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CARE-T-FARMS
**Care Activities Raising Employment and Training on Farm Adaptation to
Responsible and Mental-health Services**

**Care Farming State-of-the-Art
National Report**

ITALY





Introduction

1. Theoretical background of care farming in Italy

In Italy, social farming appeared quite recently, even if some precursors, as Maria Montessori, paved the way at the beginning of the XXth century; interesting social farming experiences have developed since the early 1970s, when social farming was mainly based on ideas of community born within the '68 movement and on other community-based initiatives (i.e. the community-based, Barbiana School of Don Milani, Community of Capodarco, etc.); however, their establishment increased once psychiatric hospitals were closed in the '80s under effect of the so called Legge Basaglia, from the name of the psychiatrist fighting for equal rights of persons with mental disorders.

Italy has strong regional, social farming networks that bring together providers and demanders. In addition to the regional networks, Italy has a National Forum on Social Agriculture that was initiated in 2011, promoting social farming as an innovation of the agricultural system (Newsletter FNAS Italy <http://www.forumagricolturasociale.it/>).

4 years later, on 18 August 2015, Italy implemented the national framework Law n. 141, providing a framework of principles and procedures for recognising social farming practices that respect the social needs of the territory, the local available vocations and agricultural resources.

2. Care farm experiences in Italy

The origin in Italy of social agriculture has its roots in the Italian national law for didactic farms: law decree nr. 228/2001, implemented with regional laws on authorization rules, quality standards and law on VAT exemption of didactic activities.

The recent national law for social agriculture Law 05/08/2015 n°141/2015, includes as main goals: placement of disadvantaged and disabled workers, farm services addressed to local communities, therapies assisted with animals and horticultural activities, food and environment education initiatives.

Social cooperatives started with Legislative Decree of the President of Italian Republic 14 December 1947 n. 1577. The decree for the first time defined the type of cooperative society responsible for the recognition of the social function of cooperation, which has the character of mutuality and without the purpose of private speculation, in harmony with the dictates of art. 45 of the Italian Republican Constitution. Subsequently, Law 8 November 1991, n. 381 (the "Social Cooperative Discipline") introduced a specific discipline concerning social cooperatives as no profit companies of type A (management of socio-sanitary and educational services) or type B (for employment of disadvantaged people).





3. Brief description of significant case studies in Italy

The SWANS methodology for inclusion

SWANS – Sustainable Work for Autism Networking Support has been a project supported by the Progress Programme, granted by DG Justice in 2011 with results published on March 2013.

Main project outputs were:

- State-of-the-Art with benchmarking between experts (Italy, UK and Belgium)
- psycho-aptitude test evaluation of persons with autistic spectrum disorders (37) by psychologists and psychiatrists for work placement in Umbria
- selection of 24 (out of 37) suitable to be placed at work
- training of facilitators from social cooperation and tutors at work to follow-up the placement (six months)
- workshop with participation of national and international experts and more than sixty specialists from USL Umbria
- evaluation in progress during the 6 month placement
- evaluation of the scientific results/improvement of soft skills and hard skills
- further 6 month placement (granted by the Region Umbria)
- dissemination of the project results (WAPR, World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation; Scuola Pubblica Amministrazione Villa Umbra in Perugia; ISFOL Conference on social inclusion Roma; etc..)
- International conference in Perugia and
- Paper on Work Rights for Persons with Autistic Disorders
- Scientific publication "Inclusion is possible: results of the SWANS project".

According to the publication of the DG Justice "Results of four pilot projects on employment of persons with autism", the main project innovative outputs are constituted of knowledge assessment and benchmarking between Italy, UK and Belgium and progressive inclusion at work of persons with autistic spectrum disorders starting from a preliminary individual evaluation of soft skills and completing the evaluation on the spot in a protected and adapted work environment.

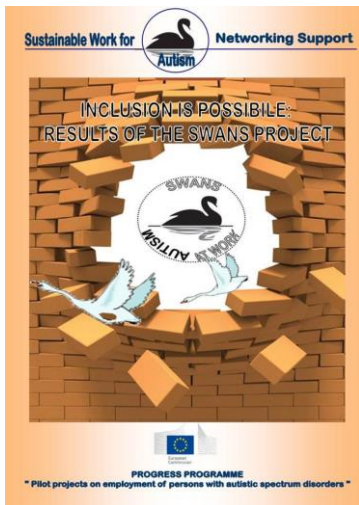
This approach has confirmed the correctness and effectiveness of a methodology based on the so called "triad", with involvement of employer and work coach/tutor in collaboration with a facilitator trained and skilled on introducing the autistic trainee at work and the overall supervision of the health unit staff (psychologists and psychiatrists).

The mid-term evaluation was shared also with families and the autistic trainees taking the decision to go on with the further 6-month placement period whether the results were considered fair, good or excellent.

A second phase of placement was encouraged by the Region of Umbria with a grant supporting the autistic trainees with facilitators in order to improve the positive results obtained.

Particularly interest was given to work place adaptation and available options to improve also hard skills and relevant work competences.





4. Institutions involved in case of regional or national systems and legislation

Institutions involved are, at national level, Ministry for Education, Ministry for Health and Ministry for Employment.

There is a national network representing social agriculture movement, Social Agriculture National Forum (FNAS), launching initiatives, such as conferences, workshops, meetings with national authorities and international meetings.

At regional level the regional authorities in charge of social farming are the Regional Council for Health and the Regional Council for Agriculture, the Local Employment Offices and Local Health Units.

Farmers' associations are also involved by giving technical, fiscal and legal assistance, organizing training courses and conferences on social agriculture.

5. Care farm services (performed or planned) and beneficiaries

Care farms in Umbria : an inclusive world for persons with mental and social gaps

The Section in Umbria of the Social Agriculture National Forum (FNAS) collects some thirty social farms.

The main objective is the social-employment of disadvantaged people, providing social services to local communities as useful nursery-schools and agri-kindergarten and implementing projects of education on environmental and food issues.

The care farms are organized for hospitality: during the day for short farm visits, courses and workshops and longer stays for those who want to experience life and work in a farm.

Hospitality is also offered in care farmhouses to meet specific needs of social tourism as well as simply for rest periods and know better Umbria.





Currently this kind of service is provided by care farms such as Casale Forabosco, near Perugia (www.casaleforabosco.com) and “La Semente” Social Farm at Limiti di Spello (<http://www.lasemente.it/>) managed by ANGSA (National Association of Autistic Persons' Parents, with a daily centre for persons with mental disability, care farming programs and farms products sold under fair trade brand.



6. Social farming more requested services and typologies of workers involved

There is an high increasing demand of services requested to the health units and other social public and private services from families with not enough available places.

Most of services are organised on a daily form offering tutoring and laboratories where the persons with mental disabilities and social troubles can have assistance.

After the recent law on social agriculture and the so called "after us" law addressed to families with sons and daughters to be assisted and empowered to give them the most autonomy possible, also including work training and placements, the Local Health Units have started to develop inclusion programs also by agreements with municipalities and family associations (i.e. ANGSA, National Association of Autistic Persons' Parents).

Horticulture, farm animal management, cooking and bakery are some of the most requested care farm courses by families for their children and adults.

Here below some examples:

"Ippogrifo" is the name of a Centre for Equestrian Rehabilitation in the surroundings of Perugia where Heike Weber, with a degree in veterinary science and a master in hippotherapy psychological support, offers animal assisted activities, addressed to persons with mental disorders, also trained to work as a stable





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“Ghismo” is a no-profit association engaged to prepare selection, breeding and training of dogs for social help. After trained the dogs are committed free of charge to persons with physical handicaps or used for pet therapy in favour of persons with physical or mental disabilities. The location is in Ponte San Giovanni, near Perugia, and is constituted of a multi-purpose centre, specifically equipped for the welfare of the dogs and safety of the users. www.ghismo.org

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“Therapeutic Parks of Umbria” is the name of an ongoing initiative of the Region of Umbria. The location is the Natural Park Monte Subasio, where some rural houses have been restored according to the concept of the universal design and greenhouses, vegetable gardens and farm animals are available for activities led by specialists involving persons with mental disorders. www.regione.umbria.it



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7. Balance of Competences and Training Needs Analysis

It is largely known the importance of soft skills for persons with mental disabilities and social troubles. The triad based on care farm manager, proposing and organising social agriculture courses, care farm coach assisting step by step trainee's learning-by-doing on the field and care farm social/health educator, introducing the trainee at farm, facilitating the relationships and promoting with the care farm coach all planned activities.

This competence supply chain will be previously analysed and approved by all the health care staff involved within the health care and social service.

A structure for a correct and successful balance of competences and Training Needs Analysis for the triad involved should follow the scheme as here below:

INTRODUCTION: THE CARE FARM COACH/TUTOR AS A PROVIDER OF INCLUSIVE ON FIELD TRAINING

- Care farm tutor/coach: definition
- Care farm tutor/coach profile: skills, competences and abilities
- Empathy with trainee and social/health educator
- Learning by doing teaching aptitude
- Self-esteem transmission

I - CARE FARM COACH/TUTOR

Item 1 - CARE FARM TUTOR'S ROLES AND TASKS

- Personal engagement as a trainer of trainees with mental or social problems
- Balance of hard and soft skills for a better trainee work inclusion
- Group work with colleagues and educators supporting the trainee
- Daily report of activities
- Evaluation of soft and hard skills learning capacity by trainees
- Evaluation of trainee's emerging interests and work talents

Item 2 - CARE FARM TUTOR'S RELATIONSHIPS

- Constant relationship with the care farm manager on programs and results
- Tutoring, managing and training trainees with intellectual or social gaps
- Empathic relationship and work sharing with the social/health educator

Item 3 - CARE FARMING PROGRAMS





- Vision focused on tailored care farm programs and laboratories
- Know-how of daily program development
- Program based on observation of nature (leaf peeping, bird watching, etc.)
- Program based on cultivations: horticulture, herbs, wheat, fruit, etc.
- Program based on animal breeding: cows and veals, sheep, goats, ponies, donkeys, rabbits, honeybees, etc.
- Hyppotherapy and pet therapy laboratory based on animal management, touch and care
- Laboratory based on food processing and recipes: milk and cheese, flour and bread/noodle making, fruit and jam, kitchen herbs, aromatic herbs, honey, propolis and other hive byproducts, etc.
- Laboratory based on clay, wood, paper and other art materials
- Laboratory based on use of clay, straw, wood and other kinds of sustainable building materials (self made bricks, fences, etc.)
- Maintenance and management of agricultural equipment and machinery

II - CARE FARM MANAGER

THE CARE FARM MANAGER AS A PROVIDER OF INCLUSIVE ON FARM TRAINING COURSES

- Care farm manager: definition
- Care farm manager profile: skills, competences and abilities
- Motivation towards tutors
- Empathy with social/health staff, families and trainees
- Vision focused on care farming

Item 1 - FROM FARM TO CARE FARM MANAGEMENT

- Analyzing existing environment conditions (location, farmhouse, cultivations, animal breeding, etc.)
- Learning laws and rules for managing a care farm
- Planning feasible changes for hospitality of persons with mental or social gaps
- Evaluating qualitative and quantitative needs for care farm human resources
- Planning care farm management and business plan

Item 2 - CARE FARM IMPLEMENTATION

- Planning works to adapt care farm hospitality and on field training
- Programming a menu of care farming programs
- Care farm project planning
- Scheduling care farming programs (seasonality, etc.)





Item 3 - CARE FARM MANAGER'S RELATIONSHIPS

- Mentoring, managing and training internal human resources
- Relationships with social cooperatives, parents' associations and individual families
- Relationships with health/social services
- Relationships with employment services
- Relationships with care farming networks

Item 4 - CARE FARM MANAGER'S ROLE AND TASKS

- Care farm leadership and responsibility
- Quality control of facilities and programs
- Evaluation of results in collaboration with social/health services and families
- Skills based opportunities for employment

III - CARE FARM SOCIAL/HEALTH EDUCATOR

THE CARE FARM SOCIAL/HEALTH EDUCATOR AS A PERSONAL FACILITATOR OF INCLUSIVE TRAINING

- Care farm social/health educator: definition
- Care farm social/health educator profile: skills, competences and abilities
- Motivation towards assisted trainee
- Collaboration with social/health staff, families and tutors
- Vision focused on social/health care

Item 1 - DISABILITY AND PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION

- Main concepts

Item 2 - SUBJECTS BENEFICIARY OF THERAPEUTIC-REHABILITATIVE PROJECTS AND THEIR NEEDS

- beneficiaries with cognitive disorders
- beneficiaries with autism spectrum disorders
- beneficiaries with mental and behavioral disorders
- beneficiaries at risk of social marginality

Item 3 - STIGMA AND BARRIERS TO SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Item 4 - METHODOLOGIES FOR ANALYZING USER NEEDS, ABILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS





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- ~~Determination of the supporting elements for the Individual Therapeutic Rehabilitation Project (ITRP)~~

Item 5 - PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION AND WORK

- Methodologies to promote the employment of people with disabilities
- Individual Placement and Support (IPS): an Evidence Based methodology

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