

Italy - EuroDairy Biodiversity Report on Delsante Farm

Presentation of the farm

The name of the farm:

Delsante Farm

The name of the farmers:

Mr Delsante

Location: Societa Agricola Delsante
Elvezio e Saverio, Via San Donato
45, Cap 43122 Parma



The farm is situated at the periphery of Parma city



Description of the land: 112 ha in total

75 ha alfalfa, 3,5 ha temporary grassland, 5,5 ha permanent grassland, 25 ha wheat, 1,48 ha barley, 1,15 ha vineyard, 1,06 ha non-cultivated

Number of dairy cows: 140 dairy cows

Description of the production system

The dairy cows stay inside all year round, as it is the typical dairy production system in this region of Italy. Cows eat mainly alfalfa, concentrate, grass and hay. The milk produced is transformed on the farm into Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese and sold directly to consumer.

Units of labor on the farm: The farm employs 4 people

Main dates of the farm according to the farmer: The farm has been audited April the 23rd, 2018

Biodiversity promoted by:

- 35 large typical trees
- 2 ponds
- Buffer strip and rivers perimeter
- Permanent pasture with mix grass

Gains:

- Healthier stock
- Healthier pasture and crops
- Attract birds that eat pest insects
- Water quality improved
- Higher quality of cheese
- Good financial return for high quality traditional Parmegiano Reggiano



Italy is among the richest European countries in biodiversity, due mainly to a favorable geographical position and a wide variety of geological, climatic and vegetation conditions. The Italian fauna is estimated at more than 58,000 species, of which about 55,000 species of invertebrates, mostly belonging to the class of insects, and 1,258 vertebrates. It is estimated that Italy hosts 67,500 species of animals and plants. This number represents 43% of the total species described for Europe and could represent around 4% of the species in the world. For some of the taxonomic groups, the percentages of European species that occur in Italy are particularly high; such as dragonflies, butterflies and saproxylic beetles.

Mr Delsante farm is contributing to the maintenance of this rich biodiversity by keeping on the farm numerous large typical oak trees and fruits trees, 2 ponds and 5,5 ha of historical extensive permanent grassland, with mixed grass and hay dried on the field. He loves spotting wild animals on his farm like pheasants, squirrels, hitch hogs, all kind of frogs...etc

The results of the biodiversity assessment show that the farm maintains the landscape mosaic diversity of the region and maintains the biodiversity level of the region through a biodiversity developed area of 0,5 ha (semi-natural habitat) for 1 ha of farm land.



The historical permanent grassland provides a balanced diet for the dairy cow, store carbon and gives an excellent habitat for biodiversity. The alfalfa covers the soil all year round, and gives a lot of flowers, which creates also a good habitat for pollinators, birds and bats. Large trees attract birds that eat pest insects and maintain the typical landscape of the region. The two ponds are very important to maintain typical wetland species like dragonflies and frogs.

Mr Delsante was surprised by the results of the audit: “I was not aware my farm had such a positive impact on biodiversity”. After the farm audit, Mr Delsante had a better understanding of what is important on his farm to promote biodiversity.

Delsante farm is a good example of a profitable farming business that promotes biodiversity in the region, adds value to the local urban environment and meets consumers expectation. Indeed, the farm directly transforms the milk into a high quality traditional Parmigiano Reggiano cheese. The marketing of the product does not highlight, for the moment, the link between biodiversity, the quality of the cheese and the maintenance of a sustainable landscape around Parma. This link could potentially add value to the product and informs consumers.