





There is a side of Friuli that you won't find on road signs. It lies along the edges of pastures, inside the quiet barns at dawn, in the hands of those who have chosen to do things right — even when it costs more. Ancestrale Project was born from encounters with these people — farmers who have chosen a different way of living the land.

Not a romantic return to the past, but a clear vision of the future: producing while respecting the animals' rhythms, the cycles of the seasons, and the balance of a landscape that holds memory.

What they preserve is not just food. It is an intangible heritage — composed of knowledge passed down through generations, of daily gestures, of relationships between humans, animals, and the land — which the 2003 UNESCO Convention recognises as a living part of a place's culture. A heritage that risks disappearing silently, not for lack of value, but for lack of attention.

The project developed through a participatory mapping of regional realities that practice ethical farming in an extensive and sustainable way. The research focused in particular on experiences that, while rooted in tradition, are today **reinterpreting the shepherd's craft in a contemporary key** — with innovative, responsible and conscious approaches. These are farmers who, often on the margins of the dominant production system, operate with an alternative vision, building local economies, relationships with the territory, and new forms of storytelling.



Ancestrale Project takes shape as a cultural project that weaves together research, narrative and communication: meeting these pastori sui generis, collecting their stories, observing their daily practices, documenting the landscapes in which they live and work. An initiative that wants to give visibility to those who, today, choose to live and produce in harmony with nature, bringing back to the centre the deep bond between humans, animals and territory.

But this project does not only tell the story of farms. It also tells the story of chefs — like Chiara Canzoneri in Gorizia — who are changed by that work, who build direct relationships with producers, who bring to the plate not just an ingredient but an ethic and a territory. And it tells the story of people like Antonio Bonelli in Cormons, who bridge worlds that still struggle to speak to each other — selecting, explaining, keeping alive a supply chain that knows where it comes from and where it wants to go.

This booklet offers that perspective. Eight stories from Friuli Venezia Giulia — from the plain to the lagoon, from Collio to the Karst — united by a choice that is at once ethical, cultural, and territorial. Rainbow eggs and Karst sheep, Ragusano donkeys and wild bees, pasture-raised cattle and valley-farmed sea bass. People who have decided that quality is not measured solely in the product, but in the way it is obtained.

It is an act of care toward a culture that risks disappearing — but one that represents a starting point for rethinking the future in a sustainable, conscious way, rooted in the values of the territory.

It is not nostalgia. It is a proposal for the future — and proof that it already exists.

A close-up photograph of an older man with grey hair and a beard, smiling gently. He is holding a black chicken with a red comb and wattle against his face. He is wearing a camouflage jacket with a blue mesh collar. A patch on the jacket reads "FATTORIA SANT' ELISE free spirit farm" with a silhouette of a rooster below. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene.

“My dream was to walk through a valley full of free-range chickens with my beloved ones, and today that dream has become true.”



SANT'ELISEO FARM

Majano, Udine · Chicken farm · rainbow eggs

Daniele Riva raises chickens in Majano, in the Friuli plain that gently slopes up toward the Carnic Pre-Alps. His farm bears the name of a saint — Saint Eliseo — and has the peaceful rhythm of someone in no hurry to get anywhere except here, in this place, with these animals.

The eggs from Sant'Eliseo Farm are called **rainbow eggs** because each hen, of a different breed, lays an egg of a different colour — white, beige, cream, pinkish, green, light blue. It is not marketing: it is the natural consequence of **choosing biodiversity over uniformity**. Ancient breeds, often forgotten by industrial farming, that Daniele has chosen to revive and keep alive.

The hens live outdoors, move freely, scratch around, and behave like hens. This seems obvious but it is not — in most intensive farms, the animals' natural behaviour is systematically suppressed for the sake of production efficiency. Not here. Here, efficiency is measured differently: by the quality of the yolk, by the flavour of an egg that still tastes like something.

Daniele did not come to this through family tradition. In 2014 he was working as a manager at a debt collection agency when he met the father of a friend of his daughter's, who was getting rid of a chicken coop. He took that tiny coop without knowing what to do with it, bought his first laying hens, and started studying. When he discovered that coloured-shell eggs existed, he literally lost his mind: he began filling his backyard with the strangest and most unique chickens from all over the world. That is when everything changed, and little by little he realised this could become his job. Today he is known on social media as The Unconventional Farmer.



Some of the breeds he raises are ones that the modern production system has abandoned — not uniform enough, not productive enough, not fast enough. But they are breeds adapted to this land, resilient, healthy, with traits that industrial breeds have lost. Keeping them alive is not a sentimental choice: it is the only way to preserve a biodiversity that, once gone, can never be recovered.



Daniele has learned to accept nature's rhythms without compromise. In autumn, hens lay fewer eggs — it is normal, it is physiological, it is their response to the decreasing light. He does not use artificial lights to disrupt the natural cycle: in autumn and winter he has fewer eggs, and those who cannot wait go elsewhere. He has learned to be at peace with that. When he opens the coop in the morning and the hens rush out — the way they dash outside, scatter across the meadow, and immediately start scratching — that is everything, he says. An animal that wants to go out is an animal that is doing well.

What he wants those who buy his eggs to understand is simple: that egg is the result of a double choice — his and theirs. When you crack open a rainbow egg and see that deep orange yolk, you are seeing a hen that ate well, that moved, that lived. That colour does not lie. It is the signature of an animal that was well.





“When you crack open a rainbow egg and see that deep orange yolk, you are seeing a hen that ate well, that moved, that lived. That colour does not lie.”





“The Karst sheep is the Karst.
One cannot exist without the
other.”

ANTONIČ FARM

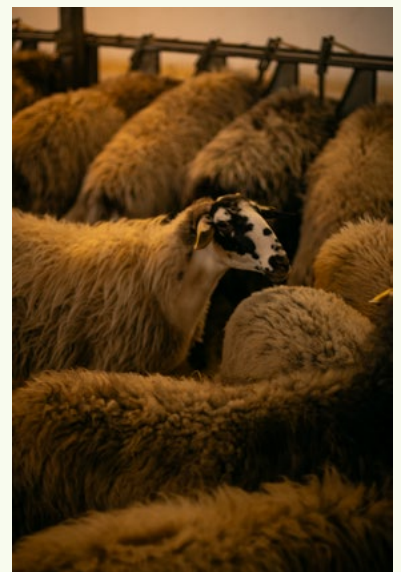
Ceroglie, Duino-Aurisina · Karst sheep farming · milk and cheese



In the Trieste Karst, amid limestone cliffs and the bora wind, Andrea Štoka of the Antonič farm raises the **Carsolina sheep** — a native breed perfectly adapted to this rugged and beautiful landscape, capable of foraging where other animals would find nothing. Antonič Farm is a place that shares the same harshness and beauty as the land that hosts it.

The Carsolina is a breed that was at risk of extinction. It is not as productive as the breeds selected by industry — it yields less milk, less wool, grows more slowly, and is harder to manage. But it is the right animal for this place: adapted to the Karst flora, resistant to the bora, sure-footed on the rock. The milk it produces — rich, fragrant, with unique organoleptic qualities — reflects exactly the landscape in which it lives. The cheeses made at Antonič Farm carry in their flavour the grass of the Karst, the aromatic herbs that grow among the rocks, the air that comes from the sea.

They cannot be replicated elsewhere, because they are the product of a specific place.



Andrea raises 250 head of sheep following a family tradition that rejects the logic of mass production. Benjamin, who works alongside him, discovered this profession through his grandmother, who enrolled him in summer camp here as a child. He kept coming back summer after summer, even during his years at secondary school, until he understood that his path was this: to stay and become a shepherd. He learned to farm, and then to make cheese. He says it is wonderful to witness the entire cycle of life: helping animals be born, raising them, milking them, processing the milk, and finally tasting the product made with your own hands.



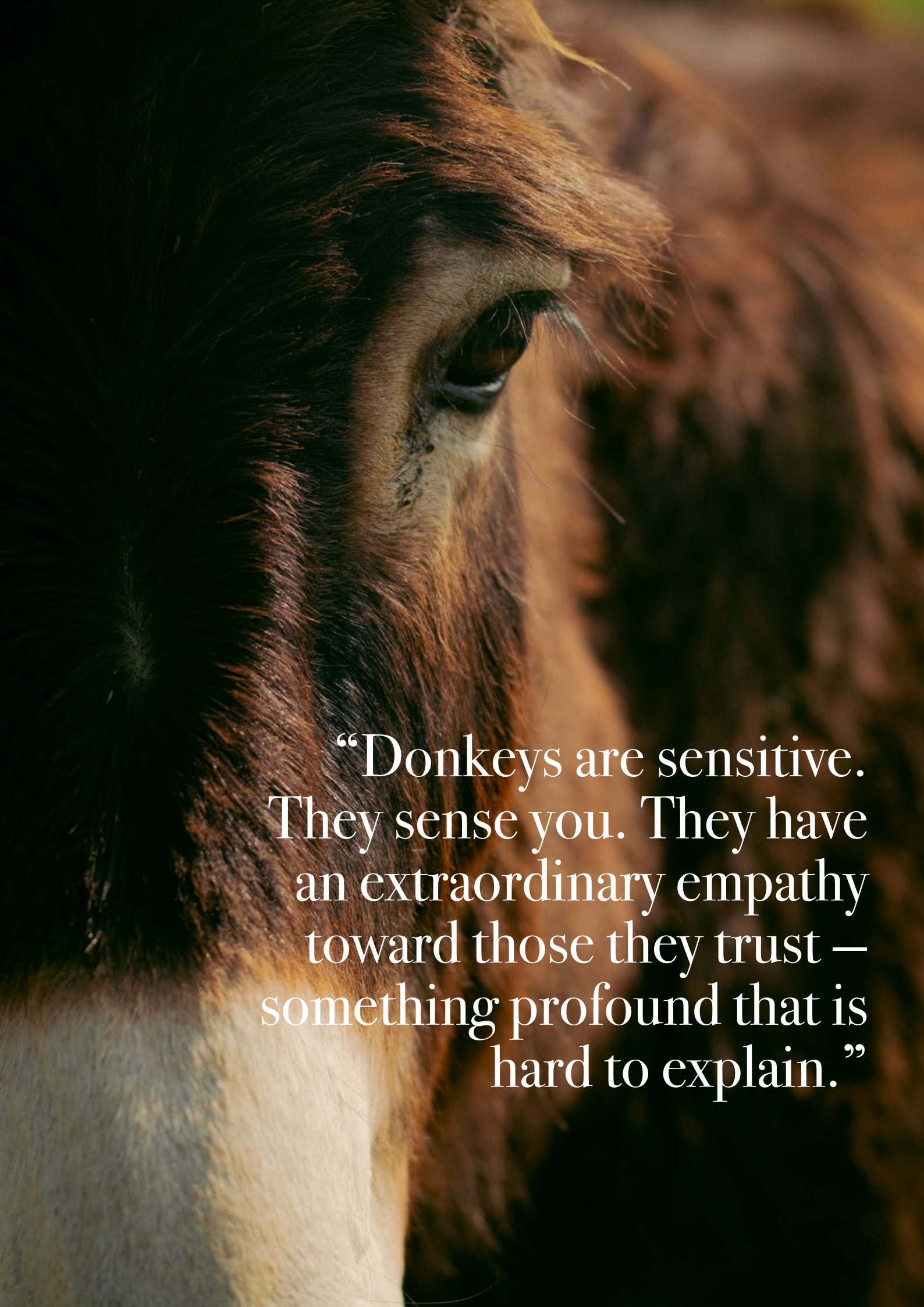
Working around Andrea are young shepherds, just like Benjamin, 22, who left competitive basketball to be with the flock, and Matej, 19, who describes how positive his choice to be a shepherd is, thanks to the bond of trust he has built with the animals. The sheep of Antoniĉ Farm graze freely, know how to forage on their own, but recognise the shepherds as herd leaders and greet them every morning with a joyful bleat. Seeing independent animals that spontaneously seek contact and affection, says Matej, is proof of their well-being.



The role of this farm is of extreme importance, because it protects both the sheep breed and the Karst landscape itself. The grazing sheep keep the land clean, sustain a millennia-old identity built on respect and symbiosis. What is sold here is not only food of the highest quality — it is respect. The animal is considered in the full complexity of its presence in the territory, following an ancient philosophy: no waste. The whole animal is used, meat included, rejecting the logic of consumerism.

“Only this breed can withstand the bora wind and forage among the rocks, keeping the land clean. Raising animals slowly and naturally means protecting a millennia-old identity and ensuring the well-being of an extraordinary animal.”



A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a donkey's head. The donkey has dark brown fur with lighter, tan-colored markings around its eyes and on its muzzle. Its large, dark eye is looking slightly to the right. The background is blurred, showing more of the donkey's fur and some indistinct shapes.

“Donkeys are sensitive.
They sense you. They have
an extraordinary empathy
toward those they trust —
something profound that is
hard to explain.”

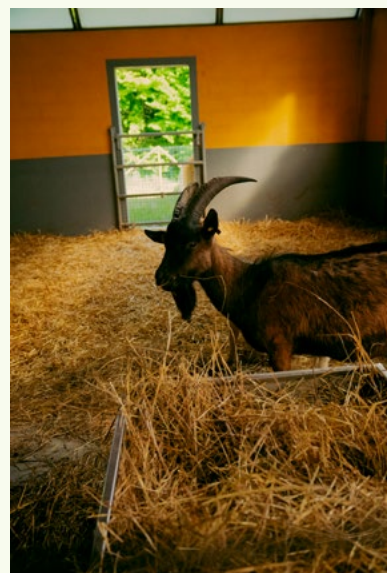
A man with a beard and a woman are smiling next to a dark brown donkey. The man is on the left, wearing a grey sweater, and the woman is on the right, wearing a dark blue hoodie. The donkey is in the center, looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with greenery.

L'ASANE LA MUSSA

Cividale del Friuli · Goat and donkey farm · milk and cheese

Alessia Moschioni and Matteo Costa Pellicciari chose Cividale del Friuli as the place to build something different. L'Asane e La Mussa is a farm that raises goats and donkeys with a philosophy that places **animal welfare** at the centre as a necessary condition, not as an added value. The name says a great deal: asan means donkey in Friulian, mussa means female donkey. Two animals that rural culture has always associated with hard work, patience, and tenacity. Here, those animals do not work — they live, and in living, they produce milk.

The story of the farm begins with an encounter: Alessia and Matteo were brought together by a shared passion for animals — all animals. Together they decided to breathe new life into a dilapidated building constructed by Alessia's grandfather in Gagliano di Cividale, near the Slovenian border. They opened in 2016, transforming a passion into a sustainable farming project, far removed from the intensive logic of the past.



Goat's and donkey's milk have very different characteristics — composition, digestibility, flavour profile — and both are transformed into cheeses using artisanal techniques that respect the specific qualities of each milk. The result is products with a strong, recognisable personality, impossible to standardise. Respecting the rhythms of nature, donkeys grow very slowly: Alessia and Matteo wait at least three years before the animal is mature enough for mating. **Only in this way can the product be truly ethical and of the highest quality.**

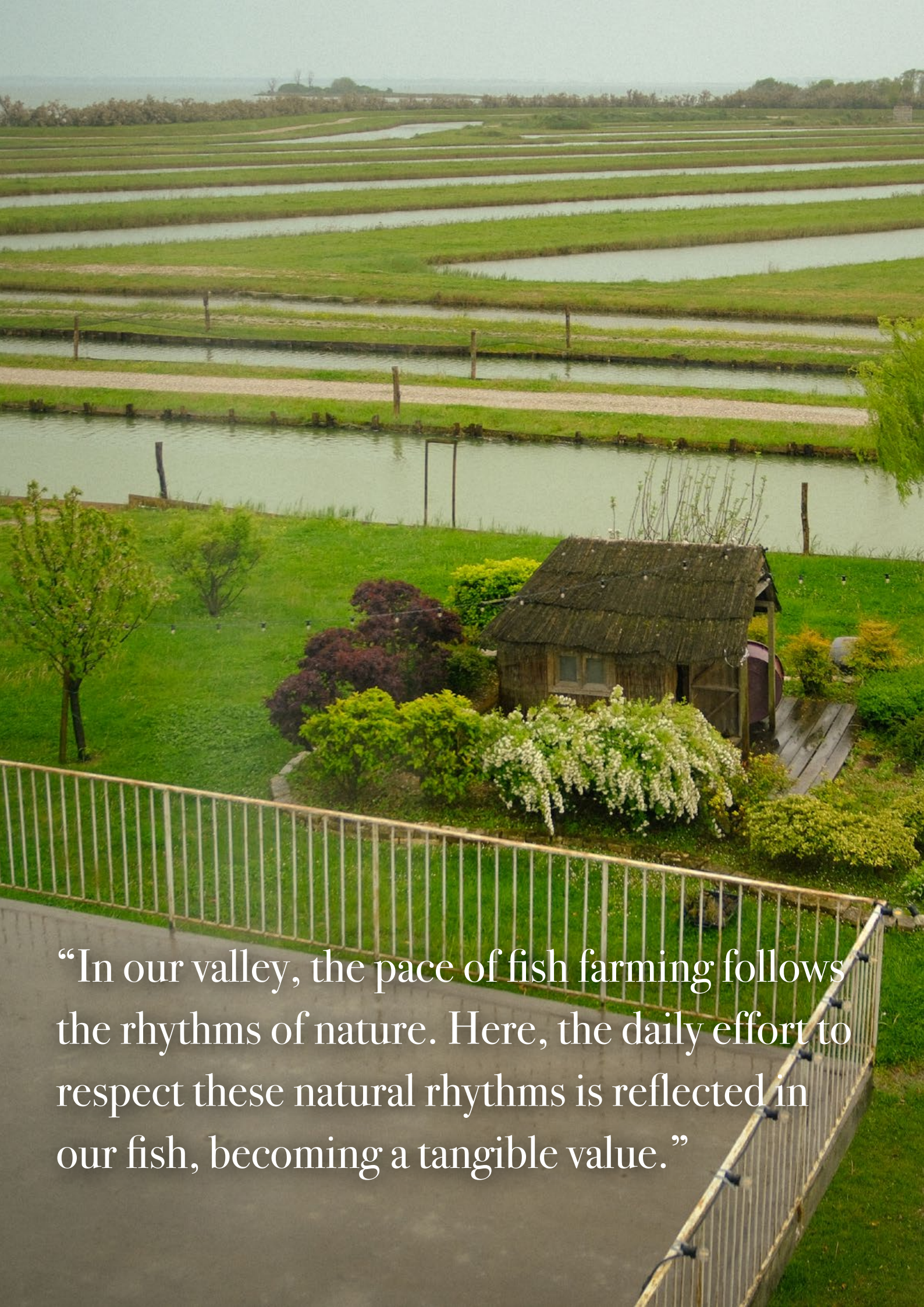


The animal they keep is the Ragusano donkey, an endangered breed that now numbers only a thousand head in total. Here, donkeys return to what they were born to do: be the true guardians of the environment. Thanks to their frugality, they are natural clearers of the small patches of Friulian land where large machinery cannot reach. By clearing the undergrowth of brambles and invasive species, they prevent summer fires and protect a fragile territory that would be lost without them. Mother and foal stay together for as long as needed, because only then will the donkey give her milk — a matter of respect before production.

The confirmation that the path is the right one, they say, does not come from numbers but from people's words. When someone stops them in the street and says 'I remember you well, I saw you pass by with the animals', they understand that their presence is creating a new awareness. In that milk and those cheeses lie ten years of their lives, of shared passion, of dedication to the animals and the land. It is not a question of appearances, but of substance.



“We farm this way because we believe that only by respecting time and natural cycles can we guarantee an ethical product of the highest quality.”



“In our valley, the pace of fish farming follows the rhythms of nature. Here, the daily effort to respect these natural rhythms is reflected in our fish, becoming a tangible value.”



VALLEDEL LOVO

Carlino, Udine · Ethical aquaculture · sea bream and sea bass

Gianluca Zanutta raises sea bream and sea bass in Carlino, in the Marano lagoon — one of the most precious and delicate aquatic environments in Friuli Venezia Giulia. Valle del Lovo is a fish farm operating in an extraordinary natural setting: **the lagoon fishing valleys**, ancient water management systems that the Venetians perfected over the centuries, today representing an extremely rare environmental and cultural heritage.

Here the fish grow in the lagoon's waters, breathe the tides, and eat what the lagoon offers them in addition to feed. Growth times are almost twice as long as in industrial aquaculture, but the difference in the final product is radical: firmer flesh, a cleaner flavour, a completely different texture. Working in the lagoon also means being stewards of an ecosystem: every production decision has a direct impact on the surrounding environment. **The lagoon is not a backdrop — it is the company's main partner.**

The story of Valle del Lovo is a story of listening to the land. Gianluca Zanutta inherited the valley from his grandfather: initially there were cattle sheds, then an attempt to plant vineyards. In the end, given the proximity to the lagoon and the sea just behind, it became clear that the most honest choice for the territory was to transform it into a fish farm. Geordie Angiolin, head of sales and fishing, puts it plainly: less quantity, more quality. Every sea bass they raise takes four years to mature, following its own biological rhythm.



The lagoon valleys preserve something deeper still: the ancient hydraulic architecture of the Serenissima, a system of sluice gates and canals that governs the movement of the tides. This technique allows the water of the Adriatic to flow in autonomously, oxygenating the environment and cleaning the seabed. Fish grow in this protected ecosystem without forcing, without antibiotics, with a vitality that intensive aquaculture will never be able to replicate. They do not accumulate visceral fat but develop muscle — because they truly move, because they truly live.

What they want those who eat their fish to understand is that inside that sea bream or sea bass lies the Marano lagoon. There is the water, there is the tide, there is the landscape. There is a culture of environmental stewardship that has lasted for centuries and that risks disappearing if no one is willing to carry it forward. You are not just eating fish — you are eating a place.



“In that fish lies the Marano lagoon. When you eat a sea bream or sea bass from the valley, you are not just eating fish — you are eating a place.”

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a pink hoodie and a black vest, is smiling and leaning on a wooden counter. In front of her are two brown paper shopping bags and a jar of jam. The bags are labeled 'LOKANDA DEVETAK' and 'SARA DEVETAK'. The jar is labeled 'SARA DEVETAK' and 'KAKI'. The background shows a shop interior with shelves and a sign that says 'lek' and 'lers'.

“You can make it in the Karst,
but only if you can hold on.”

A photograph of two beekeepers in white protective suits and hives in a field of wildflowers. The beekeepers are in the background, tending to several colorful beehives (yellow, green, and orange) arranged in rows. The foreground is filled with a field of white daisies and other wildflowers. The background shows a line of trees under a clear sky.

SARA DEVETAK

San Michele del Carso · Beekeeping · marasca honey

Sara Devetak and her husband Pavel are farmers in San Michele del Carso, in that stretch of the Gorizia Karst that faces Slovenia and still bears the scars of the First World War in its landscape. **Their bees fly over an extraordinary territory — rich in wild flora, aromatic herbs, and flowers that the Karst produces in unique quantities and varieties.**

Marasca honey is the most distinctive product of their work. The marasca (*Prunus mahaleb*) — the wild cherry of the Karst — produces a rare nectar with an unmistakable aromatic profile, which the bees collect during the brief spring bloom. The result is a honey born from a plant that grows exclusively in the Karst territory. If spring is cold and rainy, the flowering season is skipped and the honey simply does not happen. This is not a supermarket shelf. Accepting that not all varieties of honey are available every year is the only way to truly respect the rhythms of nature.

Sara did not always know that this would be her work. She studied languages at university. She came back to the Karst — and to the bees — through her grandfather, a farmer with a deep passion for nature, who taught her not to rush, to be patient, to put passion into everything. “Leave something for tomorrow,” he would always repeat. That phrase became a philosophy of work.



Sara and Pavel's bees are kept in a wild area free from intensive cultivation, where no chemical products are used. Their task is to create the ideal conditions for the bees to thrive and fly over a clean territory. The hives are never subjected to practices that compromise the well-being of the colonies. The bees are not stripped of their honey before there is enough for them first.

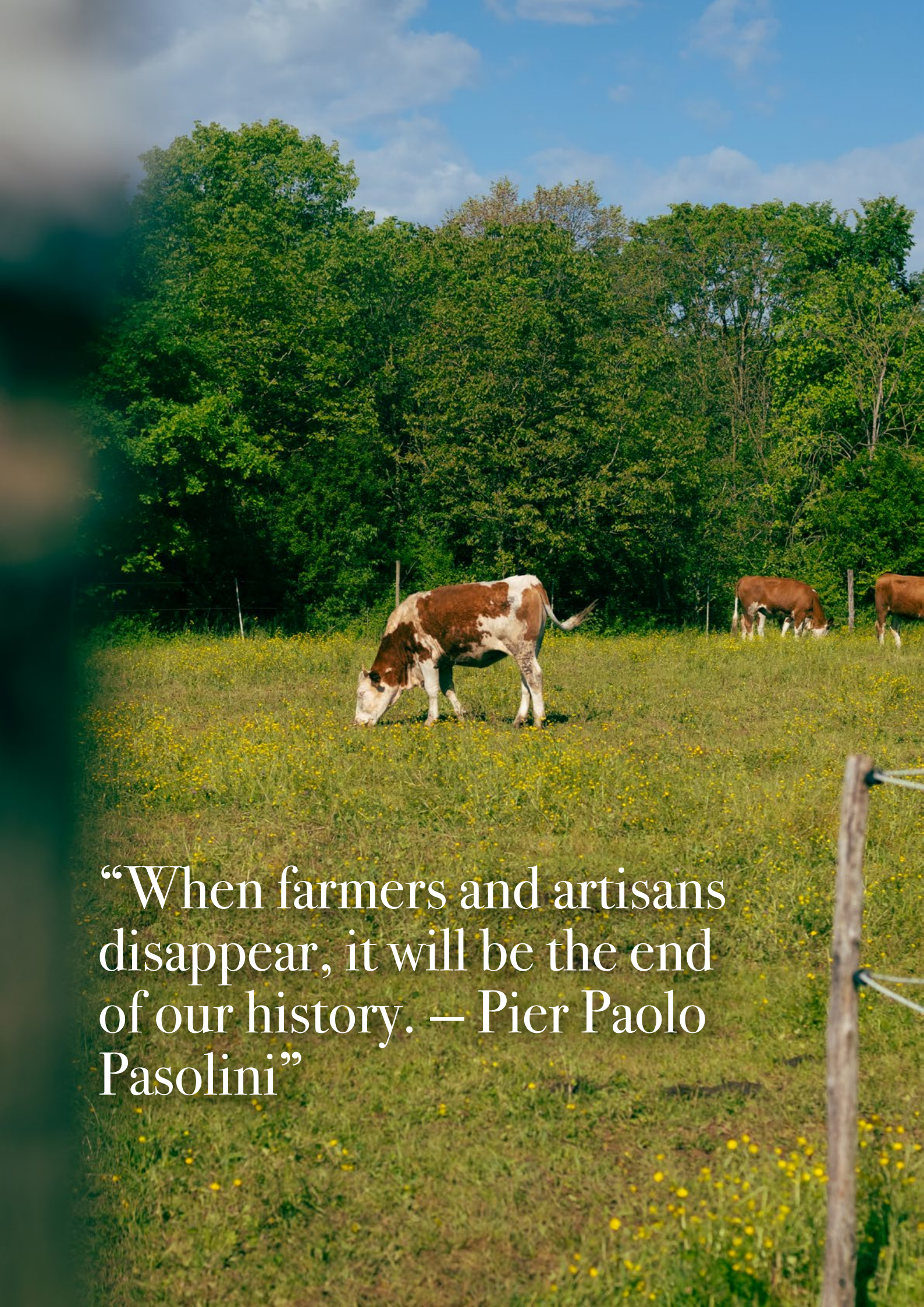
This approach has a meaning that goes beyond production: bees are precise indicators of the health of an ecosystem. If the bees are doing well, the Karst is doing well.



Behind this project lies a family history of over 150 years. Sara's family has run a traditional restaurant and inn since 1870, working in harmony with the seasons, nature, and all the products it provides. Today, four sisters are striving to carry on the traditions and culture of this territory. When you open one of their jars of honey, Sara says, an entire territory comes alive. Inside is a piece of themselves: family history, dedication, and care. Plus: pure food, with no thickeners or preservatives.

“The real magic is that, when you open that jar, an entire region comes alive.”



A pastoral scene featuring a lush green field filled with yellow wildflowers. In the center, a brown and white cow is grazing. To the right, two other brown cows are visible. The background is a dense line of green trees under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. A wooden fence post is visible in the lower right foreground.

“When farmers and artisans disappear, it will be the end of our history. — Pier Paolo Pasolini”



ZOFF FARM

Borgnano, Cormons · Cattle farming · dairy and beef

Giuseppe and Laura Zoff raise cattle in Borgnano, in the Collio hills — one of the most beautiful and complex landscapes in Friuli Venezia Giulia. Fattoria Zoff is a family farm that produces both milk and meat, an integrated supply chain where every phase is managed with the same attention and care. The Collio is wine country, but beneath the vineyards there are hills, meadows, and woods. **The animals graze freely**, know the terrain, and live outdoors for as much of the year as the climate allows.

Giuseppe Zoff is a farmer in his DNA, following in the footsteps of a father and grandfather who were sharecroppers. But he had to take a difficult road to find his way back. He started with conventional methods that forced him into the barn with IV drips — and it was there he understood he was betraying his dream, and what he had seen his grandfather do. Today he raises Red-and-White cows using organic and circular methods, fed only on hay and grass from uncontaminated pastures. ‘The truth is, this is a wonderful job,’ he says.

The turning point came through the right people arriving at the right moment — those who think alike are drawn to each other, says Giuseppe. One of them was veterinarian Francesca Pisseri, an expert in agroecology and sustainable farming, who taught him to strengthen the animals' immune systems through homeopathy. That encounter opened his eyes and helped him transform the farm into the organic, natural reality he had always dreamed of.



What he preserves is the ability to listen to the land and the animals — an ancient skill that risks being lost today. Because they have only a small number of animals, they can know each cow's individual character and prevent problems before resorting to medicine. They have invented nothing: they simply carry on the tradition that made Italian products a world heritage — that genuine connection with nature that they defend every day from extinction.

Fattoria Zoff's customers have understood the approach: if a product is available they buy it, otherwise they wait. Eating strawberries in December or greenhouse tomatoes means consuming food with zero nutritional value, says Giuseppe. Food must be our medicine, or medicine will be our food. Choosing Fattoria Zoff means keeping a territory alive — a value that goes far beyond the supermarket.



“My grandfather taught me that managing the pastures and the barn does not require ready-made formulas or chemicals. It requires observation.”



“My grandfather used to say
that being a farmer is a calling,
a passion that must run through
your veins.”



ERMACORA FARM

San Giovanni al Natisone, Udine · Cattle farming · beef production

Mauro Ermacora raises cattle in San Giovanni al Natisone, in that stretch of the Friulian plain where the Natisone River flows down from the Slovenian valleys and the landscape opens up among rows of vines, permanent pastures, and farmhouses that stand the test of time. His is a family farm carrying on **a tradition deeply rooted in the land**, with an awareness that has never been taken for granted: **animals need space, time, and care, and that care is felt in the final product.**

Mauro is the fourth generation. For him this craft is a deep calling — something that has been in his blood since birth. He raises beef cattle, rejecting the rush of mass production, choosing a slower, more traditional path because quality requires time. In nature there are no shortcuts: a pregnancy lasts nine months and growth follows its own sacred rhythms. In a context where industrial farming has progressively drained the countryside of meaning and people, Fattoria Ermacora offers a concrete and quiet response: things can be done differently, better, and in a way that still holds meaning.

The person who most shaped the way he sees his work was an old farmer named Elia, who passed away recently. He always said that the truly wealthy are those who are content with what they have. He made Mauro understand that chasing quantity and expanding the herd becomes a never-ending spiral — always more land, always bigger equipment, always less real care for the animals. From Elia he learned to work without haste and without anxiety. 'When farmers like him die,' says Mauro, 'who at 97 would tell you how at 13 he took the cows to the market fair alone — a piece of history dies.'



What he preserves concretely is a legacy of gestures and understandings that intensive farming is erasing: the deep bond of trust that arises only from respecting the natural rhythms of his animals. By spending time with them he has learned to read their body language and understand their emotional state. It is an ancient and intangible knowledge, thanks to which today, simply by observing his cows, he knows if they need something or how long it will be before they give birth. Calves stay with their mothers for as long as it takes to drink the colostrum — vital for healthy growth — something that does not exist in intensive farming.

The sign that the path is right comes every day when he enters the barn. The animals greet him with a moo, calm, approaching to be petted. Each one has its own intelligence, its own personality. Seeing them so serene, even with strangers, is the confirmation he was looking for. Mauro does not just sell meat: he shares a vision. In that piece of meat there is an animal that lived well, in a specific place and at a specific time of year. That flavour — which is never random — is the result of much work, much care, and a conscious choice never to do things the easy or quick way.



“I preserve a legacy of gestures and understandings that intensive farming is erasing. By spending time with the animals I have learned to read their body language and understand their emotional state.”



“I only source from farmers I know personally. If I don't know the farmer, I don't sell their meat.”



BONELLI'S BUTCHER SHOP

Cormons · Selection and sale of meat from ethical and extensive farms

Antonio Bonelli is a butcher in Cormons, in the heart of Collio. His is no ordinary butcher shop — it is a place where meat is selected according to precise, non-negotiable criteria: only from ethical, extensive, local farms that he knows personally. For thirty years he has worked exclusively with farmers he knows and trusts, those who uphold tradition and ensure their animals live in a healthy environment.

Bonelli is a key link in the supply chain this project sets out to describe. He is the point where the farmers' work meets the person eating — the translator between two worlds that often do not communicate. **His role is not merely commercial: it is cultural.** Every time he explains to a customer why that meat costs more, why it comes from that specific farmer, why it has that texture and flavour, he is educating about food, he is telling the story of a region. 'More than selling,' he says, 'I like discovering.'

It was his father who passed the trade down to him along with a love for animals and nature. His father taught him to seek quality in the farm and in the farmer, rejecting the logic of easy profit. The shortest path for a butcher today would be to pick up the phone and order pre-cut, vacuum-sealed cuts — but that way of working, Antonio says, has no soul. His father gave him the value of selecting the live animal and processing it from scratch, accepting even the flaws and trimmings, because it is precisely that extra fat that makes the meat tender. 'Thanks to him, today I can look my customers in the eye and always tell the truth.'



What he preserves in his work is the very essence of one of the oldest trades in the world: the ability to cut meat from scratch, to know each cut deeply, to valorise every part of the animal. The meat he sells comes from animals that have grown entirely naturally, for many more months than those from intensive farms, feeding only on grass and hay. It is mature meat that cannot simply be put on display — it must be worked, dry-aged, with the experience of another era and great patience. A slow pace that today's society is forgetting.

Customers notice the difference on their own from the very first bite — from the aroma while cooking, the texture, the tenderness. Many chefs, including some with Michelin stars, choose to source from him: professionals who demonstrate absolute consistency between what they say and what they put on the plate. His meat comes from Villanova, five minutes from Cormons. People are amazed to learn that you can still put a face to what you eat.



“More than selling, I like discovering.”

A woman with brown hair tied back, wearing a white chef's uniform with a headband, is seated at a dark wooden table in a restaurant. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background features a stone wall, a framed picture, and shelves with various bottles. A floor lamp is visible to the left.

“The secret ingredient of my restaurant is storytelling. Telling stories, always telling everything. Every dish must be explained to those who are about to eat it.”

Chiara Canzoneri was born in Caorle, in a family of fishermen. She came to Gorizia for love, and out of love for this region, she stayed — spending over a decade building a culinary project that is also a cultural one. Her **Chincaglieria Gastronomica** on Via Rastello is one of those rare places where food serves as a pretext for telling the story of a place, its history, and the people who inhabit it. Her cuisine is founded on principles that are not fashion but conviction: ingredients sourced almost exclusively locally, respect for the seasons, traditional recipes carefully adapted to the present. No single-use plastic, suppliers selected one by one, direct relationships with producers. It is not marketing — it is consistency.

When she arrived in Friuli Venezia Giulia she did not know the territory's products — they were not part of her background. She had to map the region, speak with whoever she met or was recommended to her. From there a whole new world opened up, and it all started with listening. The encounter with Antonio Bonelli was fundamental: he put real meat in her hands, showed her the differences up close, and taught her to recognise them. From that moment she could not choose otherwise.

When she cooks meat from ethical farming, the first thing that strikes her is the texture — a distinct, authentic muscle structure that tells the story of the animal's movement and life. The taste changes completely, because in the flavour you can sense what the animal experienced. Cooking becomes the litmus test: the meat stays intact, the fish does not fall apart. The greatest challenge, she says, is to work the product as little as possible. An animal that has lived well already has perfect organoleptic qualities — you cannot follow a standard recipe or rely on fixed patterns. You have to test it, accept that it may be different every time, and tune yourself to it. Only then does the dish become perfect.

Chiara knows the Friuli Venezia Giulia region with the depth of someone who studied it from the outside and then chose it from within. She understands the complexity of this border region — the Central European influences, the cuisine of sea and mountain, the knowledge of the Slovenian, Friulian, and Giulian communities — and knows how to translate it into dishes that speak to those who eat them without needing explanation. For Ancestrale Project she brings something precise to the table: the ability to transform an ethical production choice into an experience of taste and meaning.

Explaining to customers the value of an ethical choice on the plate is extremely difficult, she says. There is still too little awareness, and the economic question is real. But the price gap must be explained and communicated — not merely justified — so that people understand the real value for their health. The taste speaks for itself, but it must be made clear why the supermarket chicken costs one price and hers another — one that comes with guarantees and the absence of antibiotics. Her goal is for customers to leave transformed into true ambassadors: the awareness gained at her table must not stop at the restaurant. If an ingredient has run out, it is not her decision — nature no longer makes it available. Choosing what to put on the plate today is a truly revolutionary act.

“Expecting to have everything in every season generates food waste and a massive environmental impact. Choosing what to put on the plate today is a truly revolutionary act.”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks go to Chiara Canzoneri and Joško Sirk for having launched a beautiful idea that took shape through countless encounters and conversations, and that would not have existed without their vision and enthusiasm.

Thank you to the farmers — men and women — for opening the doors of their worlds to us, for their trust, their patience, and for sharing a precious and often invisible cultural heritage with us. These pages belong, first of all, to them.

Particular thanks go to Vittoria Elena Simone for her care in the photographic gaze and video documentation of the project, and for the design and layout of this digital booklet. Her sensitivity made the narrative and curatorial dimension of Ancestrale perceptible, giving visual form to what words alone would not be enough to convey.

ABOUT US – NETURAL COOP IMPRESA SOCIALE

Netural Coop Impresa Sociale has built solid expertise in territorial valorisation, social innovation and cultural project design, with a specific focus on rural and marginal contexts. It operates through participatory methodologies and transdisciplinary approaches that integrate research, communication, design and community activation — convinced that peripheral places are often the most fertile ground for imagining alternatives.

Over the years it has conceived and managed projects centred on the regeneration of places and knowledge: among these, Casa Netural in Gorizia, a permanent laboratory of cultural and social practices, and initiatives in the Borgo Castello, a space of experimentation between memory and contemporaneity. It has developed training programmes for cultural and creative entrepreneurship, supporting innovative and sustainable local practices and accompanying communities and organisations in building shared visions.

The team's skills range from facilitation to European project design, from storytelling to audiovisual production, from participatory mapping to digital communication. This combination of tools allows Netural to document, narrate and disseminate the intangible heritage of territories, activating accessible and inclusive cultural processes that centre the people and knowledge that inhabit places.

For Ancestrale Project, the team deployed methods already tested in analogous contexts: collecting stories through interviews and participant observation, building open digital archives, producing multimedia content and organising cultural events with strong narrative impact. The experience accumulated in connecting landscape, community and resilient practices made it possible to construct a project that pursues three objectives simultaneously: the safeguarding of intangible heritage, sustainable rural development, and the experimentation of new forms of territorial storytelling.

Ancestrale Project is, in this sense, fully Netural: a project that does not describe the world from the outside, but crosses it, listens to it, and returns it in a form that can be shared, recognised, and — above all — continued.

The team

The design and implementation of Ancestrale were led by the Netural Coop team: Andrea Paoletti, strategic director; Lara Kovic, project manager; Samuele Biagioni, communications and press officer; Giovanna Vizziello, administrative and legal manager.

Ancestrale is a journey to discover an ancient culture that unites people and animals, landscapes and communities, among pastures, knowledge, and traditional crafts that today shape new identities and rural development models in Friuli Venezia Giulia.

Stories of farmers (male and female) tell of a living intangible heritage: an ethical choice that is not just a production method, but a way of living and inhabiting the land, founded on respect for natural cycles, care for animals, and the protection of biodiversity. A profound social and ecological dimension that still today inspires forms of return to the land, conscious tourism, and shared memory.

Filming and editing by **Vittoria Elena Simone**, organization and communication by **Netural Coop**, produced by **Netural Coop**.

Produced as part of the European project **CAR2GO!** (CUP D29I25000030007), financed by the **INTERREG VI-A Italy-Austria 2021-2027 Cross-Border Cooperation Program**. Call for proposals supporting cultural projects aimed at enhancing the intangible heritage of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region.