



ITALIAN AGRICULTURE bets on youth

Young people are the key resource for the development of a modern and competitive agriculture, also for their dynamism and willingness to invest in innovation and technology. This is a mainspring for the modernization of a sector with a high rate of ageing. More than two thirds of Italian farms are in fact run by entrepreneurs over the age of 55 (68%), while the number of farms run by young people has been almost halved since 2000. The innovativeness of young people is demonstrated by data from a recent survey on diversification of profit from farms. Between 2005 and 2007, farms focused on diversification (by offering services to communities as holiday farms, nurseries and educational farms) increased by 3%. The number of those run by young people has jumped by 14%. This is a signal of the growing ability of young people to take every opportunity offered by the farm and the territory in which it is located.

Start-up grants and “youth package” to accelerate the turnover in farms

The issue of the entry of young people thus becomes one of the central pivots of the National Strategic Plan, strengthening the instruments already set out in the past programming. Young people under 40 years who want to establish themselves as farm owners are provided with a start-up grant which reaches a maximum of 70,000 euros. Thanks to the "youth package," they can also combine this grant with other regional measures, such as investment incentives, for training and mentoring. It is compulsory for applicants to provide a Business Plan. To promote support for young first-time farmers, there are, available until 2013, contributions amounting to 800 million euros for actions to support the setting-up of young farmers. The other available measures in the Youth Package should make the measure even more effective.

“AGRICULTURE BENEFITS EVERYONE”

The National Strategic Plan for rural development, drawn up by the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies, aims at supporting competitiveness in the sector, enhancing the environment, improving the quality of life in the rural areas and increasing the farms' potential sources of revenue. With 17.6 billion euros until 2013, co-financed by the European Union.



“European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural Areas”
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