The Relationship between Wine, Heritage and Tourism: an Exploratory Farm Study
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During the last two decades the mode of the rural-urban relationship has changed. While the depopulation of rural areas has continued - particularly in the disadvantaged and marginal areas - an opposite trend has become relevant, with a significant part of the urban population moving to the countryside or simply visiting it in search of: fundamental cultural values (tradition, roots, identity, ecological awareness); healthy food and clean environment; recreation and tourism in the open; contact with the natural environment. This trend can be interpreted as a reaction to the widespread dissatisfaction towards the urban-centred industrial model of development and the state of the environment that it has determined. The values of the countryside that today the urban population seems to appreciate so much and that for centuries have characterised the ordinary life of the rural population, from this last are not seen the same way. Some rural people still consider the traditional values above described as a sign of underdevelopment, because of a growth that in the rural areas proceeded much slower than in the urban ones; many others, although showing pride for their locality and traditions, still feel discriminated: since for them the rural space is not for tourism but for working and living, they would like to see it well serviced by public transport, innervated by efficient road networks, modernised and rationalised, with schools, health centres, and all the facilities and infrastructures needed.

In this context the agricultural farm itself is of essential importance. The discovery of typical products, mainly local food and wine, are considered suitable features to characterise the tourist supply of a destination and in many cases they are a major attraction of a territory. These products contain a strong reference to the territory in which they are produced. They simultaneously represent on the market a geographic area, its traditions and its cultural heritage, they identify a local community and its identity as well. Wine tourism represents the most innovative phenomenon of the more general tourism supply created. In particular the wine product and the activities which are associated with it (example wine route, courses, wine museums) is carried out directly in the farms and/or in the spaces specifically organised around the wine produced (example tasting centres).

Integration between agriculture and tourism, farm-based tourism in particular, is one of the main opportunities considered in the national and EU policies to favour the development of the rural population, through the strengthening of the local economy and the full valorisation of those farm-resources directly managed by the farmers.

The research will be carried out by making specific reference to Calabria and Sicily, regions particularly representative of the Mediterranean area. Here case-studies will be considered in sample areas where the tourism-agriculture integration, with specific referiment to wine farm, is part of specific rural development strategies and initiatives.
The presence of visitors in the production units will be studied jointly with the way how it is favoured and managed by the concerns, in relation also to the use of its building units. Moreover the heritage can play a multiple role and will be considered as: a potential housing-envelope for activities and functions; an interpretation-key of the landscape; an element of attraction for the visitors. The contribution given by agricultural manager to the corporate image of the concern will be studied, as well as their role in integrated strategies for the collective promotion of agrofood products, communication and marketing, at the company and territorial level. From this point of view the analysis will be accompanied by the study of the concern's behaviour, so as to find out the critical factors determining the success of the concerns observed, also allowing for the obtainment of data and information greatly helpful in decision making and regional planning processes.

In this phase a preliminary study (mainly cognitive) will be carried out, regarding wine producers and rural tourism definitions specifying the characteristics of wine enterprises. It was carried out on the basis of official statistics and the available literature, as well as by means of interviews with selected spokesmen. The presence on the Internet, the operators’ sites and the information presented were used as criteria to choose the farms to be studied. The survey was conducted by compiling and administering a semi-structured questionnaire comprising open-ended or multiple-choice questions. The topics in the questionnaire were divided to study: the positive integration of agriculture with sustainable forms of rural tourism; the development of initiatives in the field of wine tourism based on the valorisation of farm based resources which are characteristic of marginal areas; the fallout of the tourism initiatives undertaken and the effects on the local community; the potential for full valorisation of the local heritage, focusing also on the built heritage, the regional landscape and the local culture.

With regards to the general collected data using also decrypted statistic techniques we proceeded with sorting out, summarizing and introducing data.