

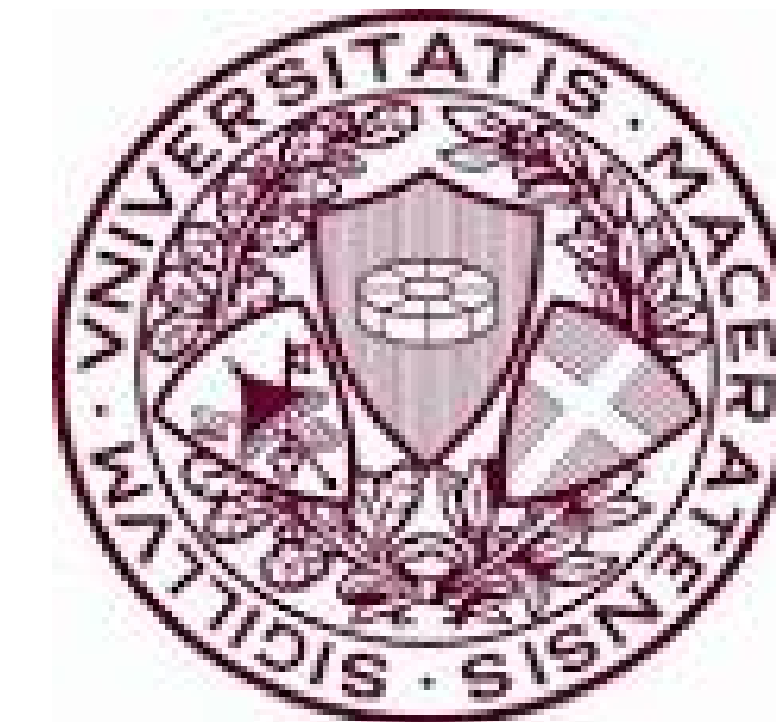


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# Women Wines and Vineyards. Managing, Innovation and Gender in the Italian Wine Making Sector

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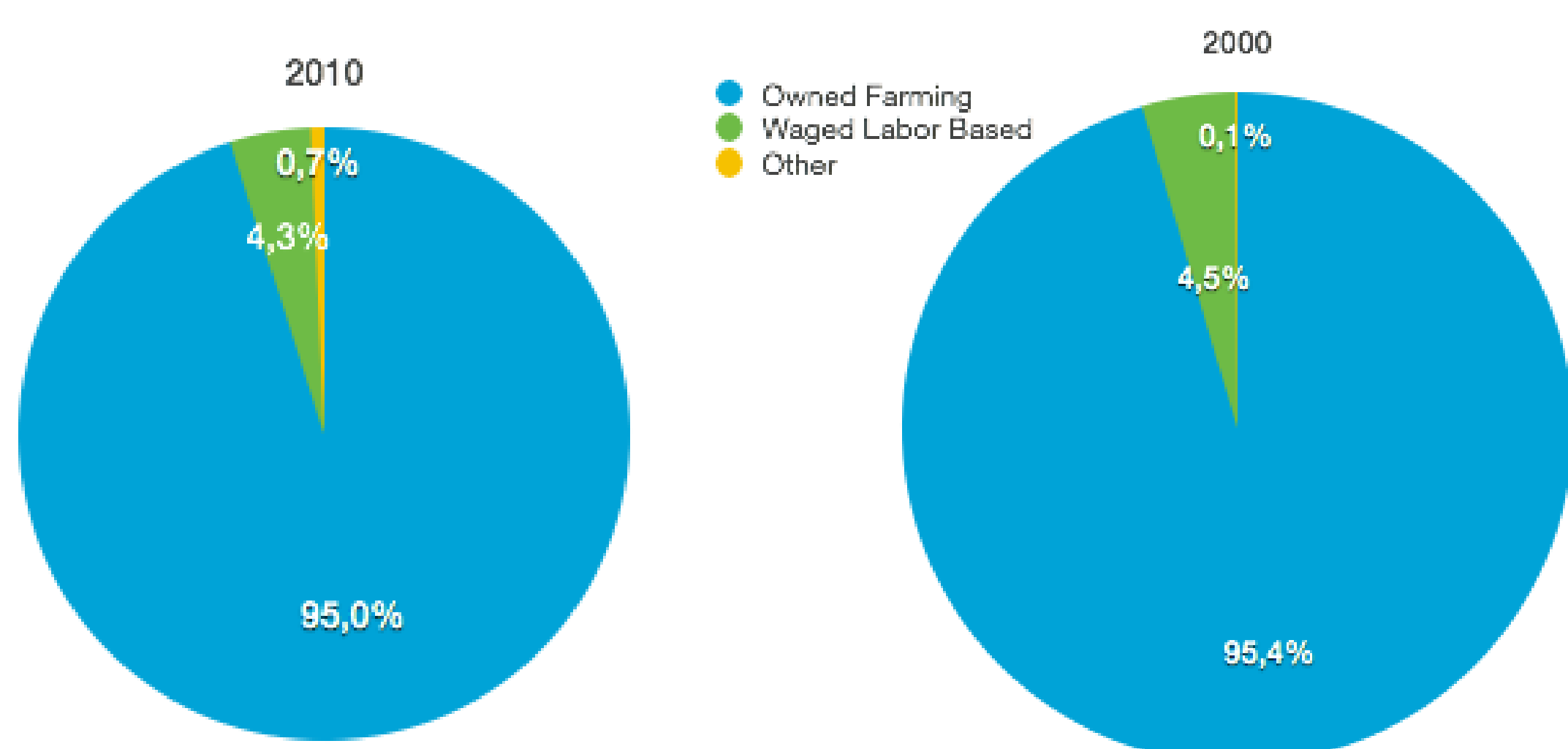
## Intro, Background and Aims

For decades the increasing presence of women in agriculture has been interpreted as a signal of loss of competitiveness because the term 'feminization' has been often used in combination with 'senilization' (aging) of farmers to indicate, among other causes, the weakening of entrepreneurial capabilities within agriculture). The underrated traditional role of women in farming has been determined by the hereditary system of land property that privileged the masculine line and even more by the role of children raising and food preparing and serving proper of housewives. The large diffused sharecropping land tenure underlined the dependent role of rural housewife in the household economy but was also the starting point of big social mutations. The traditional role of rural women is still changing in a new one, as women are more numerous than in the past both within worker and farm owners and managers. The poster reports preliminary results of an exploratory research aiming at describing and interpreting the 'new' role of women in the sector, giving some enlightenments on economic and social reasons for the increasing importance of women as entrepreneurs in winemaking and wine marketing managing and innovation.

## The overall situation of farming in Italy

Following official data (ISTAT, 2011) in 2010 in Italy there are 1,630,420 agricultural holdings, the total agricultural area (TAA) is 17,277,023 hectares and the utilized agricultural area (UAA) is 12,885,186 hectares. The total number of agricultural holdings and that of UAA are clearly decreasing over time in all the geographical zones of Italy. Main agricultural holdings are managed by individuals or families (96%), and the manager is the landowner (95%) or runs family lands (65.5%).

### Farm tenure



## 1985. Law on Agriturismo

### Male and Female Agricultural Holdings Variation

#### Censuses 2000 – 2010



Male holdings (- 38.6%)



Female holdings (- 29.6%)

#### Tourist Farms per Gender 2003 – 2012

Male (-2.3)  
Female (2.3)



## Literature, Research Focus and Method

- The past vision of 'feminization' as a negative attribute is inadequate to understand the today variation of farm tenure and managing in Italy (Sabatini, 2006 p. 19). Rosenberg (1963) stated technological innovation is a major ingredient of long-term economic growth, characterized by a high degree of uncertainty.
- In this sense, innovations introduced by female rural entrepreneurs (in particular in winemaking and wine tourism) deal with technological and market uncertainty and have many ingredients of sustainability having surely a long-term vision.
- Focus on Women of Wine and their ability in managing and innovating in winemaking, wine tourism marketing.
- Data have been indirectly detected from press and directly from face-to-face interviews to women engaged in winemaking, wine tourism and related marketing actions.

Rosenberg N. (1963). "Technological Change in the Machine Tool Industry, 1840-1910", The Journal of Economic History, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 414-443. Sabatini M. (2006). Intervento di apertura. In Luigi Biggeri e Massimo Sabatini, Donne della terra: i loro "numeri" per e nell'agricoltura. Roma: ISTAT.

## Main Findings from Interviews

- Main part of women today running vineyards and winemaking holdings have inherited land and assets from their family and became entrepreneurs. Some of them came from industrial families owning vineyards and became winemakers.
- Women self-perceive to have a higher intuition in food pairing and in experimenting new ideas than men.
- Women introduced new forms of wine promotion by means of wine tourism event and hospitality.
- Women are increasing their professional training

Elisabetta Tognana: 'In 1980 when I entered the world of wine I realized that the woman-wine wedding was beneath contempt and episodic. In 1988 I had the idea to found an association: my mentor was Francesca Cinelli Colombini'.

Allegra Antinori: 'A woman definitely brings a different sensibility to the table. Women choose the wines more often than men. Having a woman involved in every aspect from winemaking to marketing has made a major difference in the company's growth, wine is emotional, not rational like women.'

Donatella Cinelli Colombini: 'I had the duty from VIDE—Italian Excellence Vine-growers—to promote public relations, almost with no budget. I made a questionnaire for visitors of VIDE farms. I realized it was the very first time anyone made such a survey. So I proposed the new event *Cantine aperte* (Open cellars). In 1998 I was searching for an enologist, all the male enologist graduated in Siena were employed by main producers, and there were many unemployed women. That's matched to my goal to have an entire female staff'

## 1988. Association of Women of Wine 12 Founders Women

Innovation

in Wine Tourism

in Wine Events

in Sustainable Rural Development



## 1993. Open Cellars



## 1998. First Cellar All Women Staff

## 2013. 700 Associated Women of Wine in 20 Italian Regions



1877 – 1940: in Pisa, 6 women in total with university degree in agriculture

2000 – 2008: + 21,4% women in agrarian disciplines with 45% female students

Today: about 3 million annual wine tourists and  
€ 2.5 – 3.5 billion turnover

## Conclusions and the Future...

- Increasing number of women is actually supporting and not weakening the sustainability of agriculture, especially in stronger sub-sectors such as wine making and farm tourism and wine events
- Their role has changed from supporting family to managing farms, introducing innovations, professionally managing wine making and marketing
- Number of graduated and skilled women is increasing in all the steps of the wine production chain and in related professions including tourism and event managing
- They soundly contribute to sustainability ensuring multifunctionality and generational turnover in agriculture

- The declared self higher consciousness in experimenting new ideas (innovations) than men is a fertile field for future research and necessitating more deep sociological analysis tools to be combined to economic ones