



LiveSeeding Final Conference — “Change Seeds, Grow the difference”

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Session 3 — From seed to plate: municipal food policies and Living Labs

The Organic District of the Florentine Territory



**A replicable model of alliance between local government
and a civic network for cultivated biodiversity**

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Where it comes from: an alliance, not a project

The District did not emerge from a call for proposals or a single project, but from an alliance built over time.

A public institution — the Municipality of Scandicci — treating agriculture as a core part of the city's ecological transition.

A civic network — Rete Semi Rurali — running the Seed House, the Agrobiodiversity Library and the “72 Hours of Biodiversity” festival.

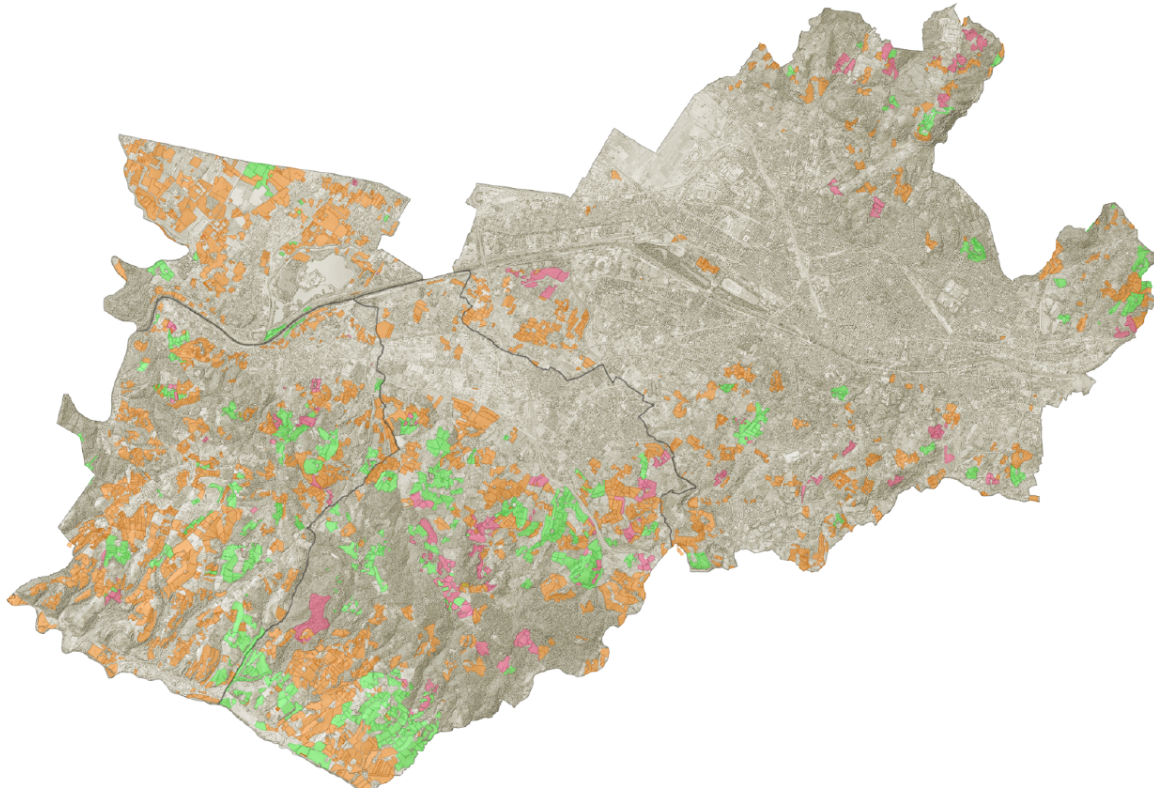
The added value is not the sum of the actors, but the network that holds them together.

From process to recognition

- 30 Dec 2025**
Recognition application submitted to the Tuscany Region
- 17 Mar 2026**
Officially recognised by the Tuscany Region
- 24 May 2026**
Presented to the territory at the “72 Hours of Biodiversity” festival, in the new Urban Biodiversity Park



The Organic District of the Florentine Territory



Distribution of organic farming across the four municipalities — ARTEA, 2024

Four founding municipalities

Scandicci · Florence · Lastra a Signa · Signa — over 400,000 inhabitants across the Arno plain and the Florentine hills.

Already growing

Bagno a Ripoli, Sesto Fiorentino and Campi Bisenzio about to join; Fiesole, Pontassieve and Impruneta considering entry — proof the model works and attracts.

A shared governance tool, not a label

Recognised by national law 23/2022 and Tuscan regional law 51/2019. By law, organic operators hold at least 51% of the District assembly — the lead stays with those who work the land.



The numbers of a real transition (ARTEA, 2016–2024)

+63%

organic / in-conversion area

769 → 1,256 hectares

32%

of farmland is organic

above the 30% legal threshold
and the EU 25%-by-2030 target

95

organic farms (up from 65)

while total farms fell 669 → 514

+45%

crop diversity

77 → 112 cultivated species

Composition of farmland (2024)

In a peri-urban context under heavy pressure, converting to organic became a strategy of resilience and of staying on the land.



The heart of the model: cultivated biodiversity as a commons

Rete Semi Rurali's Seed House conserves, selects and distributes resilient seeds — treating the seed as a commons, not a commodity. This is where food sovereignty begins.

- **Diversity Gardens** — 39 citizen gardeners on regenerated public land
- **Biodiversity in schools** — 3,000+ students reached every year
- **72 Hours of Biodiversity** — a yearly festival of food and ecological culture
- **Urban Biodiversity Park** — a new 12-hectare civic and ecological hub
- **Living Lab** — with the University of Florence and 10 more institutions

Production, landscape, health, education and the local economy — one transition design, a One Health approach.



The Granollers Manifesto — the reference for our food policy

Scandicci is not merely a signatory: we took an active part in drafting the Manifesto at the 1st European Symposium “Fostering Cultivated Biodiversity through Local Food Policies” (Granollers, Spain, 29–30 April 2025), and formally adopted it as the reference framework for our territory’s food policy.

4%

of known edible species are still used today

~60%

of plant calories come from just three crops — rice, maize, wheat

A structural fragility for the whole of Europe — the Manifesto reframes cultivated biodiversity as a commons and a strategic lever for resilience, with 32 concrete actions for municipalities across the six MUFPP categories.

Aligned with

- Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP)
- European Green Deal
- Farm to Fork Strategy
- EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030
- Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)



Why it is replicable: four takeaways for municipalities

1

Start from a stable alliance

between a public body and a rooted civic network — not from a time-limited project.

2

Ground choices in local data

your own territory's figures make the transition visible and steer policy.

3

Put seeds at the centre

cultivated biodiversity as a commons, not a technical detail.

4

Use the tools that exist

organic-district law, CAP, Cohesion funds, ERDF — and demand a multilevel framework.



**Municipalities cannot do it alone.
As a network, together we become
a driving force for change.**

Thank you.

Federica Pacini · Municipal Councillor, Municipality of Scandicci
Organic District of the Florentine Territory · **Comune di Scandicci**
· **Rete Semi Rurali ETS**



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