain landscapes with prevailing pastures within highlands in the middle of Central Apennines. This area between Umbria and Marche is the National Park of Sibillini Mountains since 1993. It is famous for its unique landscapes, suitable for animal breeding and farming based on old cereals and the famous Lentil of Castelluccio di Norcia (PGI). After the earthquakes on 24th August 2016, 26th, and 30th October 2016, that hit 4 regions: Umbria, Marche, Abruzzo, and Lazio damaging 200,000 homes and 3,000 stalls, all people living in Castelluccio di Norcia, as well as in other towns and villages around the Sibillini Mountains, the epicenter of the earthquake, moved elsewhere. The majority of those living in Umbria moved to Lake Trasimeno and were hosted by hotels and residences. Emiliano and his family decided to remain with their animals, facing the difficulties and managing animal shelters and welfare at their best. In December 2016, they moved to Norcia descending along the roads and trails torn by the earthquake. The following spring of 2017, as well as 2018, they went back to Castelluccio repeating as in the past the transhumance tradition and offering their tourist services, such as horse riding in spring, summer, and fall, in collaboration with some hotels reopening in Norcia and surroundings and offering camping tents to tourists. Televisions and press gave a large publicity to this case of "resistance" to the post-earthquake difficulties despite of Castelluccio being an abandoned ghost village.

Advice/Recommendation

There is nothing comparable to natural beauty of Castelluccio di Norcia highlands. Nature can be sometimes tough, as it is commonly in winter when this area is isolated some days of a year because of heavy snows, or it was in the case of last destructive earthquake, but it is so attractive towards sensitive people that we cannot avoid to come back and restart what was interrupted by the recent natural disaster. The unique landscape and environment of the

plateau of Castelluccio can still give again a very high added value to activities based on ecotourism, outdoor sports, and leisure time as a driver of local sustainable development. That environment is not only beautiful and attractive for nature and sport lovers, but also safe for horse riders because of its large lands ideal to learn horse riding and enjoy large trekking tours with scenic views of the area. Old cereals, namely (Triticum dicoccum), legumes - the lentil of Castelluccio di Norcia (PGI) (Lens culinaris subsp. Culinaris) and a kind of pea with strong taste called “roveja” (Pisum sativum ssp arvense, variety roveja), represent the plant biodiversity of this area and one of the most important income for local farmers. Animal breeding with bovine, sheep, and swine of local races are the other main farming activity for dairy and meat production (famous is the seasoned cheese from Norcia called “caciotta”, cured meat Norcia ham PGI, and several other kinds of traditional salted meat). Landscapes, natural environment, and traditional products are all together the traditional heritage of Castelluccio di Norcia and the Sibillini Mountains National Park.

5. Considerations, skills/competences involved and queries/questions

General considerations

Training is a very important issue for all category of workers as well as for people willing to learn outdoor sports and leisure activities such as horse riding. A professional riding guide has to be trained for many years, be passionate of a special contact with the animals and the environment and expert in relationships with visitors and tourists. Besides the techniques a riding guide has to learn to manage all horse needs, such as feeding, cleaning, horse shoeing, and sharpen a sensitivity towards any horse health problems. Very important training issues are also an in-depth knowledge of the local landscapes, animal and plant biodiversity, and food heritage with the ability to represent them to the guests. Family cohesion and good relationships within the team are fundamental in a small family farm. Family is the main self-assistance group supporting all ongoing difficulties, together with friends and volunteers, as it has been after the earthquakes. Good relationships with all other tourist operators are very important to create a pleasant and receptive atmosphere by welcoming tourists and putting them at ease. After critical and extreme difficulties (such as the situation after the earthquake) proves that a strong feeling of solidarity can also come from institutions and associations (municipalities, civil protection corps, farmers' associations, etc.) during the emergency, but favoring the processes to restart the economic activities and limiting a bureaucratic approach to reconstruction causing slowness and distortions. Training needs should be therefore not just limited to hard and soft skills (techniques and relationships), but should also enlarge notably the horizons of all operators involved in sustainable development, promotion, and provision of services with a common vision.

Strengths	Weaknesses