



Social FARMS



CASE STUDY
ARIEL COOP. SOCIALE

INTRODUCTION

Ariel is a social cooperative established in 1995, located near Foligno (Umbria, Italy), providing services in various fields and running a farm producing fruit, vegetables and ornamental plants. The social cooperative is constituted of two branches, a farm producing field and greenhouse grown organic fruit and vegetables, and a farm shop selling organic food. There is also a section of the cooperative providing gardening services, including a plant nursery. An initiative of the very last years is the launch of an ecommerce offer through the inhouse website <https://www.cibonostrvm.com/it/> under the brand "Cibo Nostrum" gathering food products from other 10 organic farming firms and the network "Raccolti di comunità" <http://www.arielcoop.it/agricoltura-sociale/raccolti-di-comunita-foligno/> with participation of other four social farms.



1. FARM MANAGER PROFILE

- **Name and Surname:** Fabrizio Dionigi.
- **Birth Year:** 1967.
- **Gender:** Male.
- **Education:** High School, Higher Education Course for Manager of Social Cooperative B.



2. FARM PROFILE

- **Address/map:** Via Casevecchie 20, Sterpete (Foligno) 06034.
- **Farm Area (in ha):** : ha 9 (8 ha arable land and 1 ha greenhouses and nursery).
- **Date of establishment of the social farm:** 1995.
- **No of workers:** 7 full time + 3 part time (+ volunteers).

Website and social networks accounts: <http://www.arielcoop.it/> - <https://www.cibonostrvm.com/it/> - <http://www.arielcoop.it/agricoltura-sociale/raccolti-di-comunita-foligno/> - <https://www.facebook.com/ArielCooperativaSociale/>

Farm general description

Since its beginning in 1995 Ariel, was inspired as a social cooperative type B, to include vulnerable persons at work. It was started a collaboration with the Local Health Unit and the Region of Umbria, the Municipality and the local employment assistance office with some successful projects aiming at training and placement of persons with different kinds of social and mental disorders. The Social Cooperative Ariel is based on an innovative business model able to ensure the highest quality in the services offered and at the same time generating social value for the community and its workers.

3. SOCIAL FARM SERVICES, ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS

Services

The cooperative has a long experience as a social farm particularly in the sectors of fruit and vegetables and ornamental plants. Nursery, transplanting in open field and plant management in greenhouse are delicate activities with needs for care and attention, so there is always a supervisor controlling the ongoing works. Safety at work also needs particular attention for some activities. The idea to open an organic shop selling own products and organic food specialties from the best firms in Umbria and in Italy was winning.

Activities

The social farm is based on greenhouse and open field organic fruits and vegetables, ornamental plants and shop for direct selling of its own products and organic food from the main Italian firms.

Products

The successful idea of an Organic Shop offering fresh fruits and vegetables, extra-virgin olive oil and meal produced at farm and a large range of other food products (wine, pasta, rice, dry legumes, marmalades, etc.) can be a driver for further development and employment of vulnerable persons. A "must" can be considered the self-produced extra-virgin olive oil PDO Umbria from the historical olive grove area Assisi-Trevi, that has been recently included by UNESCO within the Globally Important Agriculture Heritage Systems (GIAHS), commercialized under the exclusive brand "Villa Fabri" from secular olive trees. Villa Fabri, that is member of the European Garden Heritage Network, is a property of the municipality of Trevi, including ancient olive trees which harvest has been assigned to the Cooperative Ariel.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES

Social Farm Manager Role

The Social Farm Manager Fabrizio Dionigi is responsible for the coordination of all social farm activities, staff building, marketing and commercialization of products, mission, vision and media communication.

He is also supervisor of the inclusion and rehabilitative paths in collaboration with the educator from the La Locomotiva soc. Coop. type A.

Social Farm Tutor Role

The social farm tutor is a person responsible for daily activities in work shadowing with the trainee accompanied by the educator from the cooperative La Locomotiva. The work time performed by the trainees follows a rehabilitative path based on horticulture and gardening, excluding use of machineries.

5. RELATIONSHIPS WITH SOCIAL/HEALTH SERVICES

Relationships with Social/Health Services

The social farm manager is responsible for the relationships with the local Social/Health Services, families and family associations, giving care to people with learning difficulties, mental disorders or psychological problems, elderly people with dementia, young people with

behavioural problems and other kinds of social troubles. Each group requires a specific care, and an adapted set of activities and guidance.

Relationships with families

The social farm manager is also in charge of the relationships with the families and family associations, also through the type A cooperative "La Locomotiva", in collaboration with the social farm educator.

Relationships with Social Agriculture Networks

The social farm Ariel is not currently member of "Fattorie Sociali", the social farm network in Italy, but it aims to be member soon.

6. SOCIAL FARM VISION AND DEVELOPMENT

Vision

The Ariel's vision is to enable people not commonly considered productive and therefore to be "assisted", to enter the production system and recover matter of their lives through the work experience within a rehabilitative path promoting the acquisition of responsibility, commitment, autonomy, sociability and professionalism. The aim is to allow disadvantaged people to enter the production system and recover dignity, trying to bridge the existing gap between the world of social welfare and the world of work.

The Ariel social cooperative as a mission finalizes its activities to pursue its mission as a type B social cooperative, creating a significant and no-profit added value for the territory in terms of well-being, human capital and social integration within the local communities.

Development plan

The social farm Ariel, established more than 20 years ago, has been developing its activities from the initial plan aimed to host, train and empower persons with different kinds of impairments at local level, particularly in collaboration with the Social/Health Services ASLUmbria3. Additional experiences were performed at international level in 2017 at the "4th World Forum of Local Economic Development" in Praia, Capo Verde, and in 2019 within the "ECO.COM" project in Bolivia, in collaboration with the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation.

The social farm development plan has foreseen to increase agricultural and selling activities, also by means of the project "Raccolti di Comunità", in collaboration with other 4 social farms, and shelf life by improvement of the refrigeration and cold storage facility.

Suggestions for managing a social farm

The social farm manager's suggestions are focused on inspiration and passion as a starting point and theoretical and practical planning solutions based on land, agricultural production, facilities, commercialization and marketing.

Ariel started from an arable land suitable for the primary production, following investments in greenhouse, under the interest, collaboration and trust granted by the Social/Health Services and the local administrations.

The opportunity given to the social farm to convert a stable into a shop were to sell the self-produced and local food organic products was the winning idea that gave a development to the initial stage. "We cultivate the Social environment in respect of Nature" is the slogan.

PICTURES OF THE FARM



Partnership



Coordinator

Confederazione Italiana Agricoltori Umbria
(Italia)
www.ciaumbria.it



Soziale Dienstleistungen
(Austria)
www.chanceb-gruppe.at



Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi
(Türkiye)
www.comu.edu.tr



Università degli studi di Perugia
(Italia)
www.unipg.it



Boer en Zorg in Noord Nederland
(Holanda)
www.bezinn.nl



On Projects Advising SL
(España)
www.onprojects.es

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