



FONDO EUROPEO AGRICOLO PER LO SVILUPPO RURALE: L'EUROPA INVESTE NELLE ZONE RURALI

Market analysis: knowing the target

The objective of the SHEEP AL.L. CHAIN project is the valorisation of the limited sheep breed farms in the Belluno area, the Alpagò and Lamon breeds, with computerised sharing of genealogical data and production traceability. This enhancement will be carried out both through more scientific aspects related to the computerised sharing of all useful data to safeguard the presence and continuity of these two breeds, thanks to the support of the University of Padua, and through territorial marketing actions, because the enhancement of the productions linked to the two breeds cannot take place without the enhancement of the territory.

In particular, the marketing activities had the task of focusing on the communication of the "traceability of production" and the "relationship between product and territory", which is an innovative strategy for the reference context. In this sense, the web marketing strategy will have to enhance the scientific results obtained within the project, re-elaborating the collected data into communicative and attractive elements for specific targets.

Why analysis

The basis of any marketing and communication action and, in general, if you want to build a real marketing strategy is analysis.

The market analysis carried out within the project aims at being a useful tool to trace in the long term the actions that the actors involved should carry out in order to guarantee a correct communication of the values and peculiarities that characterise their territories and products, with particular reference to the sheep sector.

The analysis has been structured in a simple way so as to be clear and understandable to all stakeholders, who thus have a tool that provides the basis for immediate action.

The structure of the analysis

The analysis can be divided into three content groups:

- the *status quo* where an analysis was made of the current situation regarding marketing and communication activities related to the two sheep breeds that are carried out in the two territories concerned;
- the identification of a target profile: an essential element for the management of any marketing and communication initiative;
- the proposal of some easily achievable actions with respect to what emerged from the analysis of the *status quo* and to the target subjects of the productions related to the two sheep breeds.

The *status quo*

The analysis starts with a brief introduction to the existing marketing strategies both in relation to the territory and to the product in Alpagò and Lamon through a comparison (interviews) with the local administrations and the enterprises included or included in the chain of the two sheep breeds.

This first part is functional in order to get to the heart of the market analysis with the structuring and precise definition of the actions/tools that will make up the marketing strategy, which will be carried out through a desk analysis of the existing bibliography, the context (trade fairs, websites, sector



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publications, ...) and the marketing strategies implemented by the main direct and indirect competitors.

Benchmarking is an activity used in marketing to respond to the need to analyse the competition and to search for best practices - where they exist - in order to determine their success factors; but also to detect any shortcomings in the actions implemented by the competition that may play a role in improving the positioning of the product in question (sheep breeds).

By comparing processes and results, Benchmarking analysis facilitates the preparation of actions to achieve superior performance (post-benchmarking).

In this Benchmark analysis, the best known native sheep breeds were mapped, to understand some of the information summarised in the table:

- Designation/Recognition (PGI, Slow Food Presidium...)
- Product label (yes/no)
- Sales (meat/processed products/cheese/dairy products/wool and wool products)
- Agreements with restaurants/hotels

From this analysis, good practices have emerged to look to and be inspired by in various areas, where the animal, in this case the sheep, represents **an attraction and emblem of the territory** both for **territorial tourism marketing** activities and for the activation of collaborations and projects within and outside the territory, first and foremost between producers and restaurants, or with experiences of loyalty such as "**adopt a sheep**".

The target profile

The analysis continues with the identification of the addressee of the marketing actions, outlining the target profiles of the **responsible consumer** and the **wine and food tourist**. These two figures are the most likely to be interested in particular and niche products such as those linked to the production of the two native breeds of sheep. It is therefore important to know and recognise them because in this way coherent and effective actions can be built. In the first case, that of the responsible consumer, we have a target that has evolved a lot over the last few years and has stabilised in terms of gender, age (tending to be over 40), education and geographical spread (not only large urban centres, but also small ones). In the second case, however, we find the food and wine tourist, who, although he or she covers the entire population in terms of age, is mainly characterised by couples (married, engaged, cohabiting), with a medium/medium-high income and who are mainly looking for experiences.

The proposal for actions

The actions identified follow an order that combines priorities and difficulties of implementation:

- Structuring and managing the web presence in a coordinated way at the level of the two breeds, including the definition of objectives, targets and tools suitable for the communication of both native sheep breeds.
- Organising a widespread editorial community to start product marketing. Involving the actors in the supply chains of the two native sheep breeds to jointly define the strategic contents to promote the product.
- Structuring a dedicated periodic event that could act as a "container" of initiatives centred on lamb, thus attracting a variety of targets to get to know, through direct experience, the most important features of the commercial offer.



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- Structuring innovative marketing projects involving the final consumer, e.g. food and wine enthusiasts looking for quality typical products but also animal lovers.
- Structuring a press office service (with the task of carrying out periodic press reviews) is very important for monitoring the effectiveness of the marketing actions undertaken: web presence, editorial community, events. This action also makes it possible to professionally initiate and manage relations with the media and with bloggers in the sector, also guaranteeing constant and ongoing control of the quality of product positioning.
- Structuring tourism proposals with Dolomiti Prealpi focused on animal experience. Our market analysis shows that experiential tourism proposals centred on farmed animals are still rare. This type of proposal would be of great interest to the tourist market, given the trends in food and wine tourism which see an increase in experiences with "slow" and "eco" components, such as: direct contact with producers, the function of maintaining the biodiversity of sheep farms, the function of keeping alive breeds in danger of extinction, the function of preserving traditional crafts, the relationship with nature.

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