CONTEXT PROFILE

ITALY

FARMER
Gian Mario Costaggiu
Farm Bonacossu

INNOVATION
Combined use of rationed, rotational and free-grazing in beef farms

Video

MAIN DOMAIN OF THE INNOVATION
Improvement of grassland management

SOIL TYPE
Sand

FINANCE/INVESTMENT
Mid

AGROCLIMATIC AREA
Mediterranean South

MANAGEMENT
Pasture beef

MARKET
Local-rural

CLIMATE
Mild winter

TECHNICAL
Easy

SOCIAL
Part-time farmer

All contents of this document are expert opinions of the G4AE Scientific Technical Working Group

CONTEXT PROFILE

ITALY

Case Study: IT_14	Agroclimatic Zone								
Item (Key Innovation Elements)	**Alpine**	**Atlantic Central**	**Atlantic North**	**Atlantic South**	**Boreal**	**Continental North**	**Continental South**	**Mediterranean North**	**Mediterranean South**
Rotational grazing of beef cows the year around	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	+++	+++
Grazing management is different for annual crops (rotational grazing), natural pastures (ration grazing) and stubbles/dry vegetation (free grazing). In 'typical' farms, free grazing is the only management used with beef cows.	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+++	+++
Paddocks are enclosed with wire fences and electric fences in the plain areas of the farm	+++	+++	++	++	++	++	++	+++	+++
Cow-calf line (Limousine breed- no seasonal births)	+++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+++	+++
Supplementary Feeding: Integrating animal rations with grain-legume seed mixtures according to seasonal needs, ensuring animals receive adequate nutrition and improving their weight gain.	+++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+++	+++

+++ **Strong transferability** ++ **Slightly limited transferability** + **Very limited transferability** ✕ **Generic information/not relevant**

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Implementation Gaps

- Oversowing with adapted species and varieties, especially legumes, to improve productivity of semi-natural grasslands.
- When are grasslands oversown?
- Is there drinking water available all the time? What type of water troughs are used in the temporary grasslands?

Research Gaps

- Characterization of permanent grasslands (yield and quality, persistence) and contribution to ration from shrubs and trees (quantity and quality);
- Check of animal growth and health;
- Assess soil quality and health.
- Assess the profitability of the system
- How to deal with desertification and drought

Suggestions to Adapt

- Use of virtual fences, when possible;
- Integration of ration with fodder trees or shrubs;
- use of GPS collars or ear tags during free grazing;
- provide fresh water also in remote areas of the farms;
- use local adapted breeds;
- Increase the diversity of the system (hunting, wood...)
- Consider raising other breeds with less health problems and easier births

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COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

INVESTMENT COSTS

Total initial investment costs at start up:	mid
• Initial authorisation costs (e.g. sanitary, veterinary, etc.)	mid
• Initial advisory costs	low
• Initial buildings and machineries	low
• Initial certification costs	low
• Initial working capital (personal qualification, marketing and promotion, etc.)	high

ON-GOING COSTS

On-going advisory costs	low
On-going certification costs	low
On-going buildings and machinery costs	low
On-going working capital	mid

BENEFITS RELATIVE TO ORIGINAL SYSTEM

- **Economic**

Reduction in energy consumption (electricity; fuel consumption)	none or low
Reduction in input use (fertilizers; pesticides; feed) etc.	high
Payback period	high
Product value added	mid
Additional farm income through agroecological/agri-environmental payment schemes	not applicable/not known

- **Environmental**

Animal feed self-sufficiency increase	mid
Biodiversity increase	high
Improved nitrogen cycling	none or low
Soil regeneration	mid
Animal health and welfare improvement	mid

- **Social**

Workload reduction	none or low
Engagement of young generation	none or low

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Literature

English

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