

# FREE-RANGE ORGANIC BREEDING SYSTEM

## CASE STUDY FARM\_IT\_01

### History farm

The farm\_IT\_01 is located in southern Tuscany, an area characterised by a Mediterranean climate with relatively cold/moderate winters and hot, sultry summers. Unfortunately, this climate also leads to periods of severe soil dryness, making grazing management crucial.

Since the mid-1990s, farm\_IT\_01 has operated as an organic farm, managed by the owner family and employing seasonal workers. With an area of 230 hectares, of which 175 hectares are rented, the farm raises various animals:

- 150 meat sheep
- 15 Cinta Senese sows
- 60 fattening pigs
- 20 piglets
- 37 Maremma cows with two groups of males and females for fattening, as well as one-year-old calves.

In addition, the farm grows hay, cereals, wine and olive oil on several hectares of land.



### Pig rearing

Sow welfare during farrowing is a priority, with key aspects such as freedom of movement and access to sheds for shelter and nest building. Late weaning ensures that sows can recover before they become pregnant again. The piglets are weaned at about 70 days of age. They are then moved to a paddock with a shed until they reach 30-40 kg, after which they are moved to a larger paddock until they reach 130-140 kg at two years of age. The pigs are reared outdoors in various paddocks, including wooded pastures, meadows and shrubs. They are rotated on different pastures during the growth and finishing cycles. However, pasture productivity is low and most of their diet consists of concentrates obtained from a regional organisation.

## Enviromental aspects

Free-range pig farming has an impact on the landscape, in particular by causing soil compaction in clay-rich soils. In this case, the farmer is without extensive soil that would permit him to rotate pastures. This would help the recovery of the sward.

From the animal's point of view, free-range farming has a positive influence on meat quality and animal welfare.

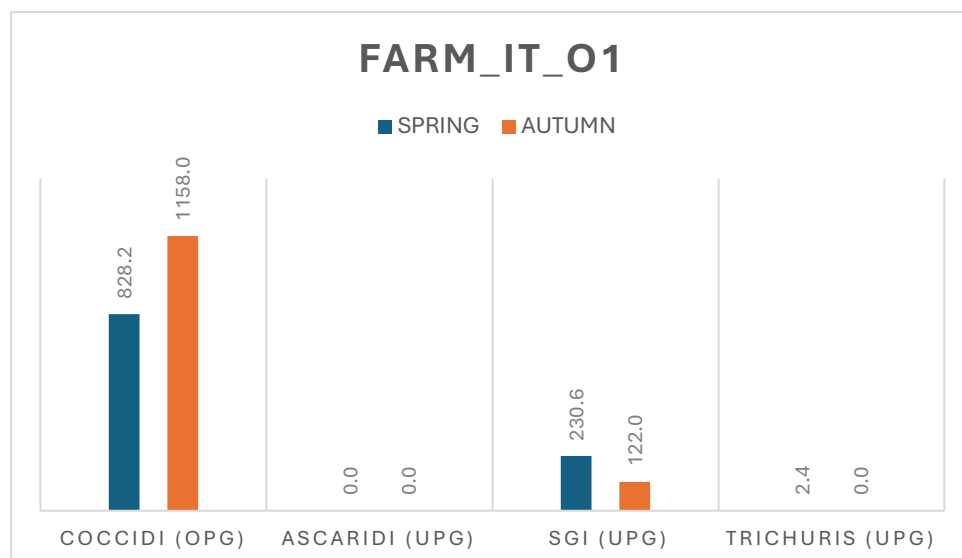


## Market

Direct sale of meat from free-range pigs allows flexibility in responding to fluctuations in input prices and market demand. Meat is sold directly in the restaurant, maximizing its value.

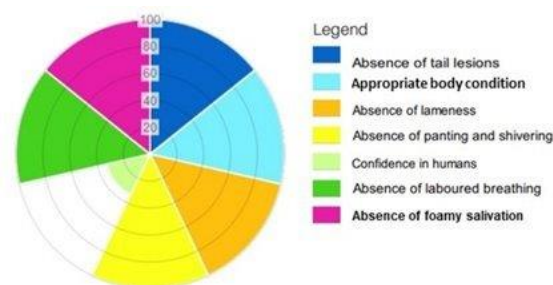
## Parasities

Faecal samples collected in 2022/2023 indicate that the parasite level of the animals is under control. We observe seasonal fluctuations in the presence of intestinal parasites, in particular Coccidi and Strongyles.



## PIG LOW and welfare

Pig welfare is monitored regularly, including seasonal fecal sampling for parasite analysis. The PIGLOW application is utilized for assessing animal welfare, with parameters generally showing high scores except for trust towards humans, which improves over time as pigs become more familiar with human presence.



The graph illustrates the different parameters used to evaluate animal welfare in pig farming. High scores are evident for most of the parameters, except for one: trust towards humans. The pig, which is very inquisitive by nature, requires a certain amount of time to get close to humans. However, in this particular case, the animals did not seem frightened. After a few minutes of studying the situation, they showed increasing interest in humans, approaching them with curiosity.

Overall, the farm's approach combines sustainable practices with a focus on animal welfare and product quality, while having to confront challenges such as soil erosion and feed management.

## TABLE FARM\_IT\_01

Free-range production system - FARM_IT_01	
<b>Farm category</b>	Organic since 1990
<b>Number of sows</b>	15 sows
<b>Breed</b>	Cinta Senese
<b>Food</b>	Pasture and integration with cereal
<b>Average farrowings per sow</b>	
<b>Farrowings per year</b>	
<b>% live born piglet mortality</b>	
<b>Mutilations</b>	None.
<b>General health</b>	The animals are in excellent health.
<b>Weaning age</b>	70 day; 30-40 kg
<b>Weight when sold on or slaughtered</b>	130-140 Kg