

AGRO-CHILDCENTERS A NEW SERVICE OF TERRITORIAL FARMS

The Agro-Childcenters (Agri-Asili) are services for children and for educational activities operating on farms. They can accommodate children from 0 to 3 years of age (agro-nursery) and from 3 to 6 years (agro-child center), offering them the opportunity to spend school time in nature, in contact with animals and eating fresh seasonal products.

The Agro-childcenters also represent an interesting solution of farm sustainability, which are more and more characterized by being multi-functional. With this modern approach farms have become food and community services providers.

In Europe the earliest educational experiences which valorize natural resources for children education [took place in the northern countries](#), especially in Denmark, Germany, France, England and Sweden.

In Italy, the Agro-childcenters are born later and have been characterized from the beginning as a service provided by the farms in rural areas. Marche region has been a pioneer in promoting Agro-Childcenters which are foreseen by its legislation aimed to promote a multifunctional agriculture. It has also set some rigorous educational and functional standards for these innovative schools. With a committee composed by its competent services, representatives of farmers' organizations, the Montessori Foundation and experts in pedagogy, high quality standards for Agro-childcenters are set and represent a benchmark for other experiences in the country.

In particular, from a pedagogical point of view, the committee proposes Agro-childcenters as educational laboratories that put children in an environment where they can be inspired by nature, farming, animals and climate, enriching their experiences. By doing so, *Agro-childcenters aim to inspire the new millennium children and stimulate them to be active, curious, creative, full of social and relational skills, tireless explorers, learn, live and transform the world they are surrounded by.*



The Agro-gardens offer many advantages, not only educational, but also social and economic:

- in mountainous and remote areas, they allow child education in a family-like context, assessing the elements of nature, local community activities and traditional knowledge;
- on the outskirts of cities, where communities may lack of services for young children, they enhance the culture of the rural world, offsetting an urban environment often anonymous and without stimulus.
- for farms, these schools represent an opportunity for a cultural re-evaluation of the rural world and the complex system of values associated with sustainable development, including traditional architecture, landscapes, crafts and traditional and organic agriculture. The experience of agro-gardens in Italy is supported by the World Wide Fund for Nature WWF.
- finally, in an economic environment characterized by the abandonment of rural areas and traditional agricultural products, Agro-childcenters represent an opportunity for economic sustainability. Therefore Agro-childcenters are sponsored by the National Association of Agricultural Producers [COLDIRETTI](#), also to create new and qualified jobs for women and youth.

Other Italian regions such as Veneto, Piedmont, Trentino, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Calabria and Campania are promoting Agro-childcenters in their territories, and universities are increasingly accompanying these new experiences of rural education.

The Piemonte region, in collaboration with [COLDIRETTI](#), implemented a pilot project to create a new rural teacher professional role, registered with a specific brand and inspired to the German Tagesmutter. These new teachers are trained to accommodate in their own farms children from 3 months to 3 years of age. Their training is geared to rural education, based on the rediscovery of nature, care of animals and local agriculture products. The project can expand the supply of child care services in rural communities, valorize those territories at risk of abandonment and promote women employment.

Like all schools, Agri-Asili and Agri-Nido are governed by rules that guarantee all quality standard requirements. The EU supports these initiatives in member countries through different financial lines oriented to social agriculture and rural development.

To know more

[Brochure Agri-Nido Marche Region](#)

[Coneygart Farm in England](#)

[Loversall Farm Day in England](#)

[Fermes pedagogiques en France](#)

[Bauernhofkindergarten-wilkenshoffenAlemania](#)



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<http://www.agrinido.com/>

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