CONCA D'UOVO SNC

The Conca D'uovo general commercial partnership, an Agrozootechnical Company, was born through the experience of founding shareholders Salvatore and Filippo Chinnici in the **poultry breeding field**. The holding area in which this activity takes place is situated in Northern Sicily in the north-west of Misilmeri village in Contrada Coda Di Volpe at 98 of P2 street.

This land is recorded in new Cadaster Registry Lands of Palermo at cadastral sheet 10 and it is classified as "E. agricultural green zone"; one part of business activities takes place in the countryside of Belmonte Mezzagno.

The Holding obtained also a building license to realize two sheds for battery breeding in line with the criteria of Animal Welfare Quality, about eggs production; it will arise in Contrada Finocchiara-Casale, appearing on cadastral sheet 17, parcels 225-226-227-228-229-230-231, and falling in "E/1 agricultural green zone" in accordance with current urban planning approved with A.D. no. 336/77.

The mean average temperature of holding area is of 15,9 °C while the average annual rainfall is about of 9oo mm (estimated for 1964-95 by Climatologic Atlas) during a wet period, between October and Mars/Avril, and a dry period between June and August; wide territorial area is of carbonatic and carbonatic-silico-clastic origin, the soil is alluvial (classification brown-red soil), riche of mineral and organic nutritive elements and his clay texture has an high water retention capacity, this kind of soil is suitable for the grasses and horticultural crops.

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About urban areas and major services it is important to know the urban areas, the route lines, the railways, the airlines and the sea lines.

Urban areas: the nearest urban areas are Misilmeri with 27192 inhabitants and a density of 331,6 inhabitant per Km^2 , and Belmonte Mezzagno with 10872 inhabitants and a density of 355 inhabitant per Km^2;

Route lines: it is possible getting the Holding by the 37th provincial route if you come from Palermo, and by the 38th one if you come from Misilmeri

Railways: the main station is Central Station of Palermo, 11 Km from Misilmeri

Airlines: the main Civil Airport is the Falcone-Borsellino Aerostation of Punta Raisi (Palermo), 33 Km from Misilmeri

Sea lines: the main seaport is in Palermo, 12.7 Km from Misilmeri.

The Conca D'Uovo Company was founded on 1 Mars 1996 in the countryside of Misilmeri in Contrada Caccamisi (Palermo) by the notary G. Furitano of Palermo and his business purpose is the **breeding of laying hens** and related activities such as the marketing of eggs and chickens ; the company's directors, in fact, have continued the activity of their father Damiano, who carried an individual company of 5ooo bred animals like a breeder, since 1965. Later, in 1998, the two brothers began to collaborate with their father improving productivity and giving him their workmanship.

After the building of a new storage into a build of 1993 in Misilmeri village, because of the increase of bred animals which amounted to 40000 in 1996, a feed factory with the most modern equipment is realized in order to ensure the self-supply of animal feeds and a better control of product quality (Dlgs reg. CE 852/2004 HACCP).

Contextually with the company's founding , in March 1996 the Conca D'uovo Company received in free loan and for twenty years the agricultural lands which until that date Mister Damiano had conducted, giving poultry activity a new impetus and so realizing an industrial management. In that time the number of animals increases to 50000. Besides, the company have continued to invest and to ameliorate her activity because of to assure an higher economic and product quality, but also to be in line with new hygienic-sanitary normative of European Community and of Sicilian Region. In 2000 the company built a new modern and efficient industrial shed in the brothers Chinnici's land(which is located near to old sites zones) to satisfy the major market demand, so the Holding made up the total of 100000 animals of which 75000 kept for the production and 25000 in the growth phase, to ensure normal turnover of the Company.

Beside of old sites, in Belmonte Mezzagno village, the company has also a new terrain of about 21 hectares for a better stoking of the effluents, called Pollina, and in

order to extend his activity to the laying hens kept on the floor according traditional methods.

At last, the company has a new project about the building of a new shed in which 35000 animals will be bred, and about the realization of a biomass co-generator inside the company for agricultural effluents optimization.

Actually, the company has more than 20 employers and a turnover of 2 millions of Euro with his largest customers Aeroviaggi s.p.a. (tour operator and hotels), Marr (s.p.a. Cremonini group) and Effe1 Supermarkets and it daily reaches Sicilian markets by using his fleet of machines, particularly the province of Trapani and most of the retailers in all province of Palermo.

The Poultry sector

The poultry sector consists of various highly specialized phenological phases which are integrated between them and they are:

The chick bred from 0 to 75 days (growth of the chicks)

The laying hens breeding (from 75 to 120 days) for consumption eggs

The placement of laying hens in the sheds

The third activity is taken by the holding and the bred avian specie is the chicken (Gallus Gallus); about this kind of breeding the animals are called " laying hens for human consumption".

Main activities of breeding cycle are the management of the animals and of their environment, the management animal feeding and the management of livestock wastes.

The fact that the holding correctly curries the first two mentioned activities reduces the incidence of some typical syndromes of animals living in intensive breeding farms , such as enteric and respiratory diseases (ills health); these syndromes cause a reduction of animal welfare and an augmentation of mortality, increasing environmental impact of the breeding, a few emissions into the atmosphere and an high number of carcasses to be disposed of.

The management of animals and of the environment in which they live

To ensure the highest level of sanitation and disinfection, the company uses the management model "all full, all empty." This system provides for the filling of the shed with animals peers (all full); subsequently, after the production phase, the shed is emptied and completely sanitized with specific chemical products. The sanitization phase has a during time of 15 days and is called "biological rest". During this time, the chicks bred in a different part of the holding ended the maturation phase before entering into production step.

Productive breed

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In the holding there are 100000 productive animals and 20-25000 pullets of Livornese and Tetra Brown species (white laying hens). It is noted that animal welfare is constantly monitored according the self-control plan, drawn up in accordance with national control plan of the Salmonella Enteridis and Tiphymurium in laying hens of Gallus Gallus specie – European Community Regulation No2007/849, in agreement with the AUSL 6, Veterinarian District of Misilmeri . Relating the self-control manual, the Conca D'Uovo Company is adressed at the advice and analysis service about self-control of foods, HACCP Legislative Decree no.155/97 and the EC Regulation no. 852/04 by Ecologica of Doctor Antonino Buffa & C.s.a.s. Company. The Tetra Brown specie was selected for her capacity of eggs production.

The breeding of animals

The production cycle begins with the bought of day-old chicks, which are bred in special structures (broodings). The chicks just conferred in the company are very well adapted to the breeding in cage thanks to prophylaxis, as well as to optimal conditions of the environment in which they are bred and at a correct temperature of 30°C.

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After each weaning cycle, that is to say before of new chicks leverage, a passage of the pre-laying hens in productive cages is accomplished. Thereafter, they pass into the pullet stage and after 22-24 weeks they enter into production phase. The first 17 weeks of the pullet life are critical; for this reason the company adopts an intelligent management which ensure that the pullets arrive in deposition cages being readied to give the best of its genetic potential. Any mistakes made during the first 17 weeks can not be corrected during the laying step.

The hens are bred in battery cages in line with the requirements of the Legislative Decree 267 about hygiene and animal welfare, in an area of 550 or 750 cm² per head which corresponds to a space containing from 4 to 8 animals. The cages are arranged in overlapped levels (from three to eight). The hens remain in the cages for 60 weeks on average, optimal time for egg laying. The use of the "forced molting technique" , phase of a during of two weeks in which the hours of light and water, food quality and food quantity are suddenly reduced causing a fall of egg-laying (so as to let rest the hens) ensures that the lengthens laying time gets longer to 100 weeks and more.

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The eggs are automatically collected through a conveyor belt (anaconda system) which is located in the front of the cages from which they are transported into the place where then they are sorted and packed. After they are subjected to a inkjet presses with the code 3(breeding in cages) IT(Italian production) 048 (Istat code) 039(production breeding code). This code identifies the agri-food traceability (Dlgs reg CE 852/2004 HACCP).

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Artificial heating of the shelters during the coldest periods is not practiced, given also high density of the animals; in summer it is instead practiced the ventilation-cooling through cooling systems per ventilation which is forced with the use of helical fans installed in the perimeter parts. The sheds are also equipped with perimeter windows, manageable thanks to the automatism and sometimes equipped with automatic intervention systems which is connected to environmental temperature probes (pad cooling).

With forced ventilation, compared with to natural ventilation system, we have a better microclimate management even with an higher number of animal, thanks to an higher quantity of oxygen introduced in the sheds. Optimum temperature is between 21 and 27°C with a relative humidity of 40-60%. This fact ensures a replacement of 4 m² per kg of live weight per hour. Laying hens can provide up to 300 eggs a year.

The egg production is hardly influenced by the change of the daily light duration to which the pullets are exposed. The number of eggs, the egg weight, the vitality and the profit are favorably influenced by a correct lighting program. Basilar rules about the management light in the company are:

To let the chicks kept at 20-22 hours of light in their first week of age to 30 lux of intensity, to switch from 20 hours of light in the second week to 5 lux; to kept chicks aged 7 to 9 weeks at 10-12 hours of light (in next weeks), or to maximum length natural light, in open sheds, between the 6th and the 17th weeks of age; to provide a

light stimulation when the body weight has reached the adult weight; the increase should be at least 1 hour; increasing the length light of 15-30 minutes per week every two weeks, until 16 hours are reached. The stimulation time ends preferably for 28-32 weeks. It is also increased the light intensity to 10-30 lux.
It is never decreased the light duration and intensity during the laying phase.
At the end of the cycle the chickens are manually transported in the trucks which will put them to slaughter, so the cleaning and disinfecting of the places and watering system start.
These cleaning works of the sheds between a cycle to another reduces the bacterial load on behalf of new group of laying hens in production. The shed is cleaned with some organic materials through the blow of compressed air and spraying a solution containing a detergent /disinfectant (quaternary ammonium salts or iodine solutions, called liquad).
This method of dry cleaning avoids the production of waste water and allows a very rapid drying, after which the shed is disinfected before of next production cycle.
During the cleaning phase, the shed is ventilated to ameliorate the remove of organic material and rapid drying of the environment. The surfaces at the top of the shed, the air windows, the crates fans, the impellers, the louvers and the water pipes are also cleaned.
Finally, before that cleaning works begins, the feed and the "pollina" are removed. After cleaning/disinfection works that is to say before that other animals go into the buildings, a biological rest of 15-21 days is preview. To verify eventual presence of pathogenic species of Salmonella, particularly Salmonella enteritidis, tests with buffers are carried out.

The management of food animals
In the Holding there is a feed ad hoc, through which the company gets optimal blends of necessary nutritive elements, for the growth, the weaning and the needs of animals in production. Here raw materials (grain, flour) such as soybean, maize, sunflower and other elements such as supplements, vitamins and minerals are stored, grounded and mixed.

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All of feeds and food supplements are certified "GMO free" and guaranteed by the manufacturers, with the exception of soybeans.
The laying hens diet consists of an high carbohydrates component and of a low percentage of proteins and fats, of vitamins and minerals, in order to ensure physiological balance and so to obtain an optimal production quality.
Camions engaged in cereals carriage, transport the feed in the sheds with the use of a telescopic arm which brings the feed in the silos.

Actually the Holding opts for future developments by using disciplinary means which respect the Kyoto Treaty and the welfare animal, and so anthropic action and agro-environmental context.
The internet site of the Company is *concaduovo.hostzi.com*, which is in maintenance.