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Editorial

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Volume 23, Issue 2, of *Economia agro-alimentare / Food Economy*, features six regular Articles and one Note, all written in English. The topics cover several important issues: consumer preferences and behaviour, food security, government subsidies for crop insurance, farm digitalisation, and supply chain power relationships. The range of the analysis goes from local to global and covers geographical areas in Italy, Albania, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Nigeria, and the UK.

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In the article authored by Biagia De Devitiis, Rosaria Viscecchia, Valentina Carfora, Carla Cavallo, Gianni Cicia, Teresa Del Giudice, Concetta Menna, Gianluca Nardone, and Antonio Seccia, titled “Parents’ trust in food safety and healthiness of children’s diets: a TPB model explaining the role of retailers and government”, the Authors use the theoretical framework of Theory of Planned Behavior. The model is extended to ‘trust’ to consider that perceived risks about safety can harm parents’ intentions due to the subsequent food scandals that affect the reputation of this specific food industry. A survey of 223 parents was carried out. The results suggest that perceived behavioral control and attitude are the most important factors

in determining the intention in parents of giving their children fruit and vegetables. Trust has been proved to influence parents' intentions, but only related to retailers and not to the government.

In the article "Whose Salad Is Organic? An Attribute Segmentation Perspective – Evidence from Albania", Elena Kokthi, Irina Canco and Eneida Topulli focus on consumers perception of organic vegetables and fruit. A survey is made on a sample of 324 consumers in different markets in the Tirana district in Albania. The aim is to understand consumer perceptions of organic attributes and identify the attributes consumers consider when buying fruit and vegetables. By using a Contingent Valuation Method, the authors analyse consumers' willingness to pay for organic products. Here, it is estimated that consumers are willing to pay an average premium of 27.7% for organic vegetables and 28.3% for organic fruit. In addition, a Cluster Analysis is applied to classify consumers into similar segments according to their willingness to pay for organic products as well as behaviour and motivation in relation to the higher price of these products. Findings from this study also indicate that consumers are linking organic attributes with health. The majority also use price as the main indicator of the quality of the product. The authors argue that organic products may serve as a farming system to improve farmer's income in the future.

The article by Francesco Zecca and Marco D'Errico, "Food security and land use: the Ethiopian case", focuses on the impact of Large-Scale Land Acquisition (LSLA) on local food and water security", provides an in-depth analysis of the LSLA in Ethiopia. LSLA refers to land acquisition by private or public, national or international investors and agribusinesses on a long-term basis to produce agricultural commodities, mainly for export purposes. The paper provides a quantitative assessment to estimate the potential food and water appropriation of LSLA in Ethiopia. After a brief literature review, the paper explores the effect of LSLA on food and water security by a simulation analysis to predict the change in food and water supply had the entire acquired land was cropped with domestic food (i.e. staple crop), under the assumption of a balanced diet in the East African region and export-oriented LSLA. The results reveal that under the absence of LSLA, an additional 7.1 million people in Ethiopia would have access to a well-balanced diet. The paper proposes a need for stringent and binding regulations in addition to voluntary principles led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). Comprehensive regulations on a global basis to issue new policies for land governance on agricultural investment will have a significant impact on food security problems in many developing countries in the Global South.

In the article titled "Prevalence and correlates of food insecurity in rural Nigeria," Oluwakemi Adeola Obayelu, Emem Ime Akpan, and Ayodeji

O. Ojo, analyse the dynamics of food insecurity among households in rural Nigeria, using data from the Living Standard Measurement Survey-Integrated Survey on Agriculture (LSMS-ISA). They found that Food insecurity status tends to increase in larger households, in those with a dependency, with a female and an older household head. Male, married heads are more likely to be food secured because of their spouses also having income-generating activities.

Muhammad Yasir Yusuf, Rahmat Fadhil, T. Saiful Bahri, Hafizh Maulana authored the article “Comparison study of agricultural insurance government subsidy and farmers’ self-subsistent premium in Indonesia”. The authors analyse a government-subsidised Agricultural Insurance program to support rice farmers in Indonesia, using panel data on the program participants available for the years 2016-2019. They test, through regression analysis, the moderating role of government subsidies and farmers’ self-subsistent premium on the overall area under the program, and confirm that the Government’s subsidy significantly increase the interested land area, while farmers’ self-subsistent premium has a negative impact.

The article “Innovation in Basilicata agriculture: from tradition to digital” by Maria Assunta D’Oronzio and Carmela Sica addresses digitalisation in the agro-food sector due to cooperation between public and private actors involved in rural development policies. Focused on Basilicata, this paper analyses the eleven Operational Groups of the European Partnerships for Innovation (EIP-AGRI) – classifying them by type of partnership, composition, main innovative tool adopted, production sector to which they belong – as well as the digital innovations they transferred to Lucanian farms to foster their smart, competitive and sustainable development. The authors verified the role of Lucanian Operational Groups in stimulating the adoption of 4.0 technologies in agricultural production processes and agro-food supply chains. Although economic (high drone flights costs), cultural (poor knowledge of technologies and foreign languages) and infrastructure (lack of fast broadband in rural areas) difficulties, the main innovative applications transferred to Basilicata farms resulted in precision farming technologies (such as satellites, drones, proximity sensors), and information collection systems, software and data analysis, as well as robotics and automation. Such an analysis can inspire similar research in other regions/countries: it should be the foundation for any future policy updates or revisions regarding digitalisation in the agri-food sector.

Finally, in the Note by Malik and Hingley, titled “Consumer demand information as a re-balancing tool for power asymmetry between food retailers and suppliers” the authors present a conceptual model that analyses the balance of power between retailers and suppliers in the supply chain to reduce information asymmetry and under conditions of mutual dependence.

Based on the theories of power dependence and resource dependence, the use of demand information is conceptualised to understand how power asymmetry can be balanced for mutual benefits by drawing on consumer information (shopper demand) as a critical data set to enable suppliers to manage mutual dependence. While part of the literature postulates that power dependence is a major cause of instability in supply chain relationships, other scholars argue that the presence of a powerful partner adds stability with resources, and a weaker partner should adapt to living with the relevant arrangement. According to this study, the co-option mechanism adds stability and reduces uncertainty through the exchange of resources. Power asymmetry in relationships is found to affect sustainability, especially in times of sales promotion for both retailers and suppliers.

With the previous issue, we welcomed Maro Vlachopoulou as a new member of the Editorial Board. Unfortunately, due to other commitments, she had to resign. We thank her for the commitment and contribution in the editorial process during the past months.

The journal's Scientific Advisory Board evaluated the articles published in the journal during the year 2020. The winner of the Best Paper Award is "The technical efficiency of the Apulian winegrowing farms with different irrigation water supply systems" authored by Ruggiero Sardaro and Piermichele La Sala. The prize will be awarded during the next IEA Annual Meeting that will take place in Verona, September 30-October 1, 2021.