TYPICAL PRODUCTS AND FOOD MARKET

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ABSTRACT

This paper has analyzed the main evolution of the consumer's alimentary model, with the aim to highlight the reasons that lead towards an increasing interest for "typical products". Furthermore, considering the great potentiality of economical development that these goods may offer to many agricultural areas of Italy. Criteria and goals have been analyzed of the main intervention politics carried-out, emphasizing the role that typical products may develop within their implementation. At last this paper deals with a brief review of typical Italian products, officially recognized with the regulation 2081/92, according to their consistence and in relation to the size of their market.

RÉSUMÉ

L'article analyse en premier lieu les principales tendances évolutives de la consommation alimentaire contemporaine afin de tracer un profil des motivations qui sous-tendent l'intérêt croissant vers la consommation de "produits typiques".
En deuxième lieu, en considérant les grandes potentialités de développement économique que ces produits peuvent offrir à de nombreuses zones rurales en Italie, l'article analyse les critères et les objectifs des principales politiques d'intervention en mettant l'accent sur le rôle que ces produits peuvent exercer dans leur développement global.
Enfin, l'article propose une brève revue des produits typiques italiens reconnus par les normes R. 2081/92, en relation avec leur consistance et la dimension de leur marché.

To give the definition of a typical product you must refer to several different criteria.
You may look at the processing, considering its localization and the specificity of the involved resources, otherwise you can look at the particular demand that the product satisfies within the cycle of the goods process; furthermore, as it happens in many papers, you may identify typical products with the ones protected by origin denomination or other social denominations similar by law. At the end, considering typicality as a particular form that differentiates products tied to their origin, it is easy to understand that the category taken into consideration must only be explained by considering all together the interactions of the information between demand and supply in relation with the exchange of the products taken into consideration. In other words between the basic knowledge of the market and the "typicality" there is a very close tie, due to the fact that this last category is the expression on one hand of the evolution of the consumers model and on the other of the models that characterize processes systems and firm strategies, evolutions that, in their continuos communication interaction, end up with giving a definition to the "social conventions" in relation with the quality of the products exchanged, convention that is at the basis of the qualification of a product as "Typical".
This type of approach to the problem implies, therefore, on the first side, the individualization of those basic transformations and of the production that have lead to the settlement of this convention and after, to the analysis of a skew report and the efficiency of the report of the market in relation to the quality of products determined as "typical", so that it may be possible to trace a picture that may help to read and interpret the quantitative dynamics of the market of the products taken into consideration, that anyhow will be considered as the following.
The tie between typicality and characteristics of the exchanged products induce consequently to take into consideration the central elements that contribute to circle the concept of typicality to which the market refers so, on one hand, the cultural evolution of the operators in the topic of alimentary quality, and on the other hand, the evolution of the models of public intervention.
In relation, to the changes of the consumers products, in a few words we may remind that, in the picture outlined of "satiety" that characterizes the alimentary consume of the post-industrial society, the only dynamic element of the demand is the requirement for higher qualitative standards. Naturally for the "modern" consumer, that does not have objectively the knowledge of the characteristics of all the goods utilized, what really counts is the perception of the quality. Within the social-economic ties that limit consume strongly marked, more than by the income they are by life and working models the alimentary choices express the conviction of the individuals in relation to quality and are a tie of communication. On these basis are outlined several models of alimentary consume where live in various combinations, profoundly different requirements: health worries and hedonistic needs, need to save time and want to save environmental and historical resources, assessment of ethnic and cultural exploration

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requirements that tend to modify these identities. This plurality of demands tend to fraction the market in specific niche – dietetic, biologic, ethnic, ethic products, etc. – and lead in prospective, as it has been observed in literature, to a redefinition of the same rudiments of typicality.

As well, complex seems the transformation of the processing systems, involved by profound reorganization processes following the overcome of the Ford philosophy based on the standardization of products and on the large integrated agroalimentary firm. Without going in detail it may be said on this subject that, in relation to requirements tied to the cut-down of transaction/integration costs and to the development of new competencies, even in the alimentary field we find the assessment of new models of flexible specialization that outline a very composed picture of the productive systems, where live forms of organization derived by processes of "splitting up" of large firms and by transformations processes of small and medium firms into nets and in local systems.

In order to clear up this subject it is useful to distinguish between different "productive architectures", on one hand firms marked by homologazation processes that don't draw out from the territory charaterization elements on the cultural and productive value scale (groups, global networks) and, on the other hand, local systems, that from the territory acquired the contextual knowledge that supports the build-up of the social-economical environment and of its productive tissue, furthermore, the elements that consent its reproducibility are closely associated to the typical productions. In other terms, according to this reading "typicality" is strictly tied to another specific organization model of agricultural and agroindustrial production.

Naturally, this general model may present specific characteristics that may or may not make it assimilable – at the occurrence of determined conditions – to a "distrectual" model. Anyhow, the main thing is that "typicality" results somehow correlated to the endogenous character of the territorial development, in other words "typicality" derives, according to this point of view, from a specific plot between the genetic/environmental resources of the territory, the local technological knowledge and the growth of the economic tissue that carries out a marketable supply of typical products.

On these basis the differentiation of products in relation to their territorial provenance may be considered expression of expansion strategies from groups or network "non local" that to satisfy requirements of outspread of the range and fidelization of their clientele (often even through agreements with local firms), produce or commercialize characteristic products of a territorial cycle, as it is anyhow evident in chain stores or even in the restoration network. On the other side "typicality" establishes instead the absolute competition advantage on which point out the local systems that have a marked rural connotation.

On some market segments – the ones where exists or may be induced some availability of the consumer to try acting as a substitute of the products that he perceives as typical – the "non local" systems may set-up aggressive strategies with the aim of chipping quotes of the market at local systems. In the niches where local systems position their products with a strong cultural connotation, may be tieing it at the fruition of free time and of the territory (wine and gastronomic circuits, etc.) these aggressions do not seen, instead easy. In other terms, the non aggressiveness of the niche is in relation with the realization and the correct communication of a true form of "vertical" differentiation.

Briefly summarizing the sense of the recognition carried out it may be concluded that exist, either in the demand that in the supply, basic ongoings that lead to hypothesize processes of segmentation of the market of typical products with the aim of separating the need for healthy and genuine products from the cultural one. To satisfy the last there are strongly tied to the specificity of the local knowledge and, therefore, to the endogenous features of the processes of rural development. In other terms the assimilation of typical products to cultural goods proposes again the problem of the development of all the territory and so of a bunch of diversified activities tied to it (tourism, handicraft, view etc.).

According to the above mentioned picture it may be said that typicality represents a first approximate answer, on one hand, to the need for local development and productive differentiation and, on the other hand, to needs coming out from the requirements of consumers. Nowadays, it is yet an answer that contains elements of ambiguity. The tie between territory and quality is yet weak and it is exclusively marked as a call for a (sometimes) estimated character of genuinity, therefore, you may consider these cases as "typicality in a weak way". In other cases the territory intends to communicate a specificity of the productive system and of the employed resources, those we may call as "typicality in a strong way".

The reasons of this strong character excessively "faded-away" by the convention that makes typicality, it may easily be viewed by the observation of the market, may be found above all in the unfair behaviour of the operators, that referring to the territory are able to differentiate – this time in an horizontal way – products that are absolutely "common", maybe found on the international market of the commodities. Afterall, this phenomenon reflects the weak efficiency of information of the market respect the quality of the product, and the ongoing of a serious skewness on the part of the consumers, that contribute to make up false idea that typicality may be, from time to time, confused with healthy, genuity or simply with variety. It is useful to underline

how the efficiency of communication is strictly tied to the forms of regulation that characterize the market, either to the ones autonomously elaborated and also to the ones elaborated by the operators as to those that are the outcome of public intervention. In this sense the forms that "traditionally" characterize the market of these products are referable to public trademark, that on a side, is a guarantee not only of the provenance, but also of quality (principally seen by the point of view of the producer) that in this sense may be known ahead the purchase, this may induce the typical product to resemble to a search good. On the other hand the trademark is seen as the instrument on which are based the politics of collective promotion.

Substantially, as it is known, the general mechanism of this form of intervention foresees: the recognition of the public trademark, regulations to respect, and eventually promotional activities to carryout, all or in part, supported by public funds.

The weak elements of this intervention model have been thoroughly analyzed in literature. The model has a strong administrative connotation, that makes difficult and slow, eventual adjustments connected to the evolution of the market; it gives little incitement to improve the quality of the single firms, so that in many cases the more dynamic operators do not give their adhesion or they go out; and, at last, for a series of reasons, not always promotional politics based on public trademark may be efficient.

This does not mean that public trademark is still an important instrument for competition in market niches, where local systems compete with other forms of productive organization. Anyhow, this model has not reached the goal of reducing sufficiently the skewness of information, and not always because to the consumers does not arrive enough information, it must be said that in some cases information is redundant and not usable, for this reason consumers are induced to banalize differences. This model of intervention has not reached the goal of reducing unfair behaviours among networks and local systems, above all within these systems. In this sense significant expectations are set in the new models of public intervention, that face the problem of cohesion and development of the local economy with a different instrumentation from the past to which we will refer in the last part of this paper.

From different points of view, the discussion carried out till now, refers to the knot of the quality of these products either from its identification level than from the communication one, quality is focused because it is the only element that can justify price in the eye of the consumer. Going on by shots, we may remind the fact that in the case of typical products, schemes generally used to face problems involved with quality, show a series of problems, therefore it is necessary to begin a specific data processing on this matter.

On the side of the intrinsic value of quality the main factors to take into consideration refer to the hygenical aspects. As it is known, infact, the problem to give suitable guarantees to the consumer often fights against the peculiar nature of these raw materials and the processing agricultural systems and/or handicrafts. A satisfying solution to the problem may not be obtained simply by introducing derogation to the existing provisions of the law – necessary in some cases and reproposed recently even as legislative measures – but through "ad hoc" laws that in some measure value the territorial environment, as for example the case of local provisions supply for specific breedings.

Always on the "intrinsic" level the other main problem is tied to the definition of organolectic aspects, they are the ones mainly in correlation with the hedonistic dimension, not always objectable in specific parameters.

On the psycho-social side instead are enhanced all those elements that are involved with the agricultural and alimentary tradition of these products and its connection with the local history and culture. These are the true elements that must characterize the dimension of the quality according to the content of the service, that must be intended especially as information (on the labels, the packaging, but even on promotional support of all the territorial circle) about the origin of the product, the raw material, the processing etc., and not too much as facilities of the consume's processing (preportioned etc.).

At this point, it is proper to take into consideration again the problem of the intervention policy.

In the first part has been underlined the close tie that there is between typicality and the model of territorial development. This tie lays out the problem of public intervention from a point of view surely new respect the past, moving the problem from the increase of value of a single product (or group of products) level, to the one of reinforcement of the local and endogenous character of the territorial development. Naturally a similar goal must consequently find its "basis", in the alimentary field, on the agricultural and gastronomic traditions of the territory.

From the suggested point of view, the models for the public policy therefore consisted by intervention models where mainly results evident the "mission" of local development, and that emerges both from at the CEC and from the national level. It is sufficient for all, the citation of the Leader Programs and the Territorial Pacts on which we will return in a short while.

These models are arranged anyhow in a more complex evolution of public policies, where the attention increases for the territory, as a crucial factor of development and competition evolution that involves the sectorial policy, as it is evident in the most recent regulations of agricultural and agroindustrial policies at a national level.

The need to overcome the policies that refers to the product in the direction of forms of intervention "for a territorial system" emerges in all a series of analysis – among which it is our pleasure to recall our recent contribution on the "pasta" district in Molise among which even those that have as object the problems in relation to the general marketing. Obviously, this overcome must not be understood as "abjuration" of the traditional politics of public trademarks – that have found after all their legitimization even in the CEC regulations – rather the enclosing of these policies in a more articulated picture, in which these are reconnected and integrated with the aim of a total development of the territory, and in which perhaps the functions of guardianship and control are separated from the promotional ones.

The experience of the protection products association, in fact, seems to show its main limits especially in the general promotional field, even if it still remains for many ways irreplaceable in relation to the structural and cultural gap that often characterizes manufacture companies respect the functions already mentioned. In this sense the most significant experiences seem to be the ones where the increase of value model followed is in accordance with the specific path of rural and agroindustrial development that characterizes the territory. This happens in the case that the protection product association is the main character of the local development, acting not only as the interface between demand and supply, but even, among the last as the promoter of common languages and knowledge towards the companies, and as connection between those and the all the economic system and local institutions and the big global networks.

The interventions to increase in value typical productions find, also, a new cultural and operative reference bottom-up development policies, that at a CEC level are related to the new goals of regional re-balance, that cross with structure policies finding an important balance point in initiatives aimed to rural development. Within these initiatives the model of intervention that shows to go along with the main "energy", the logic of local endogenous development is surely Leader Program II, that sets at the center of the intervention the arrangement among the different actors present on the territory, the creation of a new collective subject output of this arrangement, "Gal", that in substance should be the place where collective project capacity is structured and where mediation takes place between local and global dimension.

At last these new models of intervention that assume with more clearness the aim of local development tend to change the profile of policies in matter of typicality on the level of the subjects and even by the spectrum of intervention measures. In brief new reference subjects seem to become "organisms" in which concrete local partnership, always that in the process of arrangement a significant role must be given to agricultural traditions and local food. The new reference model consents afterall to arrange a spectrum of actions in relation to firms' tissue that contribute to realize typical productions, but even to external context of these firms (public administrations, material and immaterial infrastructures, manpower, environmental resources, certification state agency, etc.) all essential actions to lead to reproducibility and to the increase of value of this tissue.

Going back to typical products it must be underlined that their inclusion in the local developing process requires an original processing effort act to render adequate planning and organization choices to the specific characteristics of the territory. On a general level it may be observed to conclude that where in a determined area exists an economical tissue already characterized by significant levels of specialization according to products of agricultural and alimentary tradition – may exist therefore, what we have defined in the case of the region Molise a "protodistrict" – the problem of intervention is fundamental made by the introduction of elements of local government of the processes of production and increase in value of these traditions. In this sense the actions to carry out, aside coordination and cohesion of the operators, must be aimed to the incentivation of: activities in the field of services (formation, marketing, distribution, etc.), innovative processes compatible with the structure and the culture of firms that output the examined productions, nonetheless projects and structures in connection with the productive system and the institutions and organizations that aim to the touristic and recreation promotion within the territory.

In this sense the new forms of intervention between a strong territorial impact surely increase the potentiality of "emersion" and increase of value of the typical production systems. It is important anyhow that this strategic option finds adequate space within the instrumentation of agricultural and agroindustrial policies. In this direction seem to go some recent laws on this subject – we refer to DL 173 of the 98 – where, as it is known, competition of Italian agriculture may explicitly be tied to the increase in value of the regional gastronomic patrimony. In this sense is identified by laws a new typology of products "traditional products", on the basis of the "processing, preservation and seasoning methodologies whose use shows to be consolidated in time".

This typology seems to be in tuning with the cultural conception of typicality, as above mentioned, in the first section of this paper. Furthermore, this typology may be explicitly tied with rural endogenous development because this law clearly establishes a tie between gastronomic patrimony and the cultural, handicraft and touristic ones; improves the carryout of cooperative agreements between firms that joined DOP and IGP; it

tends to reinforce forms of interprofessionalities with local features.
The possibility of pointing out on traditional products is anyhow subordinated to some ties on the quality level that laws taken into consideration try to solve giving hypothesis, always within the CEC rules, with a system of "derogation" in the matter of hygiene. The hypothesis presents some risks, but they may be overcomed by developping new models of quality on a territorial basis.
On the other hand, the systems used nowadays have showed not to be infallible in matter of alimentary sanitation, as showed by recent circumstances that see frightfully creak the reputation of big international companies. In a word it may be said that limits showed by big groups and global networks constitute a further factor to relaunch typical productions, that seem already to benefit, as it has been shown, by a series of favorable conditions on the side of consume and production. In this relaunch an important support may come from new forms of intervention aimed to the build-up and reinforce of local systems.
For completeness we must give a brief outline of the picture for the quantity of typical products. According to the data available we will take into consideration, products in according to CEC and national rules for the mainly consistent sectors.

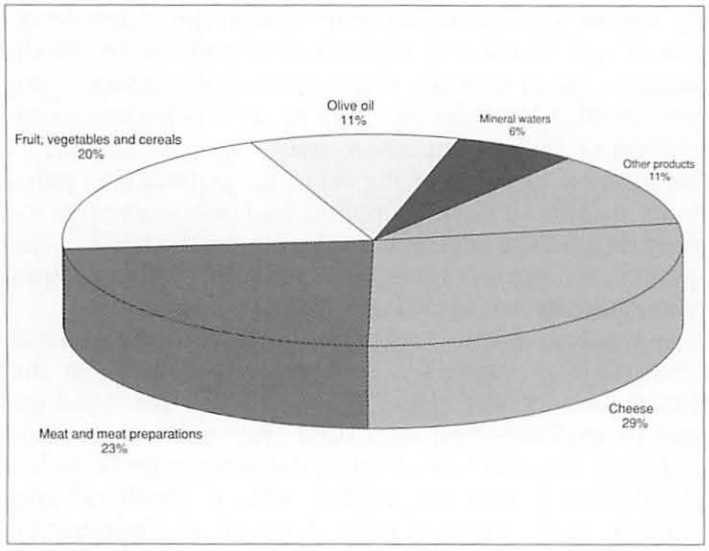
Typical agro-alimentary products according to Regulation 2081/92: short analysis by productive sectors

Products that in CEC obtained a DOP or a IGP on the basis of the rule 2081/92 have been overall 478. As it may seen in **graphic 1**, of these almost 30% are cheeses, 23% meat and meat processing, 20% vegetables and cereals, 11% olive oils, while, the leftover 17% regards mineral water and other minor products.
As it may be observed, from this representation is excluded wine, since "quality wines coming from determined regions" so-called VQPRD, are disciplined by another CEC regulation n. 823 of 1987, preceding the one that has set up DOP and IGP system for the safeguard of typical productions. These regulations even if different from the formal point of view, are fundamentally identical(1), on the substantial level, anyhow, oblige, in the short summary that follows, disjointed treatment of the two sections, that will proceed starting from the products disciplined on the basis of Rule 2081/92 and will be concluded by the treatment of VQPRD or DOC wines.

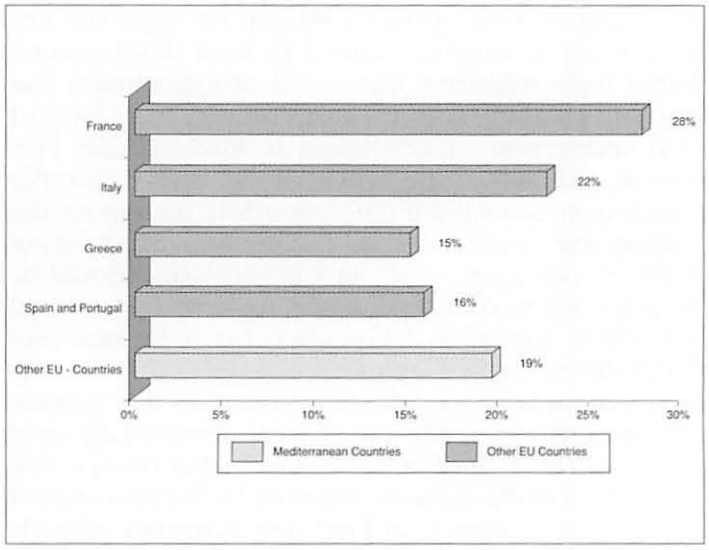
Cheeses

For what concerns this sector it must immediately be underlined that the prominence of the Mediterranean area, although the 52% of cheese production of the CEC market comes from countries not belonging to it. As seen in **graphic 2.1** great part of the safeguarded production has been produced in France and in Italy (respectively, 28% and 22%), followed, with prominent positions, from Greece with the 14% and from Spain and Portugal, that overall detain the 16% of the trademarks of this sector.
In Italy the presence of 30 DOP at the same time of the absence of IGP, show a strong differentiation towards "traditional" productions of high quality, whose origin is to ascribe to particularly narrow geographic areas.
The recognition of trademark of Italian cheeses has been particularly easy, because as it is known, they were already ruled within the national area by a law of 1954 (Law n. 125) that safeguarded "typical" cheeses. Therefore, they have had the benefit of a simplified pro-

(1) For this reason VQPRD wines in this paragraph will be considered at the same rate of alimentary products ruled by R. 2081/92.



Graphic 1 - DOP e IGP food products by sectors in EU.



Graphic 2.1 - Cheeses. DOP and IGP cheeses by provenience countries.

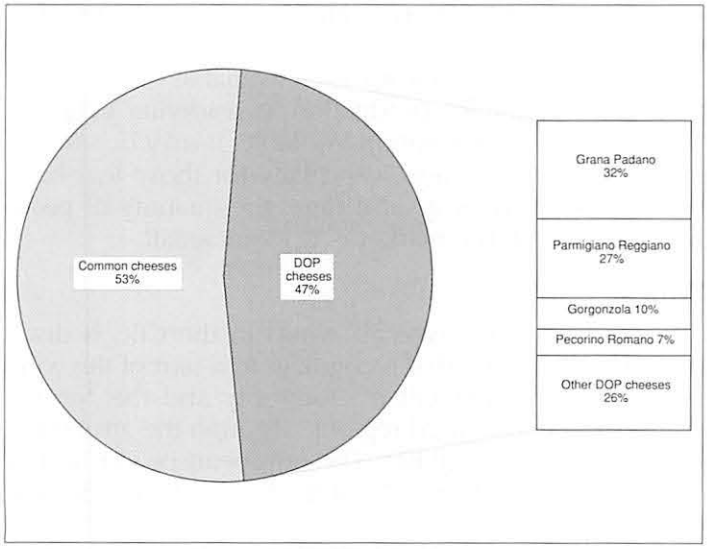
cedure to obtain the trademark DOP. Probably even due to these laws the cheese section is the one that has better picked up benefits from the application of the rule 2081/92, considering that cheeses represent 45% of DOP totally recognized to Italy, which at the same time represent more than 47% of national cheese production (**graphic 2.2**).

"Italian typical cheese" reaches about 500 thousand tons and is mainly destined to the Italian market-national for the most known trademarks, regional or local for the others. On the overseas market a significant presence is reported only for the Grana and Gorgonzola cheeses and for Pecorino Romano, the total volume of export per year corresponds complexively to a little over 50 thousand tons, equal to a value of over 600 milliards of Italian liras.

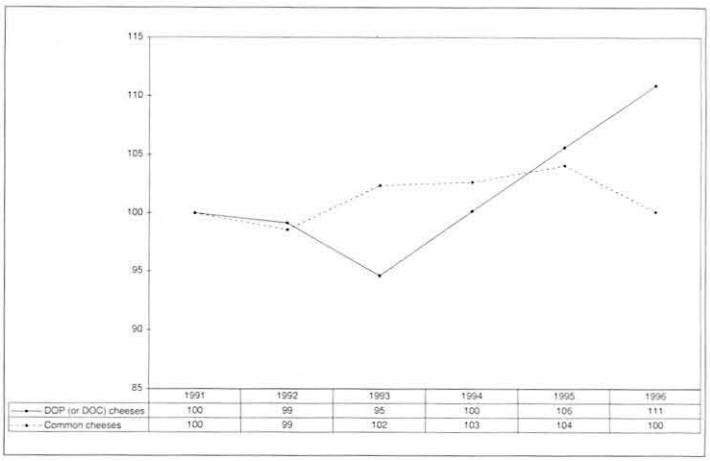
The production of Italian typical cheeses is increased of 11% during the 90's, on the contrary, the production of generic cheeses has remained substantially the same, as we may see from the ongoing of **graphic 2.3**. This ongoing is influenced either from the increase of the Grana cheese production, and even by the progressive recognition of safeguard to the various typologies of typical cheeses, that has sensibly moved the quantity of generic cheeses towards DOP (between 1991 and 1998 have been recognized the 36% of the actual DOP).

In the analysis of typical Italian cheeses the deep dishomogeneity can't be overlooked in the territorial distribution of the trademarks. Twenty of the thirty DOP have been recognized as cheeses coming from northern Italy, but the not equal distribution is even more evident if observed in quantitative terms considering that from the latter district comes the 87% of DOP cheeses (**graphic 2.4**).

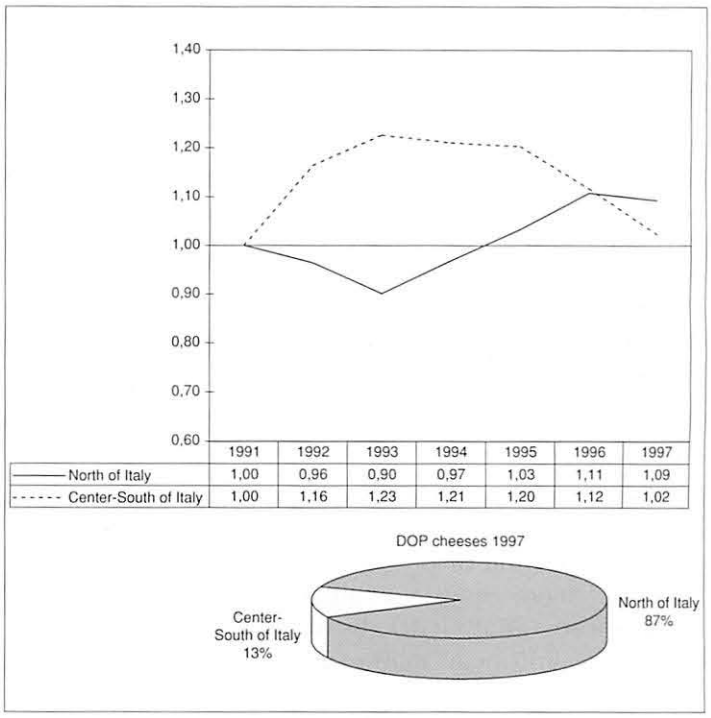
It must be said that growth rhythm appears to be higher in this district than in other Italian regions, where, a modest presence of "recognition" is surprising, especially in southern Italy, considered the general appreciation of the consumers for the several cheese typologies of those zones. This delay must be given, presumably to a high fragmentation and to the excessive diversification of the production that can be checked in southern Italy, and also to the difficulties met by these productions to go out from the local markets, due to the lack of institutions (association) delegated to marketing and to the promotion of the products.



Graphic 2.2 - Cheeses. Italian production (1996).



Graphic 2.3 - Cheeses. Italian production since 1991 to 1996. Base 1991.



Graphic 2.4 - Italian DOP cheeses evolution, since 1991 to 1997. Base 1991.

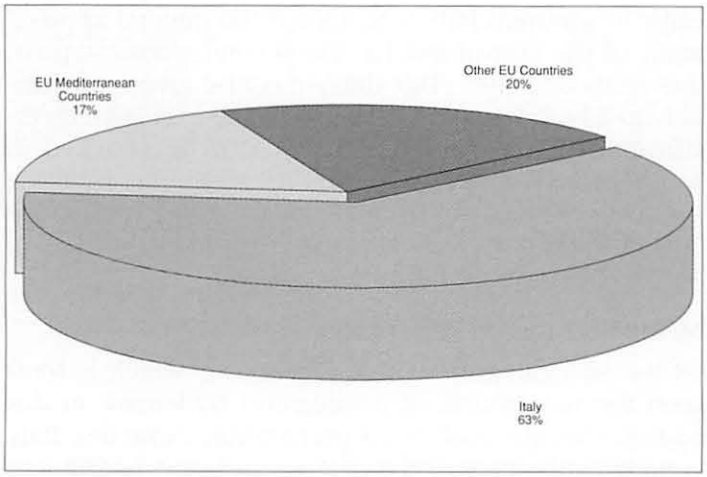
Meats and meat preparation

Of the two categories of commerce for which is foreseen the recognition of a safeguard trademark in this section ("meats" and "meat preparation", exactly), Italy is particularly interested to the second one, taking into consideration that for the first has been recognized on-

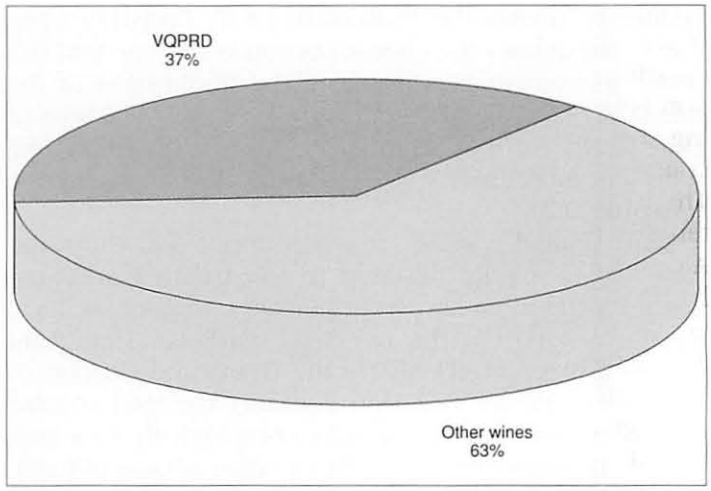
ly one IGP to the production of "Vitellone bianco dell'Appennino".
Minor relevance of the second category respect to the first one (to which have been recognized only 70% of the CEC denominations), ensures to Italy a dominant role respect to other countries of the European market, since the 63% of the total denominations has been recognized to Italy (**graphic 3**).
Recognition of typicality to this section has been reserved especially to different typologies of hams, that represent even the most significant voice from the quantitative point of view. These recognitions have prevalently concerned cold cuts of northern Italy while southern Italy, has already observed for the cheese section, has shown a certain delay – excluded Calabria – to candidate most typologies of cold cuts that are particularly rich in this part of the country. Even in this section the origin of this situation is referable to the same causes found in the preceding case.
From the quantitative point of view, if we exclude Bresaola (the only safeguarded of bovine origin) for which data is not available, production of safeguarded cold cuts corresponds complexively to about 140 thousand tons equal to 15-16% of the production destined to processing (980 thousand tons).
Every year are produced about 11 milion hams, within them about 73% has the trademark "Parma", the only typology present in a significant way on the overseas market.

Olive oils

To this section are exclusively interested the countries of the Mediterranean area, every one in reason of their tradition/vocation of production and consume.
Recently, have been recognized 52 safeguarded denominations (DOP+IGP) distributed among the countries of the European market as it is set out in **graphic 4**. From it emerges the leadership of Greece, immediately followed by Italy and at distance, by all the other



Graphic 3 - DOP e IGP meat preparations in EU.



Graphic 4 - Olive Oil. DOP and IGP olive oil production by geographic position.

countries. This distribution does not respect the same order of importance established on the basis of the common oil production, pointing out a certain delay of Spain – that has obtained the recognition of only 4 trademarks – while we may observe a certain dynamism of Greece that, probably, through the offered opportunities of rule 2081/92, is trying to relaunch their oil section.
Of the 20 trademarks recognized to Italy 19 are DOP and only one is IGP ("Toscana"); recognitions that, naturally, have interested especially the southern regions.
The incidence of production of DOP or IGP on the total production results, anyhow, yet weak, since the recognition and discipline of the safeguarded productions in many areas of Italy are quite recent.

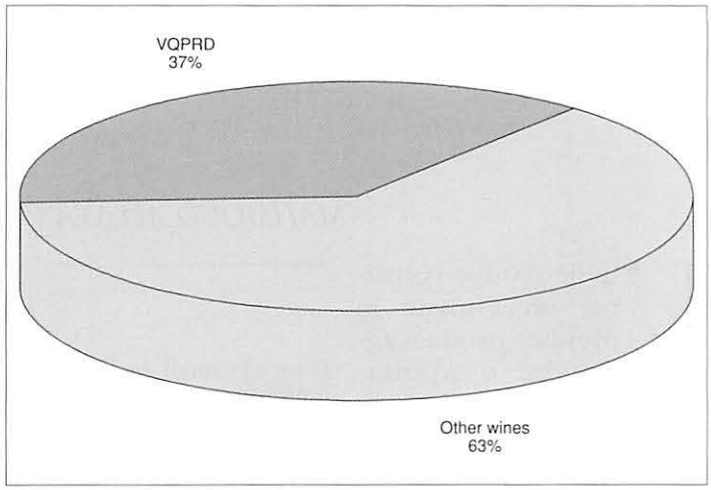
Vegetables and cereals

Among the 478 DOP and IGP assigned to Italy the 20% is related to this section. Even in this case the recognition has privileged the countries of the European market of the Mediterranean area, in particular Italy occupies the second position (with 22IGP and 2 DOP) after Greece.
Even within the little information available on the quantitative of vegetables production, considering even the little sources of information available, it may be said for many of these products, especially for those that have been recognized by a short time, the quantity of product available on the market is yet very small.

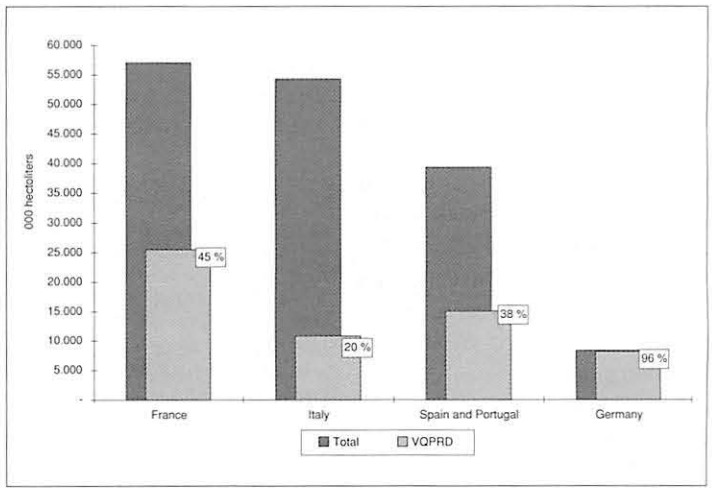
Wines

The production of "typical" wines in the CEC is disciplined by R.823/87, that recognizes to a part of the wine production the qualitative superiority and the "provenance from determined regions" through the attribution of the trademark VQPRD. The european production of VQPRD is made of the 37% of the total wine production (**graphic 5.1**).
Italy represents the third producer, after France and

Spain, with nearly 18% of the total production (about 11 millions hectoliters). Anyhow, the weight of safeguarded wines in this country respect to the whole production is particularly small, equal to only 20%, representing the small quote shown among all the interested countries (**graphic 5.2**).
The CEC production of VQPRD is increased in the late ten years of 14%.
Although this increase of production the quality wines have not had the same rhythm of increase of consumption of VQPRD within the EU that, in the same period, has been of 21%.
The distribution of the origin nomination is very non homogeneous on the national territory. It may be observed a predominance in the center-northern part of the country, while the south contributes for a modest quote equal to 12%, although that from this area comes the 47% of the national wine production. In effect the incidence of typical production on the overall production of this latter section reaches particularly modest levels (5%) of the total production.
Overall the Italian demand of wine DOC and DOCG (VQPRD) appears extremely fragmented. Over a total production of 6.665 milliards of L. the first 4 firms participate only for a quote of 7% and the first 8 for the 10,4%. The pulverization of the demand forces the competition to take place frequently in a regional or local circle, even if there are companies that are well known at an international level, destine a high quote of their production to the overseas market.
The Italian export of typical wine (nearly 4 million hectoliters, corresponding to little more than 2.000 thousand milliard of liras), in general have showed in the last years a medium growth, that even if small in quantitative terms (+4%), is worth of mention in value terms (+17).
Although in Italy the consume of DOC and DOCG wine is becoming a larger quote of the total consumption, the incidence of the "safeguarded" productions respect to the overall production continues to be modest, particularly in the southern regions.
The reasons of this delay may be set either in the slowness with which mass consumption of "typical" wine has taken place and also due to the high level of fragmentation of the demand found in southern Italy, and, above all the muddled and difficult procedures for recognition, that are much more complex in Italy than in the other EU countries.
The analysis of the quantitative scenary of typical products, offers the hint for some reflections on the weak points of what has become a true sector of the agroalimentary industry. First of all a high fragmentation of the demand. The few exceptions concern some zootecnic products (cheeses and hams) and some wines of the center-northern part of Italy. Safeguard issuing houses, where they exist, generally fought against productive



Graphic 5.1 - Wine production in EU.



Graphic 5.2 - VQPRD wines in main product Countries of EU.

realties made by small or very small companies, characterized by weak structures, inefficient marketing, very small markets. These conditions represent a strong tie to elaborate common strategies to exploit and promote typical products to introduce in the big distribution chains, that set their expansion politics on the concentration and differentiation, but above all on communication.
Therefore, the frequent and rare availability of typical products, together to the lack of adequate information of "mass consumption" on their origin and on the peculiarity of their processings – not always compensated by promotional issues, especially organized for the international market – put these products on an inferior level respect to the common productions, offering the possibility to big agroalimentary companies to penetrate this market with substitutes of typical products. ●

References were not published for lack of space. People who are interested in the complete bibliography may address either to the Author or to the Publisher.