

Germinale Agricoltura Comunitaria



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Location

Demonte (Cuneo) Piemonte

Country

Italy

Short summarizing description

Germinale was born within the Association "Insieme ... Diamoci una mano" in the context of a social program developed in three strands: 1) health promotion and prevention 2) school 3) community farming. Germinale therefore pursues the goal of creating a community agriculture in Valle Stura, ie a small-scale agriculture, strongly integrated into the local system, based on the community of people and the natural resources of the territory. As part of a social integration path based on solidary relationships and associative work. By joining in a common path those who want to grow their own food and have no land, those who want to try create their own job: young people and students, farmers who want to get on the network, those who experienced social difficulties and integration. This has been achieved thanks to people from the local community interested in participating in a production / purchasing network, or having uncultivated land to be made available, or simply wanting to help.

Key Terms

community, agriculture, integration

Context and background, Which problems/challenges does your measure try to solve/cope with?

Our initiative is developed within the rural and mountain territory of Valle Stura, one of the alpine valleys of the Province of Cuneo, characterized by a strong agricultural depopulation, with the consequent decrease in human presence on the territory and the increase of uncultivated land. Furthermore, the rarefaction of human presence on the territory, especially

in the hamlets, causes fraying and greater difficulty for community relations, furthermore in the area of Festiona that since 2015 experimented the presence of a CAS for asylum seeker from Subsaharian Africa . It is therefore necessary to "mend the social fabric" and renew it through initiatives on the territory that foster new social ties united in a work of harmonious valorisation of our agri-environmental context.

Which are the key objectives of your measure?

Produce positive effects on health, economy, social life, community identity, Recovery of agricultural land that is uncultivated or marginal, respecting the environmental balance and the healthiness of the food produced, also through the use of organic or equivalent farming techniques To favor in particular the integration of all those who live in a condition of marginality and fragility. Create income through and complementary agricultural activities.

Who are the main target groups and beneficiaries of your measure?

Germinale combined in a community path people interested in cultivating their own food for self-production young people and adults interested in building a job in agriculture, asylum seekers; farmers who want to network to manage joint activities; Also with the involvement of local community people interested in participating in a network of production / purchase, or that have unusable and arable land, or available for voluntary activities to support the project

Which actions have already been implemented and which results have been achieved so far?

In October 2015 "Germinale" was born with a first nucleus of 5 residents of Demonte, two of whom are farmers, and four young asylum seekers from Central African countries, hosted in a CAS. Starting from 5000 square meters. of mountain plots, in loan for free use by the Municipality of Demonte and a private one, cultivations of horticulture, potatoes, corn, wheat, buckwheat, medicinal herbs have started. The cereals are inserted in a common path with the Comice Agrario di Mondovì on the experimentation of local varieties. Part of the equipment is made available by the participants themselves, part purchased with resources from the Association. In the summer, three young people were involved with the NGO CISV. In the community we have promoted public moments, to stimulate the formation of a local purchasing group and to start a dialogue with Public Bodies and Associations for a network in solidarity with the project. We have been awarded 2016 Green Flag of the Legambiente Alps Caravan

Which were the main problems and challenges you were/are facing when implementing the project and how did/do you (try to) overcome them?

Need to consolidate this collective path. The aim is to gradually make the goals of social inclusion concrete through a structured agricultural project with agroecological and participatory practices. The organization of work in the fields requires the provision of agricultural equipment appropriate to the small scale dimension in a mountain environment. The need to identify a rural farm for the management of agricultural activities. To achieve these goals and to respond to the demand for work emerged, our group of volunteers is working on the establishment of a cooperative agricultural so

Link to website

<https://www.facebook.com/germinaleagricolturacomunitaria/>

Starting date

2016-01-01

Duration

24

Regional scale

1 - local (one municipality)

Other involved partners

Contact person

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Category 1, Managing social change

We take as a reference the experiences of CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) focused on the experiences of social integration in local and rural communities and on agroecological practices. With it we mean both the agronomic practices of respect for the Earth, for the valorisation of historical knowledge, with a new life also for the local seeds and races, both of social work intended as integration of diversity, sharing, ownership in management and relationships, involvement of citizens as co-producers. These social actions also include a dimension for us intercultural sharing of farming practices, for example with migrants with which we cultivate the fields together, starting from some common crops (corn, beans, some vegetables). All this will contribute to the acquisition of knowledge, practices, technical skills, methods of social organization, such as to prepare the people involved to self-organize and start work in the agricultural field and in the mountain context.

Category 2: Integrating migrants into the local/,regional labour market

The importance of the Germinal experience for the four young asylum seekers who participated was demonstrated by the facts that: 3 of the 4 have received asylum and refugee status for humanitarian reasons, also considering their participation in Germinal to demonstrate their integration path. (the 4th is still waiting for the encounter with the authorities. All 4 have undergone training internships with small farms in the area also thanks to the experience with Germinale, all in the agro-pastoral sector.

Category 3: Improving land use, nature ,protection and regional development

As part of agronomic practices in a mountain context, on fractional surfaces and with the need to use small-scale technologies sized to our environment, it is possible to share the exchange of practices and experiences with migrants from rural areas, as we have already experimented on some cultivations of common knowledge (corn, beans), as well as possible also in breeding (goats, sheep). The reconstruction of agricultural activities in uncultivated or marginal areas allows activating initiatives and practices in the field that are co-designed together between residents and migrants. In this direction there is also the prospect of making structural the collaboration with the Nuto Revelli Foundation of Cuneo, promoter of the Mountain Farming School, to which a person from our Germinal group has already participated.

Category 5, PR impact and awareness raising

The recent phenomenon of immigration in the valley raised a lot of confusion, comments and suspicious climate. Thanks to the work in the field, the open air markets attended, the public reunions, the majority of the population in Demonte had the possibility to know directly some of the refugees, see their commitment and abilities, desire to work and to make part of a community. The communication then as been mostly based on the facts and the word of mouth that are still the powerful instruments in a small community like this, where what is "said" is what it is. The premium "Carovana delle Alpi", awarded by Legambiente as been officially the main instrument to let Germinale been known outside the territory. Roberto has been invited at numerous conference in Piemonte and outside to tell the successes of Germinale. 27 sept 2016 CumianaFEst -Cisv ong 5 December 2016 Nuovi mondi film festival 25 feb 2017 La terra rimedia- Valli Unite coop 1 July 2017 Facciamo AgriCultura -Paralolo

Category 6, Innovative dimension

The innovation of Germinale lies in various aspects: the involvement of the refugees in some practical activities (during the wait for their documents), the recovery of abandoned lands considered useless, the conviction that the mountain can and have to consider agriculture as one of the pillars of the local society, of the preservation of the environment, one of the possible works of most of the young people still living in the area, one of the activities that can renew the social fabric of the area, activating solidarity, exchange, mutual aid, enhancing a new identity modeled on the recent inhabitants. From these new interactions can begin new activities like intercultural agriculture, culinary exchange, new economic activities that aims to involved the consumer letting him know the importance of how the food is cultivated and produced, how is risky to work in agriculture primarily and in the mountain, due to the climate factor that in one night can destroy months of work.

Category 7, Transferability

The transferability of Germinale is made possible by the socio-environmental conditions that unite the Valle Stura to most of the Alpine territory, at least in Italy. The presence of fragmented and abandoned territories, the lack of interest of the current inhabitants for agriculture and traditional mountain activities, the presence of small enclaves of asylum seekers too often parked in areas of which they do not know any aspect, make that the project can be successfully re-proposed in many other territories, promoting social integration, the development of technical and agricultural skills, the strengthening of awareness of one's own migration path and self-esteem.