

A close-up photograph of rice panicles, showing the golden-brown grains and green leaves. The image is used as a background for the slide.

# The challenge of sustainability: the efforts undertaken by rice producers

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# Agenda

- \* What is sustainable agriculture?
- \* How to increase sustainability: tools and ways
- \* Sustainable rice in Italy: SAI Platform



# What is sustainable agriculture

Sustainable agriculture implies high quality agricultural production that respects the environment, the safety of operators and consumers and that is able to improve the socio-economic conditions of farmers and local communities.



# What is sustainable agriculture

## Goals

- \* Increasing the productivity of the sector
- \* Improving resource efficiency and the impact of rice farming on the environment.
- \* Counteracting imports and attracting new generations of rice farmers

## *In the field of sustainability*

It is intended to combat climate change as outlined at COP21 and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) promoted by the United Nations.



# How to increase sustainability: tools

The activities carried out in order to increase the sustainability of rice companies have been used various tools such as:

- \* field visits to exchange experiences of rice cultivation and visit of model farms;
- \* transfer of expertise between rice farmers and brands on the challenges and opportunities of rice farming;
- \* refresher courses held by technical experts on the latest techniques of sustainable rice farming;
- \* issue of information bulletins drawn up by technicians of the National Rice Agency (Ente Nazionale Risi) for the entire cultivation campaign.



# How to increase sustainability: ways

The issues to increase the sustainability of companies have concerned:

- \* the analysis of soils
- \* fertilizer management
- \* sowing techniques
- \* water management
- \* conservative farming techniques
- \* the practice of green manure
- \* straw management
- \* the innovative techniques of precision farming



# Sustainable rice in Italy: SAI Platform

**SAI-Platform** was created with pre-competitive purposes to promote, support, disseminate and adopt the criteria of sustainable agricultural production. In particular, in the rice processing sector, the Ebro Foods Group takes an active part in Italy, through its subsidiary Mundi Riso.

The activities have therefore been studied and targeted to the individual realities considered, trying to identify "**good agricultural practices**" and ethical-social behaviors that are universally recognized as fair and sustainable.



# Sustainable rice in Italy: SAIRISI Project

In Italy, initially, SAI-Platform, together with Ente Nazionale Risi, launched a project called **SAIRISI** in 2016 to promote sustainability within the Italian rice supply chain.

*Participants in the project:*

Farmers, also in the form of Associations and Cooperatives (including Cooperativa Cerealicola San Gaudenzio di Novara), rice mills, food industries (retailers) and public and private research institutions.



# Sustainable rice in Italy: SAIRISI Project

The project was divided into two distinct phases:

1. Firstly, the main concepts of sustainability were introduced, according to the 17 UN objectives, and the main areas of intervention were identified.
2. Secondly, the activities that could have a significant impact both economically and environmentally, on which to develop and apply good agricultural practices and possibly introduce new technologies, were defined.

Active role of farmers in the choice of topics to be dealt with



# Results

Since the beginning of the project, 12 "**Good Practices**" have been identified to be adopted, each one aimed at improving environmental and economic sustainability:

1. Cover-crops,
2. Soil
3. Processing
4. Manuring
5. Fertilization
6. Water
7. Water management
8. Sowing type
9. Integrated pest management for crop protection
10. Collection
11. Storage
12. Increased biodiversity



# Conclusion

After the initial start of the project through SAIRISI, today sustainability in rice is carried out directly in the relationship between the rice factory and its certified producers in the supply chain.

Many producers, together with Mundi Riso, are now seriously committed to the values of Sustainability.

## ***Hopes for the future:***

- Important opportunity to differentiate the Italian product from the pure and simple commodity rice.
- Important volume of investments in corporate and productive means and in the respect of people's work.





Thank you for your attention !

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