

European funds for local development: the project “Pan di Sorc”

Introduction

The 2006-2013 Local Development Plan of Euroleader (a Local Action Group from the mountain area of the Italian region Friuli Venezia Giulia) financed initiatives by local bodies, associations and foundations considering **local identity and territory as opportunities for economic development**. The project core idea had to show a specific and detailed knowledge of the principles an ecomuseum is based on.

The community needs were the starting point for Ecomuseo delle Acque del Gemonese action: the ecomuseum suggested to create a short transparent food supply chain to make a traditional bread, the so-called *Pan di Sorc*. This product voiced the territory identity and, at the same time, it could really close the commercial cycle at a local level (production-processing-sale). The goal was to turn this food supply chain into an added value for the territory itself, also to deal with the role of agriculture in managing the territory and completing and enhancing the landscape.

The actions planned by the project *Pan di Sorc* aimed to:

1. rediscover, safeguard and promote the territory through a traditional product;
2. keep agronomic biodiversity;
3. recover the role of agriculture in territory management and landscape enhancement.

Contents of the project

- a) The population has been interviewed to record memories but also collect information on growing, harvest and preservation methods, recipes, growing tools and instruments, agronomic cycles, agricultural rites. The material collected belongs to the ecomuseum's Archive of Memory, which will soon be available on a specific internet website.
- b) Local seeds have been sought and ancient cereal varieties have been grown again: wheat, rye and short-cycle corn.
- c) Cooperation has been tested when working for obtaining organic certification: this has helped small farmers, who wouldn't be able to support the costs of the certification procedure.
- d) A food supply chain agreement has been defined: on one hand, it has bound farmers to comply with certification rules, on the other it has obliged the ecomuseum to offer an agronomic service in the field and help farmers with bureaucratic procedures. Both subjects have benefited from this agreement: farmers have received an economic and technical help, the ecomuseum has found the grounds necessary to plan crop growing, directing the farmers and motivating them to protect their territory.
- e) The registration of the trademark protecting the name “Pan di Sorc” was validated by Italian Ministry of Production in 2010. This mark is collective (it can be used by all members of the food supply chain) and it is based on a specific territory (the area where raw materials are grown); it is essential to protect both the product and the project.
- f) Schools have been involved to start an online cultural exchange and compare two communities sharing the tradition of corn growing: the inhabitants of Mexican Xochimilco and Milpa Alta regions and those of Friuli Venezia Giulia.
- g) The ecomuseum has strengthened its cooperation with the Local Health Authority by involving fragile and disabled people in creating a catalogue-field where all cereal varieties and other traditional crops are grown, thus adding more value to the Germplasm Bank in Friuli Venezia Giulia.

The project *Pan di Sorc* aims at protecting biodiversity and traditional production knowledge; it encourages farmers to use sustainable clean practices and an ethical approach to the market. Slow Food Foundation for biodiversity has acknowledged its value by inserting *Pan di Sorc* in its list of Presidia.