

Legal Definition of Agricultural Activity in Italy: Enabling Small-Scale and Local Food Production

Problem encountered and objective

Before the introduction of recent regulations, many farmers and local operators worked within a fragmented and unclear legal framework concerning agricultural activities, local processing and direct sales. This generated uncertainty about hygiene procedures, production limits, and compliant marketing practices. Laws 30/2022 and 61/2022 aim to address these issues by clearly defining what constitutes agricultural and fishery activities and which types of small-scale local processing are allowed. The objective is to support local, small-scale production linked to short supply chains, offering greater legal certainty, transparency and consistency with regulatory requirements.

Main results / outcomes

Thanks to these legal definitions, farmers can organise production and marketing activities more confidently, knowing which practices are permitted and under what conditions. The possibility to carry out minimal processing on-farm and to sell directly opens up opportunities to participate in local markets and public procurement, including school and institutional catering. The regulations also facilitate cooperation with other farms, local authorities and educational institutions, strengthening territorial links. This improves consumer trust, enhances economic and social sustainability, and contributes to the valorisation of local food systems.

Practical recommendations

- (1) **Make use of the legal definitions** to simplify administrative procedures and reduce operational uncertainty;
- (2) **Engage in targeted training** on hygiene, food safety and direct marketing practices;
- (3) **Adopt official communication tools** (logos or quality labels) to highlight product origin and transparency;
- (4) **Build collaborations** with local authorities, schools, public institutions and other farms to access local markets and public procurement opportunities;
- (5) **Prioritise minimal local processing** and direct sales to reinforce short supply chains and strengthen relationships with consumers

Further information

Law 30/2022 - Provisions for the enhancement and promotion of small local agri-food productions

<https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/gu/2022/04/22/94/sg/pdf>

Law 61/2022 - Provisions for the enhancement and promotion of zero-kilometre agricultural and food products and those from short supply chains <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/gu/2022/06/11/135/sg/pdf>

Stakeholder perspectives on emerging models of short food supply chains: a mixed-methods investigation on the 'Km Zero Newsstand' case in Italy <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s40100-025-00405-2>

About this abstract

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EU4Advice (<https://eu4advice.eu/>) aims to lay the ground for effective capacity building of Short Food Supply Chain (SFSC) actors, by supporting advisors as catalysers of the knowledge flow from research to practice within an EU network of SFSC advisors, and by promoting the integration of SFSC advisors into national AKIS.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

