

# Organic wine growers: from common problems to shared achievements

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# What are we talking about?

## European organic wine-makers

	in 2006 ha	in 2012 ha	% of total
<b>France</b>	<b>19,000</b>	<b>64,801</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Spain</b>	<b>16,000</b>	<b>81,262</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Italy</b>	<b>34,000</b>	<b>57,347</b>	<b>7.5</b>
<b>Germany</b>	<b>2,800</b>	<b>6,900*</b>	<b>7</b>

In the meanwhile EU vineyard lost 400,000 ha (*OIV data*)

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## Some features of the sector

- Important areas in many regions in EU
- Different production systems and products
  - Small-medium farms
  - Often high quality
  - Innovative by definition
  - High investment rate
- Growing market (domestic and export)
- Spread in all EU and speaking different languages

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## The common problems

Since 1991 waiting for a **regulatory definition** of “organic wine” = difficult to cope with market demands (published in 2012)

### **Agronomic problems:**

- Copper use reduction
- Flavescence dorée and compulsory treatments

### **Oenological problems:**

- Reduction of inputs but maintaining high quality (SO<sub>2</sub> but not only).



# How we started to tackle the problems

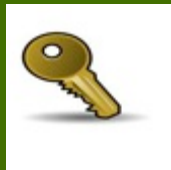
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2006-2010: **ORWINE** project (VI FP, coordinated by AIAB):

a policy-support project with large participation of producers (5 languages used)

differenciated partnership: researchers + practitioner + SME + associations

active involvement of other stakeholders (buyers, consumers, regional/national/EU decision makers)



**since the starting of the project  
(not at dissemination phase)**



# At the same time

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progressive limitation of **copper** use: several EU and national research projects but main role played by private advisors/extension service



in several region compulsory treatments (with synthetic pesticides) to control **Flavescence dorée** putting at risk the organic status. Main role played by advisors

demand to decrease  $SO_2$ : combination of new technologies and traditional knowledge



**just started: training of farm workers to have them "on board" on organic management**



## From 2005 on...

- Exchange of visits between producers from Italy, France, Spain, Switzerland, Slovenia, Germany (Grundtvig program) 
- Workshops and meetings on specific topics
- National and Regional research projects (meas. 124- RDP) 

we built up an informal transnational  
“operational group”



## Key stakeholders

- Organic wine producers (about 600 directly involved, others indirectly)
- Buyers and traders
- National and EU policy makers



o e!

facilitate (make possible) their

And include researchers...

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# Success and failures

- Wine Regulation suspended (May 2010)
- Some regional authorities compelled farmers to treat against *Scaphoideus t.*
- Years with high infections of downy mildew
- Wine Regulation approved (February 2012)

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# Overall evaluation

Focus on real needs/problems

Broad participation and involvement of **producers** since the early stages and with equal “dignity”

Constant **feed-back** on actions and results

Innovation was implemented when stemmed from the capacity to **combine traditional knowledge, practical experiences and new scientific knowledge**



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# Things to pin-point

Common problems overcome competition

Easier and faster acceptance/trust of innovation if “seen” in colleagues hands

Method turned out to be effective: involvement and rapid/constant feed-back ... very time demanding

Essential role of advisors but depending on the country/region they are public or private

Personal skills make the difference... but the winning features change from group to group

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# What I learned

Different stakeholders are not able to talk to each other!

There are groups in which I can easily establish communication and others where I simply cannot....

If the common advantage is clear ... everything works

Scientific publication times are too long and not accepted by practitioners... there is the need to “know” earlier

Need and potentials of new tools: webinars, videos....

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# Why nowadays organic wine production is the fastest developing organic sector?

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- Organic is a good tool to enhance quality
- Organic is a good tool to enhance landscape value
- Organic is a good tool to qualify tradition
- Organic wine is a good tool for group action (*i.e. Chianti storico **biodistrict** 85% organic vineyard, Franciacorta 30% organic*)



# For the future

Perfect example for **Operational Group**  
(EIP)

As it involves

Motivated and skilled farmers

Intense technological innovation

Important economic revenues (investments)

Highly specialized advisers (vine-yard and  
cellar)

International network of information brokers  
Exchange producers



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Thank-  
you!

[www.aiab.it](http://www.aiab.it)

[www.orwine.org](http://www.orwine.org)

Dossier on organic wine  
and 4 videos

Code of good practices

