

Breeding of a native sheep breed



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1 Description of the innovation



The farm 'Funtanazza' is located in the South West coast of Sardinia (Italy), in a hilly site that degrades into the sea.

The innovation of the farm is the breeding of an ancient sheep breed, the 'Pecora Nera di Arbus', that makes their farm totally different from the others in the island.

Black sheep are quite rustic and more resistant to diseases than the white Sarda sheep.

They are smaller than white sheep and are able to move in the Mediterranean maquis without problems, grazing the poor quality natural herbaceous pasture and the young leaves of shrubs.

Sheep produce low amounts of milk but with the special flavour of the essences they eat. The cheese yield from milk is very high.



Reason for the innovation

- Increase farmers income
- Produce cheese with new taste to sell in high-quality niches and to tourists that visit the South West coast of Sardinia
- Reduce production costs by breeding sheep perfectly adapted to the harsh environment of South West Sardinia



Excellent cheese
Attractiveness of the black flock on consumers and visitors



2 Farm description

ENVIRONMENT

Soil types: clay rocky soils, neutral pH

Climate: Mediterranean climate

Altitude: 50 m a.s.l.

Slope: 10%

GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT

Grazing: Yes

Grazing management type: rotational grazing, combined with mowing when there is a sufficient amount of forage (1 cut per year)

Length of the grazing season: 12 months

Forage conservation type: Hay

Fertilisation rate: chemical fertilizers are not used. Farmers just use manure on small areas

FARM STRUCTURE

Annual Work Unit: 2 full-time workers

Agricultural Area: 150 ha, 55 ha UAA:

- 55 ha, annual legumes (*Trifolium alexandrinum* and other clovers) in rotation with cereals (oat) or grasses (Italian ryegrass)

The rest of farm surfaces are covered by shrubby permanent pastures

Activity: dairy sheep raising (Pecora nera di Arbus breed)

Number of heads (LSU): 25

Stocking rate referred to total farm area: 0,17 LSU per hectare

ANIMAL PRODUCTION

Milk production: 180-220 l per head per year

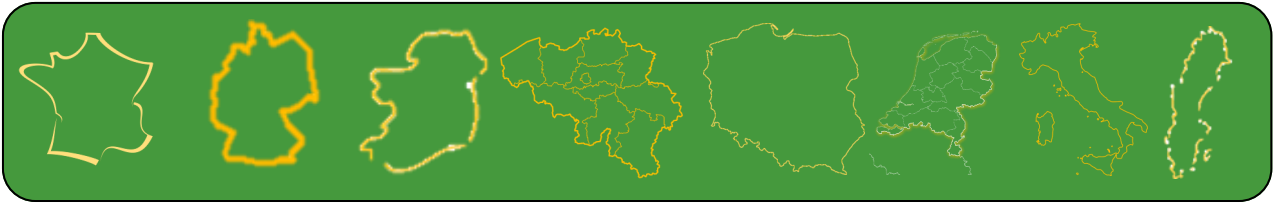
Meat production: 150 milk lambs per year, slaughtered 28 days after birth (carcass weight: 6-7 kg)

WHY IT IS WORKING

The farmers:

- took advantage of an old family tradition that used to breed the black sheep.
- often use to evocate past times to increase the attractiveness of their farm
- chose to produce niche high-quality cheese that encountered the favour of consumers

Country shapes



Domains of innovation



Machinery, tools



Forage mixture



Forage conservation technique



Grazing management system



Legume management



Animal feeding management



Animal type (breed)



Product processing



Marketing



Farm system



Landscape

Main types of animal

