



Rural History 2017

11 - 14 September, Leuven

View abstract data

Abstract title Growth of international markets and transformation of local production systems in the Italian agri-food sector (1861-1914)
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Abstract text

In the last few decades of the 19th century, the demand for Italian foodstuffs from domestic and international markets increased almost continuously (abroad, particularly in Europe and in the Americas, in part as a consequence of mass migration).

Innovative technological processes and scientific knowledge, new machinery, the availability of steam and electric power and new preservation and transport systems allowed the production to grow.

In some cases, the advent of new manufacturing systems shifted agri-food production from a craft to an industry. Former small family businesses transformed themselves into larger enterprises, which controlled the purchase of agricultural product from the farms, founded new plants, provided the processing of food and sold the produce on domestic and international markets. Industrial productions based on the importation of raw materials also took place.

The paper will exam the role played by entrepreneurs and industrialists in the collection, processing and trade of products. The study will particularly focus on their business strategies, analysing the transformation in local production and processing systems and the development of commercial relations and new markets, which seem to have been mainly important in promoting the growth and innovation of the sector.

Title of the related panel : International food markets and local production systems in the 19th-early 20th centuries

Abstract number of the
related panel : 23