

Workshop 5: Meeting of the SOCIAL INNOVATION Working Group

Social Innovation: agriculture welcomes the autism – a transferable best practice from Marche Region



OPENHOUSE
AZIENDA AGRICOLA



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Questions that led to Openhouse

Who will **take care** of Giovanni?
Will he be **happy**?
Will he lead a **productive life**?

These questions along with years of research and visits to other social farms all over Italy contributed to the creation of **Openhouse**.



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Main partners



Along with two non-profit organizations, **Fondazione Giò** and **Giò Società Cooperativa Sociale** we have been working on the creation of a place which could give work and opportunities to young adults with disability. Openhouse is a young and developing institution, however our mission is clear: to **build a fully-operational, self-sustaining business that provides school-to-work transition services, job training and employment opportunities for young people with disability.**

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What do we do?

Openhouse is a young 7 hectares farm (transitioning to organic farming). Our practices involve mainly **vegetable farming**, **olive growing** and olive oil production. We have recently planted one hectare **fruit plantation** and we are planning on growing soft fruits in the near future.

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Why social farming?

Social Farms represent real resources for families with special needs as they provide accessible and **real opportunities for social inclusion** in communities and could represent an **alternative** to segregated, specialist or clinical settings.

Social farming to **cultivate self-esteem, grow a sense of self worth, and harvest the confidence and passion that come from a job well done.**



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The experimental project

Participants:

- Matteo, 26
- Giovanni, 19

Key partners and key people in developing the individualized programs:

- Regional Adult Autism Research Center
- ASUR Marche
- Social Services (ATS6)
- Giò Società Cooperativa Sociale
- Camilla Carnaroli (Behavior analyst)
- Giulia Santini (BCaBA)



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The activities

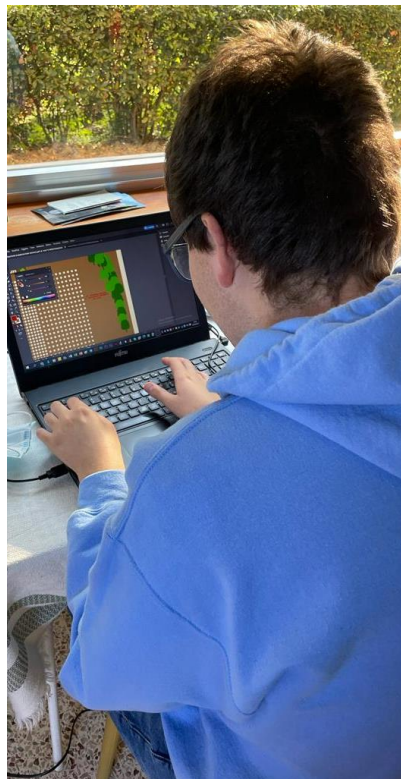
Some of the activities involve:

- Sowing, weeding, watering and harvesting in our vegetable garden and raised bed vegetable gardens;
- Washing off the vegetables and prepare the boxes that will be sold afterwards;
- Taking care of the chickens, feed the chickens, collecting eggs, cleaning the shed, and removing dirt from the eggs;
- General farmyard maintenance such as painting, repairing, sweeping, weeding;
- Working with wood to make items;
- Observing, recording, taking pictures or painting;
- Helping prepare food and drinks for breaks.



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Aptitudes and desires



PRUNS

CILIEGIO DURONE DI

ANTICA VARIETÀ BEN NOTA, CHE SI DISTINGUE PER I FRUTTI MOLTO GROSSI, DI COLORE ROSSO-NERASTRO A PULPA SODA E CROCCANTE, SAPORITISSIMA E PROFONDAMENTE MATURE. MATURAZIONE: PRIME DI LUGLIO. IMPIANTAZIONE: SIBURSI - CELESTE - PORDA.

ALTEZZA DELLA PIANTA ALLA FIORITURA: 150/180 CM CIRCA.

ANNO D'IMPIANTO: 2022

QUESTO CARTELLINO È STATO REALIZZATO DA GIOVANNI BUONCOMPAGNI NELL'AMBITO DELLA SPERIMENTAZIONE DI INIZIATIVE DI INCLUSIONE SOCIO-LAVORATIVA DI SOGGETTI CON ASD IN AMBITO RURALE PROMOSSO DALLA REGIONE MARCHE.

REGIONE MARCHE OPENHOUSE

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The funds

Thanks to the funds we received by taking part in this experimental project we built **8 Raised Bed Vegetable Gardens** to accommodate those people who have difficulties bending and we also renovated an old building inside the property which will be used for indoor activities. Additional funds will be used to cover the labor costs for tutors.



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Social Connection and Social Inclusion

Fundamental to the creation of a social farming model is the opportunity a farm offers for warm, natural and everyday social connections, as well as relationships between the farmer and participants, between participants themselves and among other people who come and go on the farm.

Personal development

Social farming helps in developing independence, capacity, confidence and sense of pride in the work they do.



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Health benefits

Improving mental health by making people feel better and happier is a key benefit we aim to achieve by providing opportunities for new friendships, sense of routine, purpose and a break from the Centre or the house, as well as the development of new interests. Very important is also the opportunity to get out and carry out natural physical activity with improvements in agility and mobility.

Connection with nature

Providing opportunities to spend active time in a natural environment, being around animals and having a role in minding and caring for them is also a key factor as they provide multi-sensory experiences with the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of nature.

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Conclusion

Finally, such projects contribute to the process of service reform and changes in service delivery as they provide opportunities for stakeholders within disability services to deliver on their commitments towards person-centeredness, social and community inclusion and of supporting people to achieve personal goals, aspiration and to be active, independent members of a community and society.





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**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR ATTENTION**