

To label or not? Values and intentions of Slow Food projects on endangered foods

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Plan of the presentation

- Quality according to Slow Food
- Presidia projects on endangered foods
- Narrative Labels for transparent information
- Which intentions?
- Which consumer expectations?
- Comparing with other quality schemes (GIs)

Slow Food

Since 1986, from pleasure to ethics – SF Foundation for Biodiversity (2003)



SF multilevel concept of quality

- "good, clean, and fair" (Petrini 2005)
- technical, environmental, and social dimensions of food production and consumption



Presidia, a model for transition

- innovative systems
 - endangered foods
 - sustainable models
- since 2000
 - 600 in 78 countries

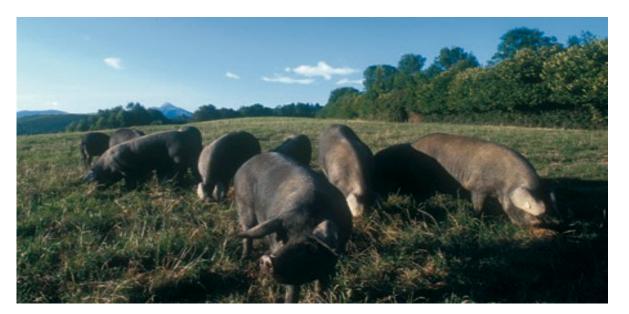
- strengthening producers organisation
- preserving traditional practices
- linking producers with consumers



Presidia main features

- private system
 initial selection
- code of practices as learning process
- 1st, 2nd level certification

- registered label where market value
 - IT, CH, BR, MX, DK, NL; coffee, sugar, cocoa (CS America)





Narrative Labels for transparent labeling

Quality as narrative

"Only a narrative can restore a product's true value"

- Product

 (origin, organoleptic, nutritional)
- Territory
- Production techniques (fishing/farming/processing)
- Processing
- Production period
- Tips for use or storage

NARRATIVE LABEL Basilicata Podolica Caciocavallo

PLACE

The farm is in Rivello (province of Potenza), at around 1,500 meters above sea level, in the Appennino Lucano-Val d'Agri-Lagonegrese National Park.

ANIMALS

Around 100 cows, Podolicos and first-generation Podolica crosses . Almost all year round, the animals graze on the farm's circa 380 hectares of pastureland. During the winter and calving periods, they are given a supplement of legumes, grains and forage produced primarily by the farm.

PROCESSING

Basilicata Podolica Caciocavallo is a stretched-curd cheese made from full-fat, raw milk from Podolica cows. The morning's milk is mixed with a whey starter and solid kid or lamb's rennet. The curd is then broken using a wooden ladle (known as a ruotolo) and left to rest in the whey, before being drained, cut into slices and immersed in almost-boiling water in a wooden tub. The curds are stretched by hand and the cheese formed into the characteristic pear shape with a little head. After a brief dip in cold water to firm up the curds, the caciocavallo is salted in brine.

AGING

The cheeses are tied in pairs by their necks, then hung up along a stick to dry in the production workshop before aging in natural caves for at least six months.

PRODUCTION PERIOD

From February to September

The narrative label is a Slow Food project and describes the product, its producer and the production process.

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Narrative Labels main features

- legal value: not a replacement of the legal label, but an addition/extra
- control system: claims are issued by the producers (self-certification)
 - \rightarrow information should be verifiable
- environmental impact: assessment of lifecycle based on sustainability indicators



An evaluation example of the carbon footprint of the Mora Romagnola pig

SF labeling intentions

- defense of cultural biodiversity, gastronomic
- sustainability
- engagement with consumers
- increase social appreciation of producers



Consumers expectations

- a daily and local battle to save biodiversity
- being a Co-Producer shared responsibility
- use of senses, pleasure for knowing



SF vs GIs labeling modalities



- Mediation food/people, producers/consumers
- Generating trust (Giddens 1991, Fine 2002)
- Also in the Global South
- Code of practices (geog. cult. area, traditions)



- Access, regulation and control system
- Types of consumers
- Scale: for a niche?

Objectives

Overlapping of quality schemes

- Presidia may complement or oppose other quality schemes (GIs)
- Sustainability of practices → not requirement of organic label



Conclusions

Quality labels guarantee food origin, quality

but

- Quality as social construct, not essential
- Values and rules negotiated
- Labels tend to fix, SF values flexibility, narration
- Excess of information vs community engagement