



Sustainable school canteens in Rome.

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The current specification regulating the management of the school meals is the result of a work started in 2001

- ▶ The duration of the contract is September 2007 – June 2012, extended until the end of December 2012
- ▶ Number of meals served each day: 150,000
- ▶ The framework of the contract divides the municipal territory into 11 lots
- ▶ Starting price: average cost of a meal € 5.03 (taxes not included)
- ▶ Annual turnover, gross any discount: €137,808,000.00
- ▶ 740 schools prepare their own meals on site; only 8% of school canteens get shipped meals

GOALS

1. Upgrading the quality of school menu, the food safety and the nutritional balancing, giving speciale attention toward children obesity issue
2. Proposal of a sustainable production and consumption pattern, anticipating the rules established in art. N. 2 of legislative decree 163/2006, regulating public contracts: «*The principle of cheapness must be subordinated to criteria inspired by social requirements, as well as by healthcare, environmental conservation and sustainable development*»

Introduction in school menus of
ORGANIC FOOD and
LOCAL PRODUCTS

was the medium that contributed to reach
both the goals

Due to the economic linking generated,
Rome's Municipality is located within
the first 10 national food-farming facts

Introduction of organic produce

Organic food includes 70% of all food served, except meats, fish and frozen vegetables.

The switch to organic food has raised the average cost of a meal of 8 % (that is € 0.40)

Introduction of organic produce

Are organic fruits, vegetables, legumes, cereals, bread and bakery products, pasta, flour, potatoes, tomatoes and processed products, cheese, UHT milk, yoghurt, eggs, extra virgin olive oil

Introduction of organic produce

The choice of organic meals was setting upon **2 needs**, considered the most important for the City:

- ▶ **FOOD SECURITY**: in organic food chains there is less toxicological hazard, because there are no pesticide residues
- ▶ **ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY**: organic agriculture has specific rules in order to manage farming and breeding practices correctly and in an environmental-safe way

Introduction of local produce

Local food includes 26 % of all food served in Romaine canteens. Beef meat, many typology of fruit, vegetable and cheese are local. These products came from 86 different farms sited in Lazio.

The switch to local food has raised the average cost of a meal of 1,4 % (€ 0.07)

Introduction of local produce

According to European legislation, the use of local products can be provided in the contract only if:

- the products themselves are protected by EU law (PDO, PGI,)
- involves qualitative benefits or lower health risks for users
- involves advantages in terms of reduced environmental impact compared to the use of "free market" products



Steps acted by the Municipality of Rome in order to promote the use of local produce in school meals (26%)

1. Introduction of PDO products (Protected Denomination of Origin) or PGI (Protected Geographical Indication), typical of Lazio
2. Guaranteed freshness produce
3. Meat freshness
4. Seasonality
5. Recipes' variety

1. Introduction of PDO products (Protected Denomination of Origin) or PGI (Protected Geographical Indication), typical of Lazio

- ▶ Mozzarella di bufala PDO (buffalo milk mozzarella-cheese)
- ▶ Pecorino Romano PDO (sheep cheese)
- ▶ Ricotta Romana PDO
- ▶ Beef PGI (slow growing old breeds: Chianina, Marchigiana, Romagnola)

2. Guaranteed freshness produce

On the base of research published studies, we can assert that a **major freshness of organic fruit and vegetables** – intended as minor time-break between harvesting and intake – represents a first rate standard.

Nutrients such as water-soluble vitamins and antioxidant compounds (polyphenols) denature in a short time. These nutrients, other than being important for the best conservation of the food itself, play also a **beneficial role for human health**

2. Guaranteed freshness produce

Criterion for fruit and vegetables (leaf vegetables, strawberries and cherries) for which no more than three days are taken between harvest and intake.

2. Guaranteed freshness produce

Products were required to be sold in packages with information on harvesting firm, harvesting date and the site of the food processing centre. Compliance proven by mileage and time needed from harvesting site to consumption site, with fewer kilometres entailing most points (promoting less pollution)

3. Meat freshness

- ▶ Red and white meats delivered in vacuum sealed packs within 4 days from packaging
- ▶ The shelf-life (time between packaging and consumption) of vacuum-packed meats is 20 days for red ones and 12 days for white ones
- ▶ One-serving packages for special diets have a 12 days shelf-life. Even in this case, the time-limit was set as a freshness guarantee, since at the time the food is extracted from the package it must be fit for use and it hasn't to be a possible pollution source for the kitchen and its tools
- ▶ Such time-limits supported the criteria to use only meat coming from breeding that are no more than 300 km far from Rome

4. Seasonality

The presence in menu's recipes of products not available in a certain season doesn't support local products use

For instance, in Rome's schools menus zucchini are used only during summertime, even if this vegetable is now available in the markets all the year long, often imported. The same principle has been adopted for other products: many kinds of fruits, salads, and so on

5. Recipes' variety

- ▶ To guarantee a greater variety in offered courses two menus were introduced, respectively a summer and winter one; both are shaped by 9-week menu cycles, also taking account the afternoon activities weekly performed only in some days
- ▶ Such a long cycle menu supports the use of fresh seasonal food. Up to 160 different recipes were worked out
- ▶ The start up of each menu cycle is diversified among the lots, so that each lot begins with a different weekly menu, in order to help products supplying

Other measures to facilitate the nutritional balance of the menu

Given a snack mid-morning the children are offered various types of food: fruits and biscuits. This decision falls within the perspective of proper nutrition and is an important element in the fight against childhood obesity. In general, children tend to consume too many calories prepackaged snacks.

No -food measures to reduce environmental impact

- ▶ Companies to make separate collection of waste
- ▶ respectively a summer and winter one; both are shaped by 9-week menu cycles, also taking account the afternoon activities weekly performed only in some days
- ▶ There was a reduction of waste production, with increased use of ceramic plates, stainless steel cutlery and glassware. In those schools (20%) where it was not possible to install a dishwasher, dishes are used biodegradable, compostable and recyclable. Before 2007 it was used almost exclusively plastic, with a production of 8.1 tons of plastic a day, currently there is no plastic in municipal waste of the canteen