

## 13 – AGRICULTURE

On the basis of the latest available data, there were about 243,141 agricultural holdings in Sicily in 2009, representing 15.3% of all such enterprises (1,591,362) operating in Italy.

Going through a period of recession, the value of agricultural production in Sicily in 2010 remained at similar levels to those of the previous year, but nonetheless maintains a prominent Regional role.

In economic terms the value of the harvest amounted to almost 3,800 million Euros, representing 8.3% of the national total.

At the same time, value added in the sectors of agriculture, forestry and fishing was estimated (at current prices) at about 2,750 million Euros (10.4% of the national figure), which was substantially the same as the previous year, i.e. also in real terms.

With regard to agriculture, there was a slight rise in the quantity of wood products, whereas graminoid and grass produce underwent a further sharp drop of 10.4%. A detailed analysis shows that the durum wheat harvest went from 6,122,000 quintals in 2009, to 8,054,000 in the following year, representing a 31.5% increase. Tomato (+8.2%) and orange (+3.6%) production was also up, whilst courgette production saw a fall (-72.7%) as did carrots (-43.8%) and mandarins (-6.4%). Production of table-grapes remained stable, along with lemons and eggs. Overall wine production in 2010 was slightly lower than in the previous year, at 4.9 million hectoliters; this was due to a considerable fall in DOC and DOCG wine production, with a combined figure of -20.2%, along with table-wines (-21.5%), but a marked 38.4% increase in IGT. For the first time, the latter constitutes the largest share of wine produced in Sicily (48.2% against an average national figure of 31.2%). For DOC and DOCG wines the figure of 3.4% can be compared to the national figure of 35.2%. Once again, in spite of the improvements in quality in recent years, Regional wine production is still inclined towards supplying the semi-finished product to the wine-making industry in other Regions, which is to the detriment of its own more prized wines. In practice, Sicily produces a little under a fifth of all Italian table wine, about a sixth of the IGT production and only 1.2% of DOC and DOCG wines.

Live-stock production in 2010 more or less maintained the same levels as the previous year as regards pork production and poultry, whereas there was a 1.9% fall in bovine production.

In the last year considered, about 20% of land destined for agricultural cultivation in Sicily was used for sowing cereals (330,000 hectares), growing olives (160,000 hectares), vineyards (140,000) and a little under 95,000 hectares for citrus groves. Data per Province shows a marked concentration of land used for cereal production in the Province of Palermo (29.5% of the whole) and in Enna (16.1%), whereas Messina, with a mere 1,850 hectares

utilizes only 0.5% of land devoted to cereals in Sicily. The latter Province allocates most of its agricultural land to olive-production (35,122 hectares). In Trapani 65,000 hectares are covered by vineyards, accounting for 46.7% of the total land used for this cultivation in Sicily.

Between 2006 and 2010 there was an accumulated fall of about 5.9% in agricultural cultivation, whereas live-stock production rose by 3.6%. More specifically, bovine meat production fell slightly when compared to the initial years in this period, whereas pork production increased by 9.8% as did poultry by 12.1%. At the same time, mild oscillations were recorded in the production of milk from cow and buffalo and from sheep and goats.

As for organic agriculture, from data up to 2009 provided by the OdG and the SINAB, there were over 7,400 organic farms operating in Sicily (representing 15.3% of the national total), which represented a rise (+6.1%) when compared to the previous year. Analysis by type of farm shows a marked concentration in the production sector in both Sicily and at the national level, and a general absence of enterprises devoted to importing organic food products.

In 2009 the number of agritourism enterprises in the Region increased by 73, arriving at a total of 486, with sleeping places for 8,811 (+16.1% over 2008). On the basis of data analyzed, with regard to specific facilities, places which offer full-board seem to be the norm (306 agritourism enterprises) followed by those that provide half-board (99); these two provide 92.8% of beds available. Each enterprise in Sicily has an average of about 18 beds, as against 12 at the national level.

## ***Glossary***

**Agricultural holding:** economic/technical unit of land (also in non-contiguous plots), and also (possibly) a variety of equipment and installations, where agriculture, the production of wood and livestock-farming is carried out by the tenant (farmer, company, body).

**Agriculturally utilised land (AUL):** total area of land devoted to seed crops, family vegetable-gardens, permanent meadow and pasture, tree-growing and fruit-bearing chestnut groves. It constitutes the area allocated for proper agricultural cultivation and actually used for this purpose. It does not include the areas set aside for mushrooms in caves, cellars or appropriately-designated buildings.

**Agritourism:** adaptation and utilisation of rural buildings, in which agricultural entrepreneurs provide accommodation for tourists.

**Dead-weight:** for cattle and horses, this figure refers to the skinned carcass, including kidneys and their fat, but without the head, the vital organs of the thorax and abdomen, feet and tail, and with “loss through cooling” also detracted; for pigs, sheep and goats the dead-weight also includes the head and feet, with the vital organs and “loss through cooling” again detracted.

**DOC and DOCG wines:** wine obtained (from vines) from vineyards whose surface area is recorded in the Register of Vineyards instituted by the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture, for the production of wines of controlled denomination of origin (DOC) and guaranteed controlled denomination of origin (DOCG).

**Organic farm:** a farm using agricultural systems that encourage the production of food and fibre in a socially, economically and environmentally healthy manner. The productive capacity of these systems is based on the intrinsic fertility of the soil, allied to respect for nature, plants, animals and the countryside, and the thorough exploitation of all these separate factors.

**Sowable land:** area utilised for growing graminoid and herbaceous plants, subject to crop rotation, which envisages a maximum duration of five years’ utilisation

### ***Further reading***

#### Publications

Italian Statistical Yearbook 2011- ISTAT –

Agro-environmental indicators: methodologies, data needs and availability – ISTAT

Waste statistics on agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors – ISTAT

Italian Agricultural Yearbook - INEA

Foreign trade in agro-alimentary products - 2006- 2007-INEA

Italian Agro-alimentary Outlook - Annual report – ISMEA

#### Internet

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

Italian Agriculture Counts 2010

## Report on the state of Italian agriculture

### [www.istat.it](http://www.istat.it)

Value added for agriculture by Region - 1980-2010

Structure and production of agricultural holdings - 2007

Territorial indicator system – Area Agriculture

Short-term data – Annual data for cultivation

Short-term data - Annual data for live-stock quantities

Short-term data - Annual data on means of production

Short-term data – Annual and monthly data on milk and cheese production

Short-term data on forest surface areas and utilisation

Short-term data – Annual data for hunting

Short-term data – Annual data for floriculture

Short-term data – Annual data for fishing

Agritourism enterprises in Italy

Italian Statistical Yearbook 2011 – Chapter 13: “Agriculture

### [www.politicheagricole.it](http://www.politicheagricole.it)

DOP and IGP products data-bank

DOC, DOCG, IGT wine data-bank

Traditional agro-alimentary products data-bank

Fishing and hydroponics data-bank

Agro-alimentary sector data-bank

### [www.sinab.it](http://www.sinab.it)

National single system for Organic Agriculture

### [www.ismea.it](http://www.ismea.it)

Price survey – agro-alimentary product prices in over 300 markets

Business trends and situations – related notes, studies on consumption, climate investigations and situational analysis

Economic-financial analysis

### [www.agricolturaitalianaonline.gov.it](http://www.agricolturaitalianaonline.gov.it)

On-line journal from the Ministry of Agricultural, Alimentary and Forestry Policy

### [www.inran.it](http://www.inran.it)

Data-bank of alimentary composition

Database “Quality of varieties of wheat grown in Italy”

### [www.irepa.org](http://www.irepa.org)

Economic observatory on productive structures for sea-fishing in Italy