- Pasture rotation
- Sheep genetic selection
- Consociation of legume
- Grasslands regularly renovated each year

CENTRO GENETICO ASCIANO FARM

1 Description of the innovation

The "Centro Genetico Asciano" was built in 2001 with the objective of genetic selection of Massese and Comisana Italian native sheep breeds. The center collaborates directly with the National Association for Pastoralism. The the farm annexed to the genetic extends over 280 ha including two irrigated areas of about 30 ha each. Innovations consist in the genetic improvement of the nucleus flocks for productive, reproductive and disease resistance traits and in the management of the land focused on sustainability avoiding over-explotation. A planned consociation of legumes (Alexandrian clover, Sulla coronaria) and grasses (barley, oat and ryegrass) granted a high level and top quality forage production for dairy sheep. The grassland is regularly renovated and minimum tillage soil conservation system with the goal of minimum soil manipulation necessary for a successful crop production is applied. This approach preserve soils limiting the erosion, leaching and organic matter reduction.

Added Value

- **Grassland quality (feeding value, species composition)**

- **Livestock production yield**

- **Livestock production quality (taste, nutritive value)**

Reason for the innovation

- Introduction of novelties in agronomic management and genetic breeding

- Push genetic improvement of the two selected breeds

- Provide a demo farm to support research

2 Farm description

ENVIRONMENT

Main soil types: Clayey-loam

Climate: Warm Mediterranean climate

Altitude (m a.s.l.): 200 m a.s.l.

Slope (%): 5-10

GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT

Grazing: yes, combined with cut use

Grazing management: rotational stoking

Length grazing period: 8 month

Number of cuts: 3-4

Forage conservation type: hay

Fertilisation rate: 100 kg of N/ha

STRUCTURE

AWU (annual work units): 10,800 hours

Agricultural area (ha UAA): 115 ha

- **Arable land** 45 ha

- **Permanent crop** 30 ha

- **Permanent grassland area** 40 ha

- **Temporary grassland area** 40 ha

- **Rangelands area** 10 ha

ANIMAL PERFORMANCES

Breed type: Comisana sheep, Massese scheep

Total livestock Unit: 195

Milk production (l/year/head): 180

Reasons why this innovation is working on the farm

Extended use of data for flock management.

Expert and professional staff.

Favorable pedoclimatic condition for grazing.

Country shapes

Domains of Innovation

Machinery, tools

Animal type (breed)

Forage mixture

Product processing

Forage conservation technique

Marketing

Grazing management system

Farm system

Legume management

Landscape

Animal feeding management

Main types of animal

BEEF

MILK

SHEEP

MILK

MILK