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Sustainable Food System in the European Union

Edited by
Mariosaria Lombardi, Vera Amicarelli and Erica Varese

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About the Editors

Mariarosaria Lombardi

Mariarosaria Lombardi is an Associate Professor Ph.D. in Commodity Sciences at the Department of Economics, University of Foggia (Italy). She has been a Rector's delegate for Coordination of Planning and Accreditation Activities since May 2023 and a departmental delegate for the Third Mission (relationship with the territorial stakeholders) since June 2017. She is currently engaged in two university courses: "Innovation and Sustainable Technologies" and "Economics and Technologies of Energy Sources." She is the author of 80 papers published in refereed journals and academic volumes. She deals with the innovations and socio-economic and environmental sustainability assessment of supply chains, using mainly Carbon Footprint and Material Flow Analysis methodology, focusing mostly on agro-energy and agro-food systems in relation to climate change. Particular attention is also paid to social innovation as an alternative approach to improving the sustainability of the agro-food sector. She has been part of different national and international research groups' projects, as coordinator of some Erasmus Intensive Program projects on bioenergy and leader of a WP for the European FP7 project, STAR*AgroEnergy, coordinated by the University of Foggia. Currently, she is a member of a Ph.D. Program and co-advisor of a Ph.D. project at the Department of Economics of the University of Foggia. She is a reviewer for several international scientific journals and guest editor for some open access journals, including Sustainability, where she is also a member of the relative editorial board (Food section). In 2019, she received the Future Food Institute and FAO certification as a "Climate Shaper." Since 2015, she has been a member of Vazapp, a social innovation initiative that promotes relations among farmers to develop a more sustainable agro-food system. She is a member of the Italian Commodity Science Academy and the International Society of Commodity Science and Technology.

Vera Amicarelli

Vera Amicarelli is an Associate Professor Ph.D. in Commodity Science at the Department of Economics, Management, and Business Law at Aldo Moro University of Bari, Italy. In undergraduate and graduate courses, she teaches Industrial Ecology, Quality Environment and Sustainability, and Resource and Waste Management. She is the author of more than 80 papers published in refereed journals and academic volumes. Her current research interests focus on Material Flow Analysis, Environmental Indicators such as Water and Carbon Footprint, Food and Textile Waste Minimization, and Circular Economy. Her main academic activities are related to the Erasmus+ exchange program; she is the department delegate and coordinator for several agreements with foreign universities. Additionally, she is a member of the Ph.D. Professor Committee and advisor of Ph.D. projects. She is a member of the Italian Commodity Science Academy (AISME), IGWT (International Society of Commodity Science and Technology), and the Italian Circular Economy Stakeholders Platform (ICESP), and is included in the CREA (Council for Agricultural Research and Analysis of the Agricultural Economy) expert register. She is a reviewer for several international scientific journals, and since 2014, she has been a guest editor for various scientific journals, including the International Journal of Sustainable Economy (InderScience), Sustainability (MPDI), and British Food Journal (EMERALD). She has been and is a member of national and international research groups' projects.

Erica Varese

Erica Varese earned a Ph.D. in “Culture and Enterprise—Entrepreneurial Strategies in the Age of Globalization” in 2005. She is currently an Associate Professor in Commodity Science at the Department of Management “Valter Cantino,” University of Torino (Italy), where she teaches undergraduate, graduate, and master courses in Italian and English. Her main research areas include food-related aspects (such as Food Businesses, Labeling, Quality Assurance and Certification Schemes, Food Waste Management, and Industrial Tourism); Consumer Science, Protection and Perception; International Trade and Customs; and Circular Economy. She has been an Erasmus visiting professor at Canterbury Christ Church University (Canterbury, UK). At the Université Nice Sophia Antipolis (Nice, FR), where she is a standing invitee, she has attended teaching and research activities. She has published articles in many refereed journals, contributed to chapters and books, and presented papers at conferences on a global basis. She is a member of the International Society of Commodity Science and Technology (IGWT), of the Accademia Italiana di Scienze Merceologiche (Italian Academy of Commodity Science), and Full Academician of the Accademia di Agricoltura di Torino (Agricultural Academy of Torino, IT). She is a reviewer for several international scientific journals, has been a guest editor for the scientific journal *Sustainability* (MPDI), and has been and is a member of national and international research groups’ projects.

Preface to “Sustainable Food System in the European Union”

Among the efforts to tackle climate and environmental challenges, the European Green Deal (EGD) plays an important role in proposing a holistic approach in which all European actions and policies contribute to the objectives of the Green Deal itself. The EGD plans new, sustainable, and inclusive growth strategies to enhance the economy, improve people’s health and quality of life, protect nature, and ensure no one is left behind. The Farm to Fork (F2F) Strategy is one of the EGD strategies focused on sustainable food systems and the complex links between healthy people, healthy societies, and a healthy planet. The F2F strategy, while emphasizing the awareness that food systems remain one of the key drivers of climate change and environmental degradation, highlights the need for a transition towards a green agri-food system.

The main goals of the F2F strategy are to ensure sufficient, affordable, and nutritious food within planetary limits; to guarantee sustainable food production through a substantial reduction in pesticides, antimicrobials, and fertilizers use, and an increase in organic farming; to promote more sustainable food consumption and healthy diets; to minimize food loss and waste; to fight food fraud; and to improve animal welfare. The F2F strategy’s aim can be summarized as a shift to a sustainable food system that brings environmental, health, and social benefits, offers economic gains, and ensures sustainable growth.

This Special Issue of Sustainability has contributed to this field by collecting high-quality studies and research related to the complexity of food systems to measure the progress in achieving F2F and EGD strategies’ goals.

The Guest Editors are glad that this Special Issue has attracted the attention of several researchers who shared their results by submitting original research articles, case studies, reviews, critical perspectives, and viewpoint articles. The Special Issue’s final results provide an updated picture of the effectiveness of the F2F strategy and any corrective actions needed.

Mariarosaria Lombardi, Vera Amicarelli, and Erica Varese

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