

Food Strategies in the Mediterranean Basin, Possible for Food Safety and Security

Authors : Lorenza Sganzzetta, Nunzia Borrelli

Abstract : The research intends to reflect on the current mapping of the Food Strategies, on the reasons why in the planning objectives panorama, such sustainability priorities are located in those geographic areas and on the evolutions of these priorities of the Mediterranean planning dispositions. The whirling population growth that is affecting global cities is causing an enormous challenge to conventional resource-intensive food production and supply and the urgent need to face food safety, food security and sustainability concerns. Urban or Territorial Food Strategies can provide an interesting path for the development of this new agenda within the imperative principle of sustainability. In the specific, it is relevant to explore what 'sustainability' means within these policies. Most of these plans include actions related to four main components and interpretations of sustainability that are food security and safety, food equity, environmental sustainability itself and cultural identity and, at the designing phase, they differ slightly from each other according to the degree of approximation to one of these dimensions. Moving from these assumptions, the article would analyze some practices and policies representatives of different Food Strategies of the world and focus on the Mediterranean ones, on the problems and negative externalities from which they start, on the first interventions that are implementing and on their main objectives. We will mainly use qualitative data from primary and secondary collections. So far, an essential observation could have been made about the relationship between these sustainability dimensions and geography. In statistical terms, the US and Canadian policies tended to devote a large research space to health issues and access to food; those northern European showed a special attention to the environmental issues and the shortening of the chain; and finally the policies that, even in limited numbers, were being developed in the Mediterranean basin, were characterized by a strong territorial and cultural imprint and their major aim was to preserve local production and the contact between the productive land and the end consumer. Recently, though, Mediterranean food planning strategies are focusing more on health related and food accessibility issues and analyzing our diets not just as a matter of culture and territorial branding but as tools for reducing public health costs and accessibility to fresh food for everyone. The article would reflect then on how Food Safety, Food Security and Health are entering the new agenda of the Mediterranean Food Strategies. The research hypothesis suggests that the economic crisis that in the last years invested both producers and consumers had a significant impact on the nutrition habits and on the redefinition of food poverty, even in the fatherland of the healthy Mediterranean diet. This trend and other variables influenced the orientation and the objectives of the food strategies.

Keywords : food security, food strategy, health, sustainability

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