



# INNOVATION



A new CAP  
Mountains of  
opportunities

## Mountain innovation

Innovation is one of the main priorities for Europe in the new programming period and **mountain supply chains have a significant contribution to make to the innovation agenda**. On-going innovation in mountain food supply chains takes a variety of forms: new farming practices to improve competitiveness or sustainability or both, new products, new processes, new services, new forms of organisation...



Developing high quality specific products through innovation is a way to compensate for handicaps, invest new sectors and new markets **and maintain a vibrant mountain economy**.



## Policy instruments

The new Common Agricultural Policy offers several measures supporting innovation in mountain production systems especially in food and wood supply chains:

- The Operational Groups financed under rural development policy will be a great tool to apply innovation to many rural issues, especially Article 35 on cooperation of the EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development).
- EAFRD Investment measures, such as Article 17 (investment in physical assets), Article 45 (investments), Article 46 (investment in irrigation), can help mountain farmers and producers to renew their assets and move forward.

In addition, Horizon 2020 calls of Societal Challenge 2 "Sustainable Food Security and Innovative, Sustainable and Inclusive Bioeconomy" offer several opportunities for research and innovation projects on mountain agriculture.

Beyond the CAP, several national and regional initiatives help to support innovation in supply chains, led by a variety of actors, starting with supply chain actors themselves.



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# Innovating Agriculture: "Fresh and Ready to eat" Produce in Umbria

## Context

A consortium composed of 3A Agro Food Technology Park (3A Parco Tecnologico Agroalimentare dell'Umbria -Research and innovation centre in Agro food sector - lead partner), the University of Tuscia, Novamont SpA (company worldwide leader in Bioplastic production), Analysis srl and three farms (Azienda Agricola Luca Treppaoli, Azienda Agraria Il Poggiolo, Azienda Agraria Pizzi Giorgioma) was formed in Umbria (Italy) to address **the need for innovative solutions to the regional farms' struggle to survive in a more and more competitive market environment.**



## The project

The objective of the project was to improve farms' viability, through:

- **The diversification of the main farms' activities** to start producing "fresh and ready-to-eat" fruits and vegetables;
- **The creation of new market opportunities**, mainly targeting big supermarkets;
- **The introduction of innovative and "environmental friendly" packaging solutions.**

The innovative processes mainly aimed at keeping the freshness of products for longer, increasing their "shelf-life"; developing environmentally friendly packaging on the product front. A special effort was undertaken to find new markets for these products, with particular attention to big supermarkets.

## Innovative point

**Bottom-up approach:** The research was carried out based on the needs identified by farmers and involving them from the beginning of the project.

## Results

Thanks to the project the **farmers:**

- **diversified their outputs,**
- **introduced new quality products,**
- **found new market opportunities**
- **increased the profits of farm activities.**

They also **became part of the regional short supply-chain**, enhanced their skills, improved their farming practices, and contributed to spreading innovation.

The cooperation between the entrepreneurs, the university and the technological district set up a platform for interactive and innovative entrepreneurial behaviour.

Moreover, taking part in this cooperation project the farmers established a good relation with the research partners, which is still in place.



# Innovative multi-actor project recovers wine growing area in Galicia

## Context

A winegrowing area in Galicia (Spain) was about to disappear due to **difficulties concerning profitability and the lack of recognition of local grape varieties**. In 2006, the Local Action Group (LAG) started a reflection process to find alternatives to improve future prospects for the winegrowing area.

Several stakeholders met to collectively analyse the situation. As a result, a private foundation based in the area offered the possibility of funding for an innovative action in support of the wine sector in the area. The project was launched by Consejo Superior Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), 8 farmers, 3 advisory organisations, the LAG and the Galician government.

## Innovative points

- **Multi-actor approach:** engaging and making all the stakeholders work together from the beginning was especially important for the success of the project.
- **The use of emotional intelligence** to tackle the differences between the actors and establish a cooperation that can last.



## The project

As often is the case, **prejudices need to be overcome to make the project a success**. Fortunately, **with “emotional intelligence” all challenges could be tackled**.

The agreed solutions were based on **paying the farmers a rent for each vine used in the project**, maintenance expenses covered by the Foundation and a contract proposal by the researchers for a technician to be in charge of all vines.

Four years later, the research group completed the study on the different vine varieties.

They identified the **most appropriate vine-growing areas and the most suitable variety for high quality wine-making** in this Galician area was chosen.

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## Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is the ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotions, to discriminate between different emotions and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior. Applying this concept, listening carefully to all actors' needs and worries, the different approaches and perceptions of the project were reconciled.

## Results

The results led to the **inclusion of two varieties in the Spanish Official List of Vine Varieties**. At the same time, the project achieved the legalisation of vineyards and commercialisation of the wines.

Farmers learned new techniques to increase the wine quality and they are now well aware and proud of the quality and exclusiveness of their wines. **New wineries have even been set up**. Furthermore, a **quality label** for these wines and a **tourism route** linked to the area are going to be created.

# Supporting local production: Cutting and processing workshop in Brioude



## Context

This project was created based on an observation: the organic and mountain industries suffer from a lack of dynamism in the Brioude area (Haute Loire, Auvergne, France). In addition, farmers in the region have an abattoir in Brioude but it is overcrowded and, significantly, does not have processing tools.

**A collective made up of five farmers came up with the idea of creating a cutting and processing workshop** to rediscover their skills in processing and promoting their products, to take advantage of high-performance equipment, to diversify and to re-energise their industries by promoting their role in the local region.

## The project

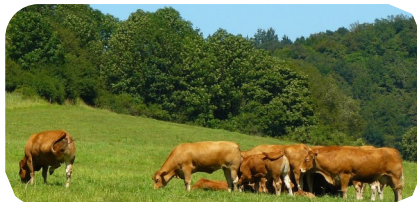
The farmers had a number of difficulties in finding land to construct their workshop. This first step took over two years.

The workshop was constructed by a local company with support from the region's timber industry.

The cutting and processing workshop has been operational since January 2014.

The shop itself will open in September 2014. Until then the products produced in the workshop will continue to be sold by the farmers themselves through the AMAP (Association for the Preservation of Local Farming) or other short supply chains.

Beginning in July 2014 these five farmers have also entered into an agreement with a producers' shop in Paris.



## Innovative points

- This is a **win-win system for consumers and the farmers** as it eliminates middlemen.
- The **creation of long-term jobs** promotes mountain and regional production.
- **The project has also enabled older farmers involved in the project to more successfully pass on their expertise to the new generation.**

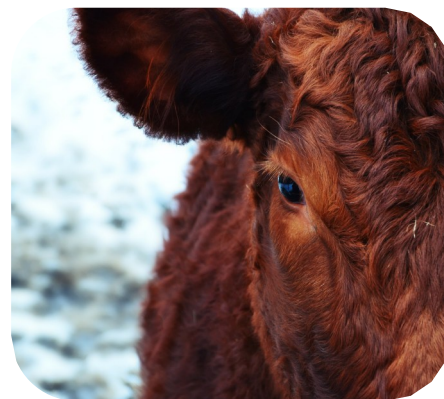
## Results

In June 2014 the workshop received European authorisation to process external production. This agreement means that the five farmers can now offer their clients a **cutting and processing service for cooked products on the condition that the products used are organic.**

In the mid-term, the workshop aims to recruit a butcher, a caterer and an administrative assistant and to create agricultural jobs.

In 2015 the five farmers also intend to invest in supplying the mass catering industry in Brioude.

Overall the collective intends to expand in the coming years and hopes that the success of their initiative will inspire others to join them.



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