



Organic wine from common
problems to shared
achievements through a
research project

ORWINE

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What is the organic wine sector about?



European organic vineyard

	in 2006 ha	in 2012 ha	% of total
France	19,000	64,801	8
Spain	16,000	81,262	10
Italy	34,000	57,347	7.5
Germany	2,800	7,500	7.5



In the meanwhile EU vineyard lost 400,000 ha (*OIV data*)



Some features of the sector

- Important areas in many regions in EU
- Different production systems and products
 - Small-medium farms
 - Often high quality
 - Innovative by definition
 - High investment rate
- Growing market (domestic and export)



Spread in all EU and speaking different languages



The common problems

Since 1991 waiting for a **regulatory definition** of
“**organic wine**” = difficult to cope with market demands
(regulation published in 2012)

Agronomic problems:

- Copper use reduction
- Flavescence dorée and compulsory treatments

Oenological problems:

- Reduction of inputs but maintaining high quality (SO₂ but not only).



All in a very competitive environment

How we started to tackle the problems



2006-2009: **ORWINE** project (VI FP, coordinated by AIAB):

a policy-support project with large participation of producers (5 languages used)

differenciated partnership: researchers + practitioner + SME + associations

active involvement of other stakeholders (buyers, consumers, regional/national/EU decision makers)

since the starting of the project or even the proposal (not at dissemination phase)



Scope of ORWINE



1) To define a **code of good practices** for organic viticulture and wine-making

2) To supply the scientific support to **develop the regulatory framework** for organic wine-making





about multi-actor approach

AIAB

Overall coordinator, is an **association**
(funded by its members)

UNIUD

scientific coordinator

Ecovin
IFOAM-EU
ITAB

associations

FIBL
Geisenheim Inst.
INRA
ITV
Univ. Sacro Cuore

Research
Institutes
with **different
knowledge**

VINIDEA

SME - Information broker





Structure of the project: how to keep practitioners needs in first place

Deep assessment of the state of art (producers, science, consumers, market)

Scientific trials of innovative techniques (which ones **decided after discussion with producers**)

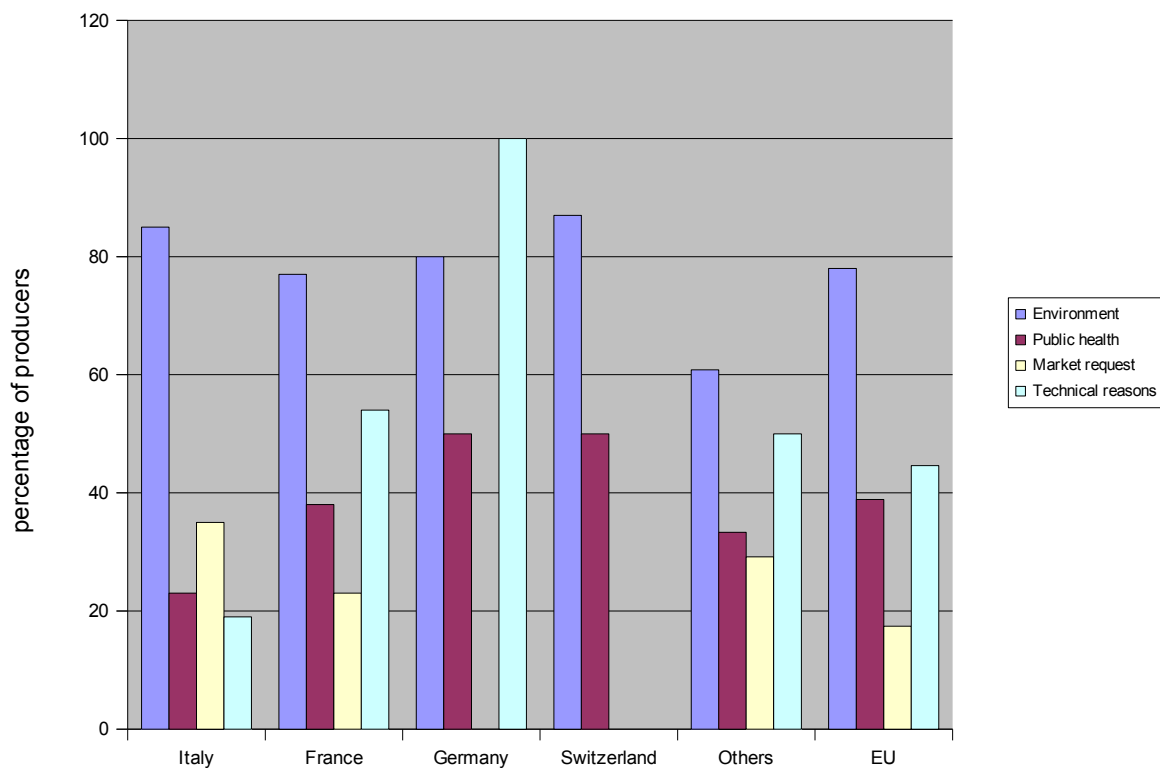
Pilot farms testing of innovative protocols (Network of 40 farms)

Involvement of interest groups (National and EU level)





Who is the EU organic wine-maker?



long experience

*environmental
motivation*

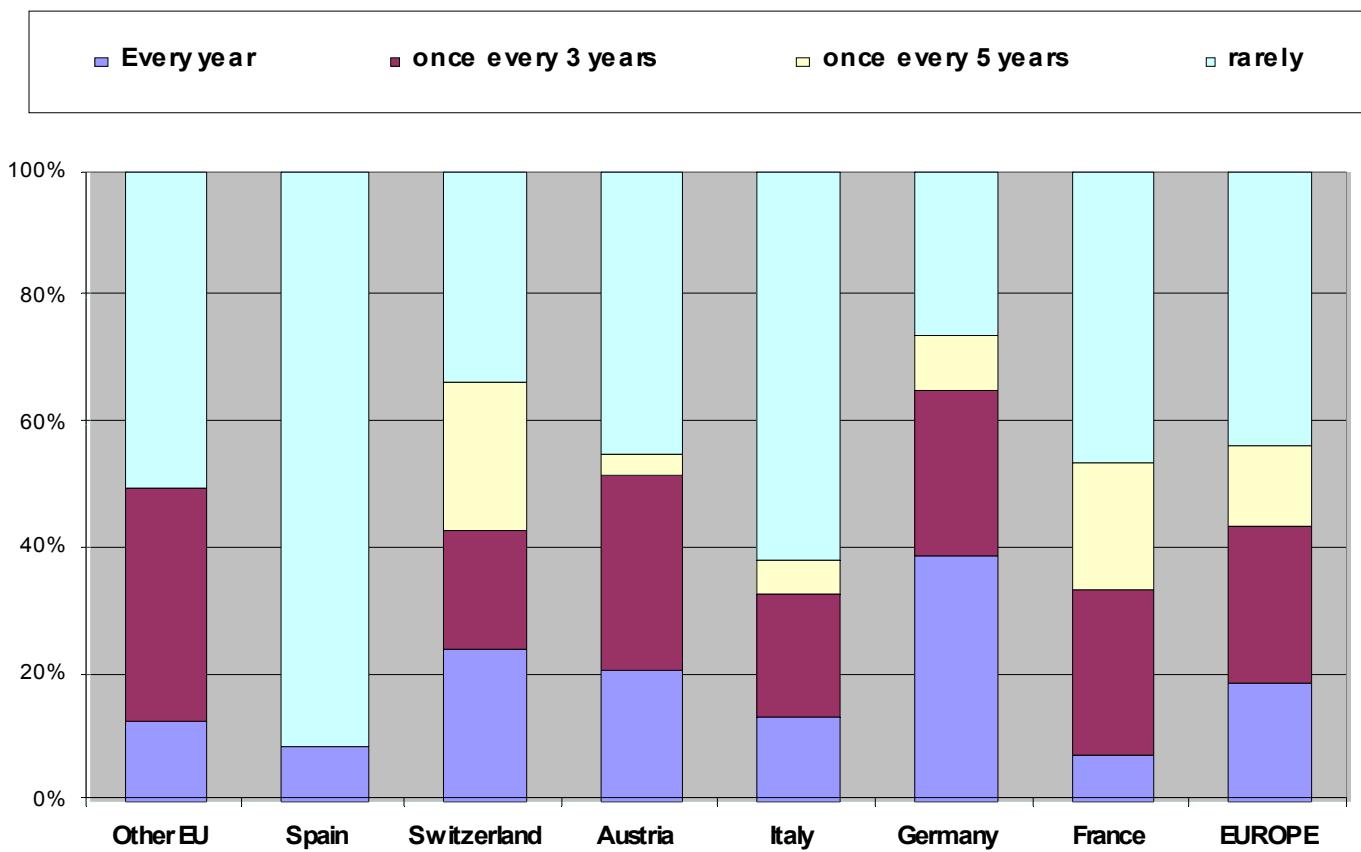
market driven





Vineyard management

How often do you have to manage grapes with more than 10% of clusters attacked by a disease ?



conventional varieties and resistant hybrids (D, A e CH)

soil management is key

main diseases: botrytis e powdery mildew





Consumers – acceptability of additives and processing aids

Enzymes	Too limited knowledge on health effects
Selected yeasts	Considered as natural and well accepted
Wood chips	controversial
Gelatine	Not accepted
Selected bacteria	Not sufficient awareness and knowledge





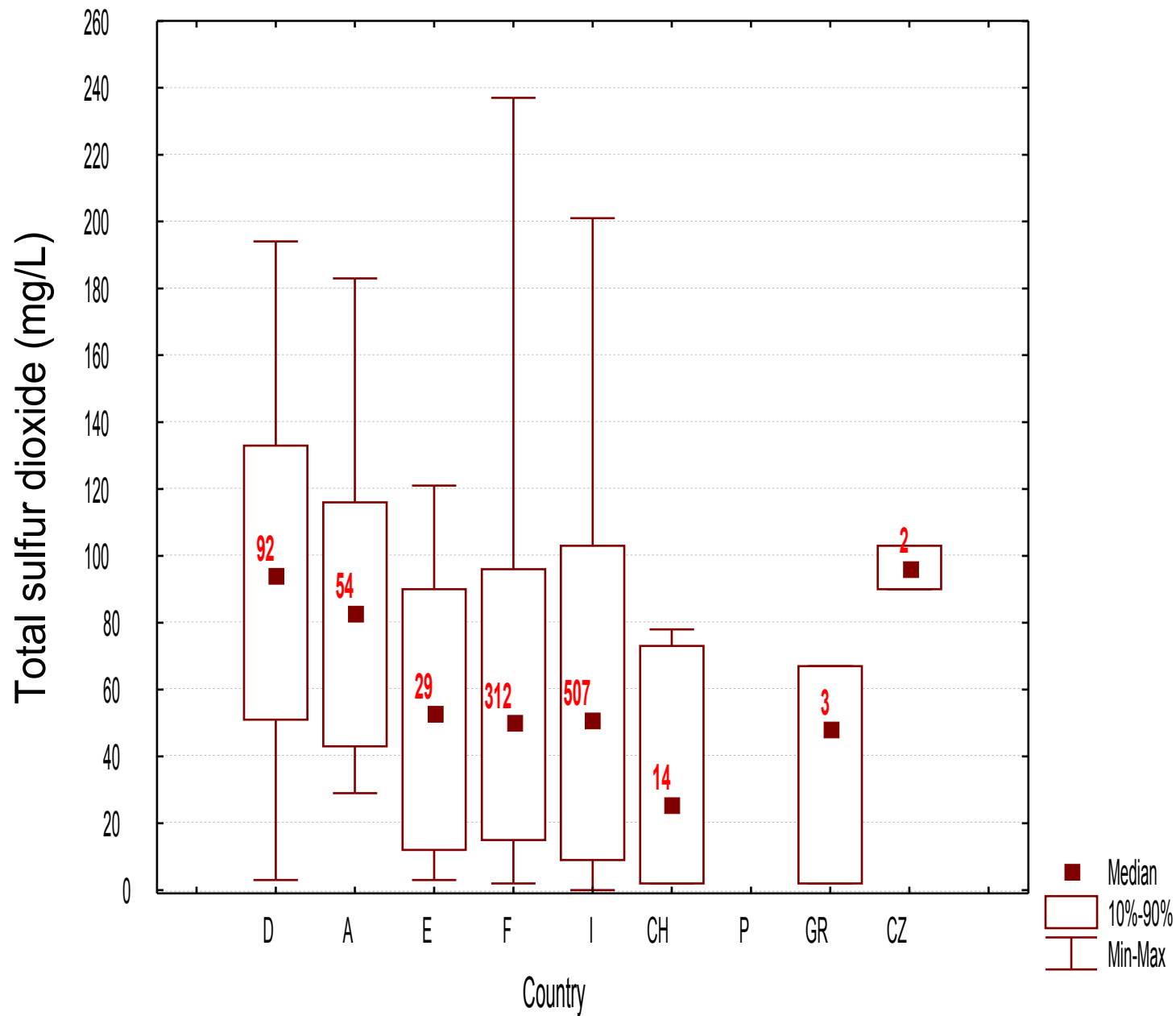
Market study methodology

Study in 2 runs :

👂 **1st step:** 25 interviewed in D(8), I(7), CH(3), F(7)

2nd step: 45 interviewed in EU producers countries (24), Eu non producers (16), non EU (5)





Analysis on 1100 organic wines



Key actors involved



- Organic wine producers (about 600 directly involved, others indirectly)
- Buyers and traders (about 50, EU and non-EU)
- National and EU policy makers

big effort to facilitate (make possible) their **dialogue** as usually it is not so

And include **researchers... not so used to discuss as peers** with other actors



Stepping out of the “project approach”



the **scope is to develop a sector** (solving its problems by the use of research projects... but not only).

During the project we launched:

- **Exchange of visits** between producers from Italy, France, Spain, Switzerland, Slovenia, Germany (Grundtvig program) using LLP Grundtvig projects. And other **training** activities (farm workers included)
- **Workshops and meetings** on specific topics
- **National and Regional research projects** (i.e. meas. 124- RDP)
- **SMEs association research project** (RDP) on innovative processing aids (STABIWINE)
- **Scaling up** the organic wine-biodistricts (Chianti and Franciacorta)



we built up an *ante litteram* “**transnational operational group**”

Overall evaluation: keys for success

Focus on real needs/problems

Broad participation and involvement of producers and other actors since the early stages and with equal “dignity”

Constant **feed-back** on actions and results (also on research design)

Innovation was implemented when stemmed from the capacity to **combine traditional knowledge, practical experiences and new scientific knowledge**



Lessons learned



Common problems overcome **competition**

Easier and faster acceptance/trust of innovation **if “seen” in colleagues hands**

Involvement and rapid/constant feed-back is very effective but ... **very time demanding**

Essential role of advisors but ... in many regions few advisors and not so keen to innovate their role

Personal skills make the difference... but the winning soft skills change from group to group (no prototype)

For **scientific publication times are too long** and not accepted by practitioners... there is the need to “know” earlier

Need and potentials of **new tools**: webinars, videos....



Why nowadays organic wine production is the fastest developing organic sector?

- Organic is a good tool to enhance quality
- Organic is a good tool to enhance landscape value
- Organic is a good tool to qualify tradition
- Organic wine is a good tool for group action/scaling up
(*Chianti storico **biodistrict** 85% organic vineyard, Franciacorta 30% organic*)



example of Operational Group

as it involves

- Motivated and skilled farmers
- Intense technological innovation

- Important economic revenues (investments)
- Highly specialized advisers (vineyard and cellar)
- International network of information brokers
- Exchange with conventional producers



Thank-you!



www.aiab.it

Dossier on organic wine
and 4 videos

www.orwine.org

Code of good practices
In 5 languages

