

Farm Eredi Gradassi Andrea s.s.

1. Introduction

The Eredi Gradassi Andrea farm, existing since 1639, is one of the oldest in the Umbria region. It covers about 150 hectares in the Spoleto Valley between the hill towns of Campello sul Clitunno, Spoleto, and Trevi. The company's main and historical activity is the production of extra-virgin olive oil obtained in the company's continuous mill from the local varieties of moraiolo, leccino, and pendolino grown on a property area of about 50 hectares and other 100 hectares rented with the total of about 15,000 plants. In the months of November and December the olives are harvested manually and pressed for natural cold dripping (Sinolea-Rapanelli method) within 24 hours of harvesting. The mill is also a point of reference for many other producers in the area. The average annual production of extra virgin olive oil is around 400,000 kilograms. The direct business management is carried out by the owner Carlo Gradassi with the assistance of his sons Andrea and Elisabetta.

2. Promoter profile



First Name

Carlo

Last Name

Gradassi

Birth Year

1943

Gender

Male

Education

High school

3. Farm Profile





Address

Via Virgilio 2, 06042 Campello sul Clitunno (PG)

Country

Italy

Farm area in hectar

150.00

Date of establishment of the farm

1970

Date since when the promoter owns/rents the farm

Thu, 01/01/1970 - 12:00

NUMBER OF WORKERS	FAMILY MEMBERS	EXTERNAL WORKERS
Full time	5	3
Part time	20	0

Farm description

The farm consists of 150 ha, 50 ha company's property and the rest rented mostly made of terraced olive groves. Cereals and legumes are also produced in a farm plain area of 30 ha. The farm is led by Elisabetta Gradassi, Carlo's daughter, who is responsible for the family farm activities, including a farmhouse and restaurant for agritourism. The farm core business is based on the production of quality extra-virgin olive oil (EVOO) under the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) Umbria, sub-area "Colli Assisi Spoleto", approved by the European Union in 1998. Part of the production is certificated as organic. The family label "Gradassi" is one of the best-known labels in Italy and all over the world among the representatives of the olive grove area Assisi-Spoleto. This result based on EVOO top quality has been also favored by the investment in a modern bottling, packaging, and marketing company, C.U.FR.O.L. limited, 51% owned by the Gradassi family and managed by Andrea Gradassi, Carlo's son. In this company, besides the main family trade mark, two other EVOO lines are also produced: "Terre Francescane" EVOO blend with olives from Umbria, Northern Lazio, and Apulia; and "Italiano" EVOO blend based on "biancolilla" variety with addition of other Italian olives targeted to restaurants.

Website and social network links

www.gradassi.com

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

Tradition is the keyword for this family farming particularly engaged in maintaining and valorising the surrounding historical landscape made of dry-stone wall olive groves. The most present variety dominating the steep hills is "moraiolo" with a strong herbaceous and fruity taste representing about 75% of all olive trees. This peculiarity, together with the unique

location on hills from Assisi, the UNESCO Cultural Site since 2000, to Spoleto, an olive grove area, included in the National Catalogue of Historical Rural Landscapes and candidate for the UNESCO and GIAHS-FAO site, gives EVOO a special value symbol of the territory. This connection between food quality excellence represented by the extra-virgin olive oil and the dry-stone wall terraced olive groves is fully recognised by the Gradassi family and other producers, as well as by the municipalities as an opportunity to highlight food and landscape heritage. Measure 4.4.1 of the Rural Development Plan of the Region Umbria have been activated through the Local Action Plan, Measure 19, to restore the dry-stone walls as a peculiar characteristic of the terraced olive grove historical rural landscape.

Advice/Recommendation

Tradition is strongly included in the family farm strategy for a long time, and also continuing currently to be an asset for the local development in the future. The unique landscape made of hill olive groves with still existing terraced dry-stone walls dominating the valley below, between Assisi and Spoleto, is strictly connected to a high-quality extra virgin olive oil (EVOO) famous all over the world. Nevertheless, this landscape is a fragile environment that has to be maintained and protected as endangered by the risks of soil erosion, bush, and wild boars ruining the dry-stone walls. The preservation of this unique landscape, the UNESCO and FAO GIAHS (Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems) candidate, already included in the national observatory catalogue of Italian Historical Rural Landscapes, is therefore essential for the identification of EVOO as main typical product and symbol of the territory representing at the same time the historical heritage and a strategic asset of the local economy. Other traditional products from the valley below the terraced olive groves, such as old varieties of legumes and wheat are also important as characteristics of the territory and its traditional farming values.

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

General considerations

Training has to be based not only on technical issues mainly related to the EVOO supply chain as a whole and other traditional local products, but also on the peculiarities of landscape protection and maintenance as an added value and icon of the territory. There is a strong connection between the traditional food products and tourism in the area between Assisi and Spoleto. From Assisi, the UNESCO cultural heritage and the centre of the St. Francis' religious movement, to Spoleto, a town of the Two World Festivals with comprised historical sites, such as the Temple of Clitumnus, the UNESCO cultural heritage, small paleochristian church along the banks of Clitunno River, that became a symbol of the EVOO quality representing the famous national prize "Ercole Olivario". According to this vision of the local values strictly combining historical heritage, cultural landscapes, and quality food products training and competences have to include a large range of professional specialties: technical (agronomists, pruners, olive mill managers, food technologists, business managers,

etc.), humanistic (historians, sociologists, anthropologists, linguists, etc.), environmental (biologists, naturalists, etc.), tourist (tour operators, incoming managers, tourism guides, etc.), and media (web designers, communication managers, etc.) issues. A small company like Gradassi can just be focused on its production and commercial internal needs (agronomist, food technologist, pruners, olive mill manager and workers, business manager, commercial employees) but it is also aware of the importance of the cultural landscape and its protection, maintenance and communication, as well as tourism flows and media audience participating to all collective initiatives launched to enhance the local values.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional company well-known in the market at local, national, and international level. • Location in the middle of the most appreciated area of the PDO Umbria EVOO. • Unique dry-stone walls terraced landscape symbol of the EVOO quality in Umbria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endangered production area due to the lack of maintenance in some higher parts where bush and brushwood are covering the olive groves. • Endangered dry-stone walls due to soil erosion and damages from wild boars.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing interest on EVOO from European and international markets for its healthy nutritional qualities and popularity by the chefs. • Potential strength of a district traditionally based on EVOO. • Enlargement of a tourism based on gastronomy and good eating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil erosion depending on sudden heavy rains due to climate change. • Lack of workers available and competent for maintaining the dry-stone walls.

Keywords

EAL Keywords

Terraced landscape

Orchards

Farming Key words

Olive trees

Permanent crops

Main Training/Skills/Competences

The company knowledge is based on farming with specific focus on extra-virgin olive oil supply chain from the field to the table. Main company activities are cultivation of olive trees with all relevant works needed, EVOO production in an ancient traditional olive mill implemented with a modern Sinolea system, EVOO bottling and packaging, marketing, commercialization, and shipping (also including many countries abroad). Part of the farm activities are also agritourism accommodations and restaurant. Other farm products are those from the valley properties, such as durum wheat, barley, wheat, lentils, chickpeas, grapes, commercialized under Gradassi company (pasta, dry legumes, wine etc.). The company has a complete range of internal and external competences, agronomist, farm workers, pruners, olive mill master and workers, business and administrative employees. The farm owners also hold the majority of the C.U.FR.OL. company managing bottling, packaging, and shipping. Furthermore, it is important for the mission to maintain and protect the dry-stone walls and surrounding landscapes as they are the symbol of the local area and EVOO production. For this purpose, the Gradassi family participates in all initiatives enhancing a sustainable rural development and relevant media communication and exhibition (i.e. Ercole Olivario national prize, national, and international fairs, initiatives to get UNESCO and FAO acknowledgements, etc.).

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Queries/Questions

. This case study is an example of marginal agriculture related to cultural heritage values, namely dry-stone walls and olive grove landscapes. Do you think that, in your context, there would be the possibility of valorising such aspects by highlighting the synergies between the sustainable farming activity and the rural cultural heritage?

. Do you think that the non-tangible services provided to the society by sustainable farming (e.g.: landscape maintenance) could be somehow “billed” in the products final price? Do you think that this potential niche market of “sustainable” farming products could find a place in your context?

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