Bergamot, niche and organic products in Calabria (Italy)

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PEGASUS WORKSHOP

The potential for provision of environmental and social benefits through farming and forestry in remote and marginal areas, including mountains

Albert Schweitzer Haus Schwarzspanierstraße 13 A-1090 Vienna, Austria
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The Greek Area (Area Grekanica)

- The ecological context is extremely fragile, devastated by the disordered urbanization and hydro-geological erosion;
- Bergamot cultivation is a way to maintain landscape (bergamot is part of the image and identity of the area), healthy soils and rural vitality.
- Bergamot production: declining trends until ’90s
Social and environmental benefits

**ACTORS**
- **1999**: Setting up of *ASSOBIOBERG* consortium
- **2003**: Setting up of the *UNIONBERG* Producers’ Organisation, which takes the place of the old State-driven bergamot consortium;

**RULES**
- **2001**: PDO “Bergamot essence of Reggio Calabria”
- Contractual arrangements that *UNIONBERG* and *ASSOBIOBERG* define every year with the main buyers, which define the rules in the of bergamot production

**BENEFITS**
- **Indirectly**: through price mechanism
- **Directly**: through the definition of specific agricultural practices

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 633814
Landscape (1)

Risk of desertification
Bergamot farms adopt and maintain hedges, rows and dry stone walls more than non-bergamot farms and these components increase as the bergamot size increases.
Landscape (3)

Rows of olive trees (windbreaks)
Soil functionality

Protection of agricultural land

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Resilience to flooding

Retaining wall
Water availability

Traditional irrigation systems are more widespread in the smaller farms. The other methods allowing saving water techniques (micro-irrigation) are used when the farm size increases.
Rural vitality

Processing industry, commercial firms and tourism: development of small and medium food industries and tourist activities related to bergamot

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### Key findings

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<th>Structural change</th>
<th>Sustainable production methods</th>
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<td><strong>Collective action</strong></td>
<td>The creation of the two consortia as key initiatives for the maintenance of bergamot cultivation in the area</td>
<td>Participation of farmers to organic schemes promoted by Assobioberg</td>
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<td><strong>Public support</strong></td>
<td>Regional law providing structural public support to renovate old bergamot plants</td>
<td>Targeted agro-environmental measure (RDP 2014-20), which deliver a payment of 740 €/ha use natural and non-chemical or mechanical control of the spontaneous vegetation in the bergamot area (7 years).</td>
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<td><strong>Market drivers</strong></td>
<td>Favorable contractual arrangements negotiated by Assobioberg (stable and even increasing prices for farmers)</td>
<td>International buyers acknowledge a differential (premium) price for organic products</td>
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Thank you for listening!

For more information, contact us!

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