



FARM' IN

INCLUSION THROUGH
SOCIAL FARMING



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1.3. Social farming activities. Some examples

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Origins of Social Farming



How and when was SF born?

Different hypotheses about the origin of Social Farming.

Some scholars affirm that agriculture is capable of welcoming everyone while respecting natural cycles: the traditional agricultural family takes care of the entire community and its problems...

... so, all agricultural activity is social, regardless of intentions



Past experiences

Europe, 18th-19th century:
experiences of involvement of
psychiatric patients or poor people in
agricultural activities.

The creation of farms connected to or
detached from asylums was
considered a new and significant
advance in the management of
psychiatric patients



Agriculture did not have a real
therapeutic function

Gheel (BELGIUM), a rural center near
Anversa, in 1821 hosted around 400
people with mental problems (around
800 in the mid-1800s), entrusted by
their families to farmers, with the
hope of healing through the
intercession of Saint Dinfna.

In the agricultural colony of Clermont-Ferrand (FRANCE), the
farm was a real detachment from the psychiatric hospital,
aimed at producing the goods necessary for the functioning of
the hospital itself. It was characterized by public and not
private management.

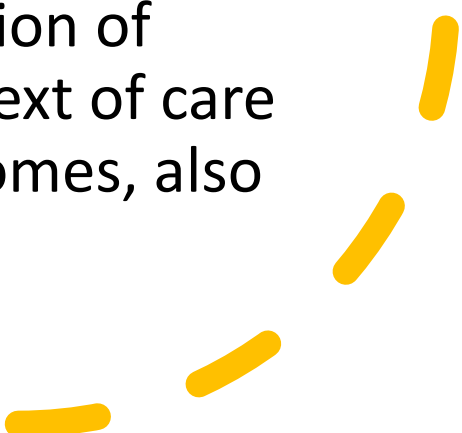
The York Retreat (ENGLAND), founded in 1796, was a country
house where Quakers with mental/psychiatric problems could
live together and cultivate the vegetable garden, obtaining
undoubted benefits for their health conditions.




Negative aspects

In the 19th and early 20th century, many monasteries, educational and therapeutic social institutions and psychiatric hospitals were associated with agricultural facilities that were used for self-supply with milk, meat, eggs, vegetables, and other foodstuffs. Sometimes, the providers also knew about the advantages of working for their patients.

In addition, the use of agriculture for social purposes in some past experiences also had some dark chapters, i.e. abuse and exploitation of children and young people in the context of care education in orphanages and youth homes, also through agricultural work

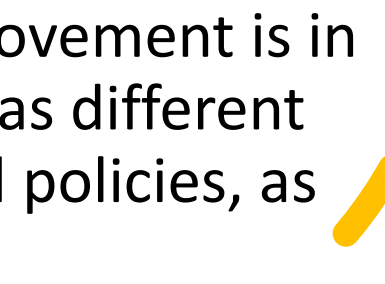




It is challenging to understand how and by whom the social farming movement originated. It seems that enthusiasts and pioneers noticed benefits for individuals working with plants and animals, as well as those in touch with nature within the local community, as well as working in a non-judgmental context.

However, many other factors such as finance, institutions, knowledge, skills, expertise and support policies are needed to build practices and interventions.

Throughout Europe, the social farm movement is in different stages of development and has different support organizations, institutions and policies, as well as different approaches.





Different contexts →
different paths
The Italian case

How and when was SF born?



Social farming in Italy

Social farming in Italy was born in the '70s and '80s, period during which civil society demands to recognize some rights of the Italian Constitution (equality, education, legality, etc.).

Article 2

The Republic shall recognise and protect the inviolable rights of the person, both as an individual and in the social groups where human personality is expressed. The Republic expects that the fundamental duties of political, economic and social solidarity be fulfilled.

Article 3

All citizens shall have equal social dignity and shall be equal before the law, without distinction of gender, race, language, religion, political opinion, personal and social conditions.

It shall be the duty of the Republic to remove those obstacles of an economic or social nature which constrain the freedom and equality of citizens, thereby impeding the full development of the human person and the effective participation of all workers in the political, economic and social organisation of the country.

Article 4

The Republic shall recognise the right of all citizens to work and shall promote such conditions as shall render this right effective.

Every citizen shall have the duty, according to personal potential and individual choice, to perform any activity or function contributing to the material or spiritual progress of society.

Social farming in Italy

In this period the social cooperation was born, with the aims of

- ❑ **producing goods and services** that can be placed on the market;
- ❑ **including disadvantaged people** on the labor market.



- SF has **developed differently in Italian regions**, to respond to specific needs of the local communities with the involvement of the different actors (farmers, social operators, health services, etc..) .
- Since the beginning of the 2000s, universities, researchers, associations, have started to **study and discuss** on SF as a **new model of welfare** and as a **new paradigm of agriculture**.

Different settings... different practices

Social farming can take place within a variety of agricultural settings and contexts, depending on the resources, problems, solutions adopted, but also on the regulatory framework of the different countries.

The activity can in fact be carried out in “traditional” farms, farms/gardens attached to health and social care services, farm-based work integration social enterprises or within the context of community projects.



Bio&co Social Farm, Bucharest, Romania.

Bio&co provides jobs to disadvantaged workers, including workers from the Roma local community or from Ukraine. It works in a vulnerable peri-urban community with few mobility possibilities. Bio&Co gives people an opportunity to improve their skills and competences, earn an income, and work in a supportive, community-based environment.





Bio&co Social Farm, Bucharest, Romania.

The farm is also involved in activities aimed at reducing distances between the farm and consumers in Bucharest, as well as its citizens in general, offering products from SF using the short food supply chain and a weekly newsletter. Indeed, vegetables are delivered to 14 delivery points in the city, given Bio&co farm is located less than one hour away from Bucharest by car.

Bio&co Social Farm, Bucharest, Romania.

In addition, events and activities around biodiversity, healthy lifestyle, agriculture are organised at the farm.

Read more about the story of Bio&co on the EU CAP Network website:
https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/news/inspirational-ideas-healthy-tasty-and-social-vegetables_en





Middlethird Farm, Co. Galway, Ireland

Middlethird Social Farm is an 11-acre mixed family farm located in a very scenic coastal location close to Galway City. Social Farming activity usually takes place 2 –3 days each week with four participants each day coming from the surrounding community.



Middlethird Farm, Co. Galway, Ireland

Middlethird Social Farm provides access to the farm so that participants in social farming activities, social workers, and families can enjoy the farm and its activities. Neighbours and all people in general are also welcome to visit the "open" farm.

Middlethird Farm, Co. Galway, Ireland

The farm also carries out a range of farm-based activities of social/community value, which, such as concerts, plays, art and photography exhibitions, live nativity, pumpkin picking, etc. A farmgate shop and the sale of baked goods at the local shop provide local people with access to local food and help shorten the food supply chain.

www.middlethird.ie/





Social cooperative Palmi Messini (Greece)

The Greek social cooperative Palmi is located in the Peloponnese and promotes organic agriculture, cultural events, job placement of disadvantaged people in the agricultural sector, and the promotion of slow and sustainable tourism.

The cooperative aims to create dialogue opportunities, avoiding discrimination, injustice and policies that worsen the conditions of the poorest, making them increasingly vulnerable and unable to manage their feelings.



Social cooperative Palmi, Messini (Greece)

Palmi was born to respond to the serious economic crisis that has been affecting Greece since 2008. Their values are sharing manual activities, tools and means; equality among members; fair working relationships with employees; and collaboration with local communities.

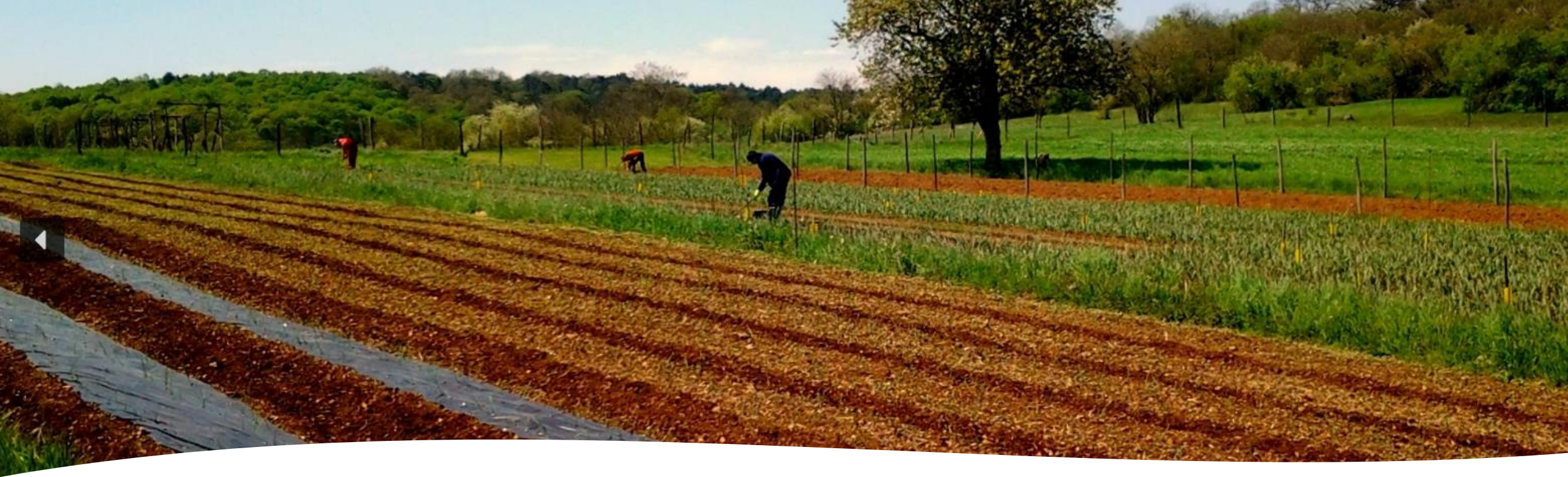


The cooperative produces organic extra-virgin olive oil, Kalamata table olives, hand-picked and processed according to the traditional recipe, dried figs of the tsampelosika variety, Corinthian raisins, honey, many other fresh and processed products

Brinjevka farm (Slovenja)

The organic farm Brinjevka, which operates as a social enterprise, in collaboration with the Association for Mental Health and Creative Leisure VEZI, offers new opportunities for the local community, both in terms of creating new jobs for hard-to-employ people, as well as in terms of a healthy lifestyle, mainly for people with Mental Health Problems and Persons with Disabilities.





The Association VEZI (Connections) is a non-governmental and non-profit organization that acts as a community service in the field of mental health. It was established in 1998 on the initiative of relatives and the Center for Social Work Sežana. The association works in the public interest in the field of social protection, employment, health care and education. It has been granted the status of a humanitarian organization in the field of social protection. <https://www.drustvovezi.org/>

Brinjevka is an organic farm

The farm produces cereals, legumes, vegetables, and processed products, such as flour, pasta, jams, biscuits



Let's try to make a list... From Germany

- **Children and young people**
 - Admission of foster children
 - Farm kindergarten
 - Intensive socio-pedagogical individual care for young people
 - Assisted single living in the youth welfare service
- **Adults of working age**
 - Assisted living in host families for people with disabilities
 - Therapeutic residential community
 - Assisted single living
 - Outsourced workplace of a workshop for people with disabilities
 - Additional income for people with disabilities
 - Workplace subject to social security contributions
 - Supported workplace for people with addictions
 - Life and work of people with addictions
- **Elderly people**
 - Living in own private apartments with common rooms: Assisted living; Senior citizens' house community
 - Living in a shared apartment: Senior citizens' residential community; Ambulant assisted living community
 - Temporary stays on the farm: Farm holidays with relatives in need of care and/or assistance; Low-threshold offers for support groups with the farmer
- **Farmer as a service provider**
 - Low-threshold offers for support groups with the farmer
 - Farmer as the lessor of premises



Each activity can be declined within the farm taking into account its specificities: plant and animal production, transformation, direct sales, agritourism, etc.

The result will probably be different from situation to situation



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Focus Group 'Social farming and innovations'

https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/social-farming-and-innovations_en

All materials, in particular:

Final report, 2023, https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/publications/report-eu-cap-network-focus-group-social-farming-and-innovations_en#section--resources

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