Paqui Ruiz Requena Farm

1. introduzione

La serra si trova nel comune di El Ejido sulla costa di Almeria, dove si concentra il maggior numero di serre in Europa, che per il suo aspetto e il numero di serre si è guadagnata il soprannome di Mare di Plastica e per i suoi meriti è nota come l'Orto europeo. Le serre di Almeria consentono una produzione agricola intensiva e costituiscono una forza trainante dal punto di vista economico e sociale che permette di mantenere la popolazione e attrarre lavoro in una regione che, senza questa risorsa, dipenderebbe esclusivamente dal turismo. Questo caso è un esempio di come le serre possano avere una gestione sostenibile, rispettando la fauna e il suolo, e costituiscano di per sé un paesaggio agricolo degno di considerazione.

2. PROMOTORE PROFILO



Nome
Paqui

Cognome
Ruiz Requena

Anno di nascita
1983

Sesso
Femmina

Formazione

Secundary Education

3. FARM PROFILO













Address
Las Norias, El Ejido, Almeria, Spain

Nazione
Spagna

Zona agricola in ettari
1.00

Data di costituzione dell'azienda

2002

Data da quando il promotore possiede / affitta l'azienda agricola
Mer, 01.01.2003 - 12:00

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

descrizione dell'azienda

The farm consists of 1 ha of plastic production where the red pepper and yellow melon are alternated, the greenhouse is in El Ejido (Almería) near the Punta Estinas-Sabinar Natural Place, it is a family farm where Paqui shares the activity and the equipment with his mother with the support of his grandmother, the predecessor of both. Previously their main crop was courgetter, but the appearance of a virus has forced them to transform their production into pepper and melon for 4 years. From the commercialization point of view, they use private distribution channels that export abroad, which obliges them to comply with very strict certifications, especially for export to the USA. This commercialization forces to develop a greenhouse management based on the principles of integrated production with a minimum use of synthetic products for fertilization, which means that no pesticides (herbicides, insecticides or fungicides) are used, based on the biological pest control, solarization, and mechanical weeding, thus ensuring sustainable management and healthy and pesticide-free products.

4. Agricoltura multifunzionale/sostenibile e Paesaggi Agricoli Europei (PAE)

Multifunctional & sustainable farming Key Words
Biodiversity
Quality/Organic/Certified production

Testo libero

In this farm, the sustainable management is very important with no use of insecticide, fungicides, and herbicides, in exchange to biological control, solarization, and mechanical weeding is being developed since 2003, which makes for example the use of bees and bumblebees possible for the pollination of the crops, and maintaining a high population of tiger fly, the fundamental auxiliary fauna to control certain pests. The soil is enriched annually with organic matter from manure to improve soil fertilization and structure. In summer the greenhouses are whitewashed, which produces the reflection of light and therefore a reduction of the temperature under plastic and environment of the region, this is known as the Albedo effect.

The plastic is no longer an uncomfortable waste, now there are many plastic recycling companies and the new plastics are biodegradable. From the water management point of view and given that Almeria is a particularly arid region, in the last few years multiple desalination plants have been built, which provide this resource to many farmers. From the energy point of view, the greenhouse in this area is very efficient, the characteristics of this area means that in winter it is not necessary to maintain the temperature with heating and the fuel consumption and emissions are minimal.

In the beginning, the change to integrated production was difficult because of the scarce availability and price of biologically controlled material, but the trends in the sector have normalized these practices. In this sector, the disease control is very important, the entry of a virus that affected the courgette forced to transform this greenhouse, thus it is important to identify a product that would be an opportunity and bet on its implementation.

One of the biggest problems is to finance the renovation and modernization of greenhouses and the purchase the equipment, on the sale through private warehouse you get an extra price with respect to cooperatives, but not belonging to OPFH (fruit-and vegetable-producer organisations) prevents them from accessing subsidies for the greenhouses’ improvement.

In the future they plan to market through cooperatives, where the defense of the product is not on the best quality level, but it allows them to move to organic production and access financing to improve their farm.

At the beginning, as a woman, she found certain barriers and prejudices on the part of certain colleagues in the sector. At present, Paqui has found her place as a well-known and respected farmer in her environment.

Consiglio/Raccomandazione

- It is important to access agriculture through set-up programs. Setting up a greenhouse without financing is difficult. From the commercialization point of view, it is important to belong to OPFH (fruit-and vegetable-producer organisations) in order to finance investments and improvements.

• There should be a limitation in the minimum sales prices, the price drop shows the lack of union within the sector.

• Incorporating more women in agriculture is important, they have to believe in themselves and know that they are able to do what they want to do.

• We have to be aware of the positive values of sustainable cultivation in the greenhouse, we must defend our activity and enhance its importance as an agrarian landscape.

5. CONSIDERAZIONI, abilità/competenze coinvolte e domande/questioni

Considerazioni generali

In recent years the perception of the greenhouse as a landscape and method of agricultural exploitation has been changing. The spectacular nature of the landscape contributes to this together with the paradigm changes towards sustainable management methods that respect the fauna and the environment. The legislation and the requirements of foreign markets are also contributing to this. The greenhouse is becoming a tourist attraction factor, generating interest for visitors, students, and farmers. It is expected in the future that integrated production and ecological management will be imposed on traditional methods of greenhouse management. It is, therefore, important to build and promote the values of the agricultural landscape linked to this type of sustainable agriculture, which ensures high quality, healthy, and safe products. In terms of training, it is important to know the marketing alternatives and develop associative mechanisms that allow the short chain commerce to ensure the permanence of added value close to farmers. The technical training linked to integrated production, plant health control, and efficiency in nutrition and use of resources is fundamental to guarantee the economic and environmental sustainability of the greenhouse. For all this, it is important to develop and enhance the values of the greenhouse, know and spread the benefits they provide as a method of cultivation, and, in the case of Almeria, as an agricultural landscape that drives the economy and society.

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• Produzione elevata. • Approccio familiare. • Orgoglio e convinzione. • Produzione integrata.	• Dimensione. • Infrastrutture e attrezzature. • Dipendenza dal marketing.
Opportunities	**Threats**