

Experience of Azienda USL di Modena

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Abstract

The Province of Modena, along with the Local Health Unit (AUSL) of Modena, has signed a protocol which has as its objective to facilitate and support the health structures of the Province of Modena in introducing, in the hospital food service system, food staples cultivated in compliance with the dictates of EC Regulation 2092/91, originating from the territories of the province. The mission of a Health Unit goes beyond the direct care of the ill to the preventive aspect of safeguarding health through initiatives that decrease environmental impacts.

The choice of organic products, given their lower environmental impact compared with traditional ones, is already, in itself, a positive fact and, if this is also accompanied by a preference for local products, the advantages increase. Yet, this is not sufficient. Another positive element is that of reducing so-called "food miles," that is, the number of kilometers food products travel in order to reach the table of a consumer. The purchasing method that privileges a reduction in kilometers traveled between place of production and place of transformation and consumption is defined as the "direct supply chain."

The use of local products within the field of food services, along with advantages already indicated, could greatly contribute to keeping alive those products from the territory that otherwise would risk disappearing, if not opportunely protected. This is also true for primary production products, as well as for transformed products, therefore promoting the protection of those professions that, by disappearing, mean the disappearance of a piece of the history of the territory and, therefore, of the local identity.

Public bodies, behaving as a collective consumer, can also determine the direction of production and the quantities required, since they have the capacity to preventively estimate specific needs and, on the basis of such, orient the product offered.

These proposals, if accepted and implemented, also tend to generate, among other things, virtuous behavior in individual citizens, through the imparting of correct information. Furthermore, these are models that can be reproduced and exported to other territories.

In the following eight hospitals, which refer to the AUSL of Modena:

- 1) Nuovo Ospedale San Agostino Estense di Baggiovara
- 2) Vignola
- 3) Pavullo
- 4) Castelfranco Emilia
- 5) Mirandola
- 6) Carpi
- 7) Sassuolo
- 8) Finale E.

The following organic and typical products have been introduced:

- organic veal
- organic plain yogurt
- organic fruit yogurt
- IGP Pears
- IGP Peaches
- IGP Nectarines
- DOP Modena Prosciutto ham
- DOP Parmigiano Reggiano (Parmesan) Cheese