Are PDO projects adding value to local breeds? Comparing two case studies, Nustrale and Cinta Senese pig breeds

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Exploring strategies to add value to local breeds: what about PDO?

- Protected Designation of Origin is generally adding value to the product on the market.
  
  **When based upon the mandatory use of local breeds, are PDO adding also value to these breeds and what kind of value?**

- We compare two cases of previously endangered and now recovered local pig breeds:
  - Cinta Senese in Tuscany (Italy)
  - Nustrale in Corsica island (France).

- 5 comparison points: Names, performances, environment, distribution of added value, attractiveness.
The two local pig breeds

CINTA SENESSE

NUSTRALE
The two situations we compared

- Cinta Senese breed is mandatory for the PDO *Cinto Toscano*. Protection is already obtained, **only for the pork meat**, at national level and European registration is still in progress.
- Nustrale breed is included in the application for a PDO as *Prisuttu di Corsica* (dry cured ham of Corsica). Protection is not yet completed and still examined at national level.
- In both situations, breed census is growing and animals are reared in pasturelands and forests referring to traditional practices.
- Our work is based upon :
  - several interviews with a large part of the breeders involved both in the PDO body and in the local breed management.
  - official documents such as PDO specifications and breed management criteria.
Name to be protected

PDO name must avoid any confusion with the name of the breed. What decisions to be made by administrations, breed managers and PDO appliers?

- In Tuscany, PDO appliers decided to «create» a new name «Cinto Toscano», evoking the breed as a partial homonymy.
- European Commission is still contesting this name as without any previous use.

- In Corsica, PDO appliers asked the breed managers to change the name of the breed (Corsican pig).
- The breed managers accepted to rename the breed «Nustrale» and let Corsica for the products on the market.

When the breed name is including a location, there is a risk of conflict to face with PDO name.
Content of PDO specification on animal performances

Code of practices regulates the use of the local breed within a livestock system. **Is it valorizing specificity of the breed?**

- In PDO specifications, slaughter age in both cases is over 1 year. But, in the farms, animals are slaughtered at 14 – 18 months.
- A minimum of carcass adiposity (3 cm) and of intramuscular fat (6%) are mandatory in Corsica.

PDO specification is respecting quite well the local breed specificity, giving new value to apparent defects.
Content of PDO specification on Environmental impacts

As herds are reared on the pasturelands, some degradation can occur. **Is natural resource managed in a sustainable way?**

- **Cinto Toscano** : A maximum of 1.5 T/ha. Only reference coming from organic farming. Obvious problems are observed.

- **Corsica** : A maximum of 5 pigs/ha of pastureland and of 8 pigs/ha during finishing period. To be checked.

**PDO don’t worry about how forest and pasturelands are going on. Moreover, there is a problem of control.**

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Distribution of added value along the supply chain

Local breed is less productive for quantitative criteria. Are lack of productivity (low prolicacy and slow growing) and carcass adiposity compensated by raw material price for the breeders?

- **Cinto Toscano**: A large fraction of Cinta Senese breeders have chosen to be on-farm processors for realizing added value linked to the breed.
- **Corsica**: All Nustrale breeders are also on-farm processors and they gather all added value. Future PDO is opening the possibility for some of them to sell raw material.

**Till now, breeders – processors at the same time and short chain with direct selling seem to be the best solution, even with PDO.**
Heritage value due to the PDO protection

Local breed brings a strong image to the product. **Is PDO bringing back to the farmers new attractiveness for the local breed?**

- **Cinta senese**: Risk of extinction, now 147 breeders with 1200 sows. A great part are newcomers due to PDO.

- **Nustrale**: Risk of extinction, now 83 breeders with 550 sows. Newcomers are choosing Nustrale pigs partially due to PDO application. **PDO has a positive effect on the breed census with breeders’ pride. But risks of opportunism, lack of technical culture on the « system »**.

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Conclusion

• For local breeds, PDO seems to induce contrasted effects:
  - legal value of the breed name = Negative
  - breed performances = Positive
  - environmental issues = Negative
  - distribution from market up to breeders = It depends
  - attractiveness of heritage value = Positive, but...

• PDO projects mobilizing local breeds can add value for the breeders according the shape of the supply chain.

• Value is including **symbolic and cultural elements** able to attract new breeders and to help in recovering endangered local breeds.