

The best flower in the Mediterranean

« **L**orking the land means following its times and respecting them without haste". This is the motto of an agricultural company that makes of quality without compromises its primary mission. Fabio Piras, commercial manager of Fratelli Piras, starts from this assumption to explain the work ethic of his Sardinian company. "This is why we have integrated modern agriculture technologies with farming techniques inspired by tradition - explains Piras -. Our goal is to bring the most fresh and healthy products to the market, using the lowest possible number of treatments. Our crops are therefore all zero residue: we always harvest at the right time, in order to offer only products where no residues of pesticides or other chemical agents can be traced".

Since our company was founded in 1975, our goal has always been to produce fruits and vegetables of the highest quality. "We take care of every aspect of cultivation, from plowing to harvesting, and with refrigerated vehicles we deliver products ready to be processed and placed on the market all over Italy - says Piras -. We are deeply rooted in our territory, the Medio Campidano, from which we have inherited the following values - the importance of family, the simplicity of everyday life and a strong work ethic. Our strength is all in the relationships that we have created and toughened over the years with our retailers, who buy our products to transform and market them for the whole country, and above all with our employees. The majority of our staff has been working with us for more than a decade now and together we share every aspect of the hardships and of the joys of working in the fields".

Fratelli Piras specializes in the cultivation of the Sardinian violet artichoke

The fruits of a land with zero residue in the words of Fabio Piras, who brings the experience of his company in Sardinia as an example of agriculture linked to traditions and combined with the best modern technologies



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"to which we have added five other varieties over the years - the Romanesco, the Apollo, the Life, the Tema and the Ares - goes on the commercial manager -. In addition to artichokes, in our 100 hectares we also grow winter melon, seedless watermelon, fodder, wheat, straw and alfalfa that we sell to farmers here in the island. We also sell wild and cultivated asparagus, thanks to a consolidated collaboration with local producers. In particular, it should be noted that almost all of our productions have been certified with GlobalGAP, the production protocol for the fruit and vege-

table sector shared and accepted by the major European distribution groups. Respecting this protocol means guaranteeing the commercialization of safe and traceable agricultural products, which respect both the environment and people's health. The GlobalGAP was born in 1997 and over the years it has evolved to integrate new aspects, like the more sustainable exploitation of environmental resources and also a greater respect of workers' conditions". Fratelli Piras is a family-run business, born from the passion and collaboration of three brothers Bruno, Paolo



Fratelli Piras is located in Samassi (Su), Sardinia
www.fratellipiras.it

and Ignazio. "Together they still manage the entire production cycle, from soil preparation to harvesting and transport. Today, the family tradition is renewed with Giacomo, Riccardo and me, that is to say, the sons of Ignazio. Our territory is probably the central and most important aspect of our work. Agriculture, commitment, as well as history, community and tradition are the keywords that best describe the Medio Campidano, "the green province" of Sardinia, one of the most immaculate and unpolluted areas in Italy and one of the less impacted by men.

Our farm is based in Samassi, a small town with just over 5 thousand inhabitants, surrounded by a vast fertile plain. Together with agriculture and other productive activities, the Medio Campidano is also known for its millenary history. The archaeological discoveries found in Samassi and in the neighboring municipalities date between 1500 and 2000 years before Christ, testifying a territory that has always attracted mankind for its fertility and natural resources".

■ **Elena Ricci**

The violet artichoke

"For over a hundred years the artichoke has been synonymous with Sardinia - says Fabio Piras, commercial manager of Fratelli Piras -. It is one of the most popular and deeply rooted cultivation on the island, which has found its land of choice in the Medio Campidano, thanks to its fertile soil and to its centuries-old farming experience. Our company has specialized for more than 30 years in the production of the artichoke, the best flower in the Mediterranean, and in particular of the violet artichoke. The violet artichoke is characterized by a cylindrical shape and by the presence of little pronounced thorns. The name comes from the color of the leaves, which degrades from the pale purple of the base to an intense green near the thorns. It is a very popular variety on the national territory, particularly in central Italy. It is undoubtedly our flagship artichoke - year after year we have selected the best plants to guarantee a production of the highest level, both in terms of quantity and above all of quality".

