

Asprocarne Piemonte – Regional beef producers organisation

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A type of farmers' organisation ruled by a specific normative framework

Asprocarne is a beef farmers' organisation founded in 1985 with the objective to reach the goals of Reg. EC 1360/1978. The general aim of Regulation was to overcome the structural fragmentation of agricultural products supply in Italy by encouraging farmers to group in associations designed to concentrate their supply.

Promotional and marketing activities

The mission of Asprocarne is to promote, to market and valorise collectively beef produced by the members. The organisation has established different collective quality marks that identify beef produced according to common productive specifications and has promoted a facultative labelling systems recognized by Italian Agriculture Ministry in February 2000. It provides trade services for its members pooling cattle supply towards slaughterhouses and retailers by means of collective agreements or delegations to sell cattle on behalf of the members. Upstream the supply chain the organisation is managing the collective purchase of calves collecting the demand of different finishing farms in order to reduce transaction costs and obtain better contractual conditions.



A large and heterogenous social base

Asprocarne's members are around 980 beef farms located in the region Piemonte (north-west of Italy). On the whole they reflect the heterogeneity of beef farming systems existing in Piemonte as size, specialisation and beef breeds are concerned. Part of these farms run intensive beef farms specialised in finishing weaners imported from France (Charolais, Limousine and Blonde d'Acquitaine). The rest are cow-calf and finishing farms focused on local Piemontese beef breed.

Farmers' involvement in the initiatives

The large social base implies different degrees of farmers' involvement in the initiatives promoted by the organisation. Some of them have found opportunities to qualify production, to improve market performance or countervail stronger contractual positions of their industrial customers. Many others have maintained their individual market relationship with local butchers or have joined quality differentiation initiatives that are managed and led by multiple retail chains. In this case, the adherence to ASPROCARNE is mainly aimed at obtaining support of administrative and technical nature.



Market performance

In Italy ASPROCARNE, among other beef farmers' association, has been one of the first actors of the beef supply chain promoting traceability and certification systems in order to qualify the product on the consumption market. Today cattle labelled according facultative labelling system are aprox. 18% of the total heads sold per year by the members. The average volumes marketed by ASPROCARNE correspond approx. to 13% of the social base's yearly production. Several contextual factors mainly related to the economic and market context limit the development of the initiative put in place by the association. On one side most of multiple retail chains have adopted their own private labels and lead the supply addressing the single farmers individually. There are no possibilities for the organisation as a whole to be included into these long term supply relations as a contractual party. At the other side a high market performance with premium price has been reached by clusters of ASPROCARNE members who have focused on a strong quality differentiation concept either based on the local breed (Piemontese) or product specifications with feed requirements.

