

“Lady Truffle”: the “pink” side of truffle



Photo credit: Elisa Ioni

Keywords

truffles

edible mushrooms

Rural area

truffle hunting

NWFP

Wild Mushrooms & Truffles

Scale

Local



Context

In the Umbria region (central Italy) truffle hunting represents a key element of local traditions, where numerous inhabitants are truffle hunters, both as a hobby and as a professional activity. Only in the Northern part of the region, in the valleys called “Alto Tevere” and “Alto Chiascio”, with a total population of around 135000 inhabitants, truffle picking permits are more than 2200.



Objective

In Italy, the collection of truffles is considered a professional activity mainly for “males”. The “Lady Truffle” initiative, founded by Elisa Ioni, sales manager of a renowned Umbrian truffle company, aims to unhinge this tradition, promoting the hobby of truffle hunting among women, and, in some cases, supporting the transformation of this hobby in a real profession.



Results

The main objective of the “Lady Truffle” initiative is the creation of a brand for the truffles collected by local women. The initiative aims to create new job opportunities in rural areas (Umbrian Apennines), with another important goal: raise awareness among local women about the possibility of becoming truffle pickers, undermining traditional preconceptions. Some results of the activities of promotion of truffle hunting among local women are already there, such as the increase in the female component in the requests for truffle picking permits. In 2019, around 20% of new picking permits in the northern Umbria were released to women.



Recommendations

"Lady Truffle" initiative, albeit in its initial phase, has already been promoted in national exhibitions, as well as during the small events organized by truffle hunters' associations. Furthermore, "Lady Truffle" is very active in social network and it has been presented in several articles published by the local press. In order to have regular and constant channel sales, the initiative has already created a partnership with an important local company specialized in truffle transformation and trading, that can act as a flywheel for the "Lady truffle" products.



Impacts and weaknesses

"Lady Truffle" is an entrepreneurial initiative that bet on a brand that promotes a local excellence, such as truffle, with the "particular" characteristic of having been collected by women, creating economic opportunities for women in a rural region. At the moment, the real challenge for the initiative is the implementation of marketing strategy in order to communicate effectively the peculiarities of the products to the end consumer.



Future developments

In the near future, "Lady Truffle", in partnership with an important local truffle company, will develop a dedicated line of truffle products, with a specific brand, synonymous of a short, local and "pink" supply chain. Much work will be done at the level of marketing and communication of the product, to promote its specificities.



Elisa Ioni, "Lady Truffle", with her dog while hunting truffles Photo credit: Elisa Ioni

Further information

Tuttoggi, il giornale online dell'Umbria, 2019, Tartufai donne crescono, Elisa Ioni al debutto col vanghino, <https://tuttoggi.info/tartufai-donne-crescono-elisa-ioni-al-debutto-col-vanghino/535091/> (Last access: 26/6/2020)

Tuttoggi, il giornale online dell'Umbria, 2020, Fase 2 anche per la ricerca del tartufo, "lady-trifola" già a caccia dello scorzone estivo, <https://tuttoggi.info/fase-2-ricerca-tartufo-lady-trifola-scorzone/579540/> (Last access: 26/6/2020)

Author	Rapporteur	Published on
Contact Elisa Ioni, commerciale@giulianotartufi.it , https://it.linkedin.com/in/lady-tartufo-elisa-ioni-652048114	Name Jacopo Giacomoni	26 June 2020
Organisation Lady Truffle	Organisation ETIFOR	
Country and region Italy, Umbria	Email (hidden)	

About INCREDIBLE Project

INCREDIBLE project aims to show how Non-Wood Forest Products (NWFP) can play an important role in supporting sustainable forest management and rural development, by creating networks to share and exchange knowledge and expertise. 'Innovation Networks of Cork, Resins and Edibles in the Mediterranean basin' (INCREDIBLE) promotes cross-sectoral collaboration and innovation to highlight the value and potential of NWFPs in the region.



Funding

'Innovation Networks of Cork, Resins and Edibles in the Mediterranean basin' (INCREDIBLE) project receives funding from the European Commission's Horizon 2020 programme under grant agreement N° 774632.