



European Citizenship Awards

Agricoltura Capodarco Società Cooperativa Sociale

Description of the nominee:

"Agricoltura Capodarco Società Cooperativa Sociale" is an organic multifunctional farm on the outskirts of Rome, founded in 1978 as an offshoot of the Community Capodarco of Rome. Don Franco Monterubbianesi found the Capodarco Community in the 1966s. In 1978 the community was created in Grottaferrata (Rome) and started agricultural activity with a group of disable and disadvantaged people. Today is an a model of Social farming in Italy and a point of reference also at European level. Agricoltura Capodarco is an example of how to combine organic production with the social, working inclusion in the farm process of different kind of vulnerable people. Agricoltura capodarco is promoting a new idea of Welfare and social economy affecting at the same time the wellbeing of people included in the farm but also the whole local community.

Capodarco was born as a B Type social cooperative with the aim to include disadvantaged people in the labour market but, at the same time, it supplies many social services. The farm has progressively reinforced links within the local area, answering several needs and requests expressed by local health and social services or directly by families. Agriculture activity has also been developed including conversion to organic and the certification of products.

Now, it is a multifunctional farm that includes disabled and socially excluded people as employees, trainers or volunteers engaged in occupational therapeutic activities. The farm focuses on mentally and physical disabled people, psychiatric patients, former drug-addicts and former prisoners, people affected by depression, immigrants and political refugees, asylum seekers. The aim of the activity is to promote the social inclusion of disadvantaged people and to improve the quality of life of the local community.

The cooperative involves people with physical or learning difficulties as workers and/or in occupational rehabilitative activities. Training activities are carried out in cooperation with local administrations and are partially funded through ESF

Agricoltura Capodarco is a pioneer in the implementation of new services, in particular the Farms answer to the dramatic problems of parents with children with disabilities "what is going to happen to our children after our death?"

The main motivation inspiring Agricoltura Capodarco is to create a community based on equity, social justice and cohesion, and to create an economically sustainable farm which was also socially and ecologically responsible. Agricoltura Capodarco is a local action to promote global justice addressing the causes of this economic and cultural crisis, promoting new values and challenging the market with its

organic products and showing how it is possible not to exploit labour forces, especially immigrants, in order to be competitive, to the contrary Agriculture can be a great space of inclusion.

Impact achieved:

Agricoltura Capodarco over the years aimed to reunify needs, identities, safeguards and instances of freedom for all citizens, regardless of their abilities, promoting the values of work not only as personal income, but also as a fundamental element of an inclusive society more just, more cohesive and sustainable.

Agricoltura Capodarco supported the local services developing a new idea of Welfare able to promote the dignity and social inclusion of vulnerable people. An example is the Shelter laboratories supported by local social service for people with mental disabilities and psychiatric disorder "VIVA IO". It is a service started since 2008 in collaboration with the Mental Health Department of the Municipality of Frascati and included within the local services policies

It is a shelter laboratory where people with mental and psychological disabilities are principally engaged in floriculture activities in the greenhouse, in synergy to the agricultural context and the all farms. The project creates an experimental process with a strong social, therapeutic and rehabilitation significance which facilitates the increased autonomy sphere of subjects, including through the "training" and working in a specific field perfectly integrated in the daily agricultural and commercial activities of the cooperative itself.

They do offer also an external service for private garden in addition to complete the offer of the Restaurant of the farm with decoration for marriage and special celebrations of event

Agricoltura Capodarco promoted and is one of the Founders of the Social Farming National Forum, a national network built in 2011 to promote and facilitate knowledge and experience sharing between the very different actors involved in the care farming processes (farmers, associations, families, disadvantaged people, universities, local authorities, educational facilities, etc.)

The Forum promotes the integration of the different cultures: social, agricultural, health, training and working.

The Forum promoted the creation of a Community of practices of SF and represented the experience of SF at national and regional level.

The Forum since its foundation started a dialogue with both the Italian Members of National Parliament and Regions, giving support and contribution to promote and support the legislative process of the National Law On Social Farming (Law num 141/2015)

Agricoltura Capodarco was also awarded at the last Vinitaly with the Angelo Betty Award for the high quality organic wine production and also for the social value of the wines. Agricoltura Capodarco is the first social enterprise that received this important award that was delivered by the Italian President of Republic. This was an important recognition of how it is possible to be in the market but with different values, how it is possible to co-produce high quality goods and values based on social and environmental justice"

What makes the initiative innovative?

Agricoltura Capodarco and its network are the locus of co-innovation processes that work across several sectors and domains of knowledge. We can identify several innovations relating to business management that can be synthesized in adopting the classical typology:

Product innovation: for instance the reintroduction of native seeds and plants; the introduction of various processed agricultural products; the provision of several innovative social and health services in partnership with local authorities.

Process innovation: such as the implementation of organic farming techniques; the introduction of processing plants for agricultural production; the experimentation of significant changes in the delivery of social and health services.

Marketing innovation: such as the introduction of Capodarco brand, the adoption of innovative product promotion including an impressive symbolic dimension.

The value of this experience concerns the innovative use of agriculture as means to achieve important economic, cultural and social changes according to the vision of a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy of the Europe 2020 strategy. Agricoltura Capodarco could be considered as a real social innovation that meets several social needs and creates new social relationships or collaborations. The innovation processes involve different aspects, sectors and types of knowledge (practical, scientific, technical, organisational, etc.) in an interactive way. Consequently, it presents an "interactive innovation model" whose synergistic effects between strong formal and informal ties in enhancing the Agricoltura Capodarco network to develop not only new skills, products and/or practices, but also new attitudes and values. This experience suggests a novel pathway of sustainable place-based community development that is shaped by network building.

Besides the key function of providing food and income, Agriculture also plays a key role in land protection and landscape rehabilitation, in the rediscovery of local culture, in improving environmental awareness, social capital and cohesion. The co-innovations developed in this network are strategic in promoting sustainable agriculture, as well as revitalizing rural societies and improving rural development and dignity of people, starting by those who are the margins of society."

Contribution to European values:

The values that inspire day by day Agricoltura Capodarco are: human dignity and human rights starting by the vulnerable people such as disabled people and immigrants; equality and freedom to be achieved also by working inclusion, there is not freedom and equality without the dignity of job that it is much more than an income; solidarity and cooperation, tolerance and also the value of a real friendship between people, the capacity to dream and to cultivate together a new world starting by the respect of Mother Earth and all human being

Website or promotional materials:

www.agricolturacapodarco.it