



COOPERATIVA
SANTA MARGHERITA

season after season the dream grows anew...





E' nell'ora alta che ai mirti
ai corbezzoli e al sole cocente
gabbiani
rubano arditi i raggi
e ne fanno irti
fasci di vinchi d'oro
per la spiaggia e frutti saporiti...



They say that we are an important reality in Sardinia's agribusiness sector and a fine example of a farm enterprise managed with far-sightedness and efficiency...

...But we prefer to talk about how we came to accept a challenge.



Before becoming a plant, one must be a seed. We knew that in 1989, when the Santa Margherita Cooperative was founded. We were young and had a certain experience in greenhouse management, but our main assets were a good dose of enthusiasm and a spirit of initiative. We felt we were a good seed, but that is not enough: good soil is needed.

And the old soil of Sardinia, the soil that feeds the centuries-old holm oak, is excellent soil. We based our bold commitment on these considerations, and the results were not long in coming. After the merger with the Terra e Sole Cooperative, our new partners' confidence increased our enthusiasm and audacity and, in 1997, we received recognition from the European Community for the expansion and solidity of our organization of producers.

At that point, we realized that the germinated seed had become a plant; but we still faced the challenge of helping it in its growth.

THE SEED AND THE PLANT





*Maestrale brividi increspa
e l'onda di vespro fumo
culla ed offusca e sale.
Tutto sprofonda al nulla. Sola
l'ombra resta risparmiata con il vento
che a folate raffiche vibranti
soffonde dei notturni gelsomini
vivo il profumo e viola...*

AN EXTRAORDINARY CHALLENGE

Today, the Santa Margherita Terra e Sole Cooperative has 180 members who work some 80 hectares of greenhouses located prevalently in the area of Santa Margherita di Pula, in south Sardinia. Another 500 hectares, located in different areas of the island, are used for growing *artichokes*.

Our experience in fifteen years of activity represents an extraordinary exploit and an exciting story to tell.

What was needed was a dynamic approach, one that would make it possible to introduce rapid changes in marketing strategies, structures, technical organization and the kinds of produce that would satisfy the demands of rapidly evolving markets.

We made the tough decision to limit quantity in favour of high quality and to raise our crops only in soil.

Our obstinate and rigorous resolve to find solutions based on the use of leading-edge farming techniques allowed us to limit the use of chemicals, thus improving product quality and at the same time safeguarding the environment and the health of consumers.

And the challenge goes on...









All'oblio lento lambisce
All'oblio lento lambisce
sprofondata ed incatena il mare
le strade dell'antica città'.

Veloce le percorre a volo
ritroso libera
l'ombra di un gabbiano...
l'ombra di un gabbiano...

But we must say that in this challenge we have been supported by two truly special allies: first of all the land on which we operate, where the woodlands are the largest and the beaches the most beautiful in Sardinia.

This land has been farmland since the 19th century, when the Counts Nieddu introduced farm machinery on their land at *Santa Margharita*, dried the marshes and began raising crops. But the history of this land goes much farther back: it has been inhabited since Neolithic times and was chosen by the Phoenicians as their first settlement, Nora, Sardinia's first town. In Roman times it was *Caput viae*, the starting point of an important road and the point from which distances were measured.



CAPUT VIAE

And we, who have contributed to the redefinition of farming in this area, have made it our *Caput viae*, from which to measure the distance we have covered since the time when we could have rested on our laurels. But we have never considered this as an option: we know that we still have a long story to tell...





*Ondeggia e trema ebbra
la spiaggia riarse cicale
esausto segno lo stagno
sentore misto di amare
resine e sale esala. Il cisto
che il vento si levi invoca,
e il ginepro la fillirea e il lentisco...*

THE OTHER ALLIES...



Our other allies in this adventure are Sardinia's soil, wind and sun, its insularity, with the action of the sea to influence the climate to best advantage.

Cultivation in the soil, natural sunlight and pollination give our produce the characteristics of total genuineness, which means full and harmonious flavour together with a more intense and natural fragrance.

Sardinia's land is blessed with the precious virtue of transforming adversities into flavourful opportunities: in particular, scanty rainfall makes the aquifers slightly brackish. This means less production but also an improvement in the qualitative characteristics and enhanced flavour of the produce.

Unique allies, but then come the winds. The southern winds bring the humidity that benefits the farms closest to the sea, but it is the mistral, the northwest wind, that limits the dampness in the air, keeps the plants in a constant state of water stress and enhances certain organoleptic characteristics of our produce.

The two strong points of our system of production – quality control and environmental protection – show that we consider the challenge still ongoing...







Dalle giojaie
fulmine l'astore ad ali stese
discende alle pietraie e alle dune,
discende alle pietraie e alle dune,
l'occhio di ossidiana
brividi scintillii di onde
catturando...
catturando...





For us, quality is of the utmost importance. It has been so from the very beginning of the challenge.

But we did not want to stop at the growing of quality produce: we had to safeguard it and make sure that quality was maintained all the way to the consumer's dining table. Thus we decided to organize the work in the member companies and in the Cooperative itself in accordance with an ISO 9001 certified quality control system. We now also employ a system of traceability from beginning to end, which is certified by an independent agency in accordance with UNI 10939 specifications. All this makes it possible to monitor the product throughout the entire cycle, from the greenhouse to when it leaves the warehouse,



QUALITY CONTROL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

providing information and the possibility of intervening in real time, which means added value for our products.

The objective of producing with the highest priority assigned to the health of consumers and respect for the environment led to our decision to cultivate using *integrated defence* methods, a farming technique that takes advantage of natural resources and ecosystem regulatory mechanisms which keep to a minimum the need for chemicals.





Possente
all'abbraccio
ondivago del vento
il leccio assorto. Tra i rami
segreto moltiplicato cingvettio...
Ali
per dare volo un giorno
all'anima sua
antica e radicata?
Sempreverde
riggermoglia il sogno...

CROSSING THE SEA...

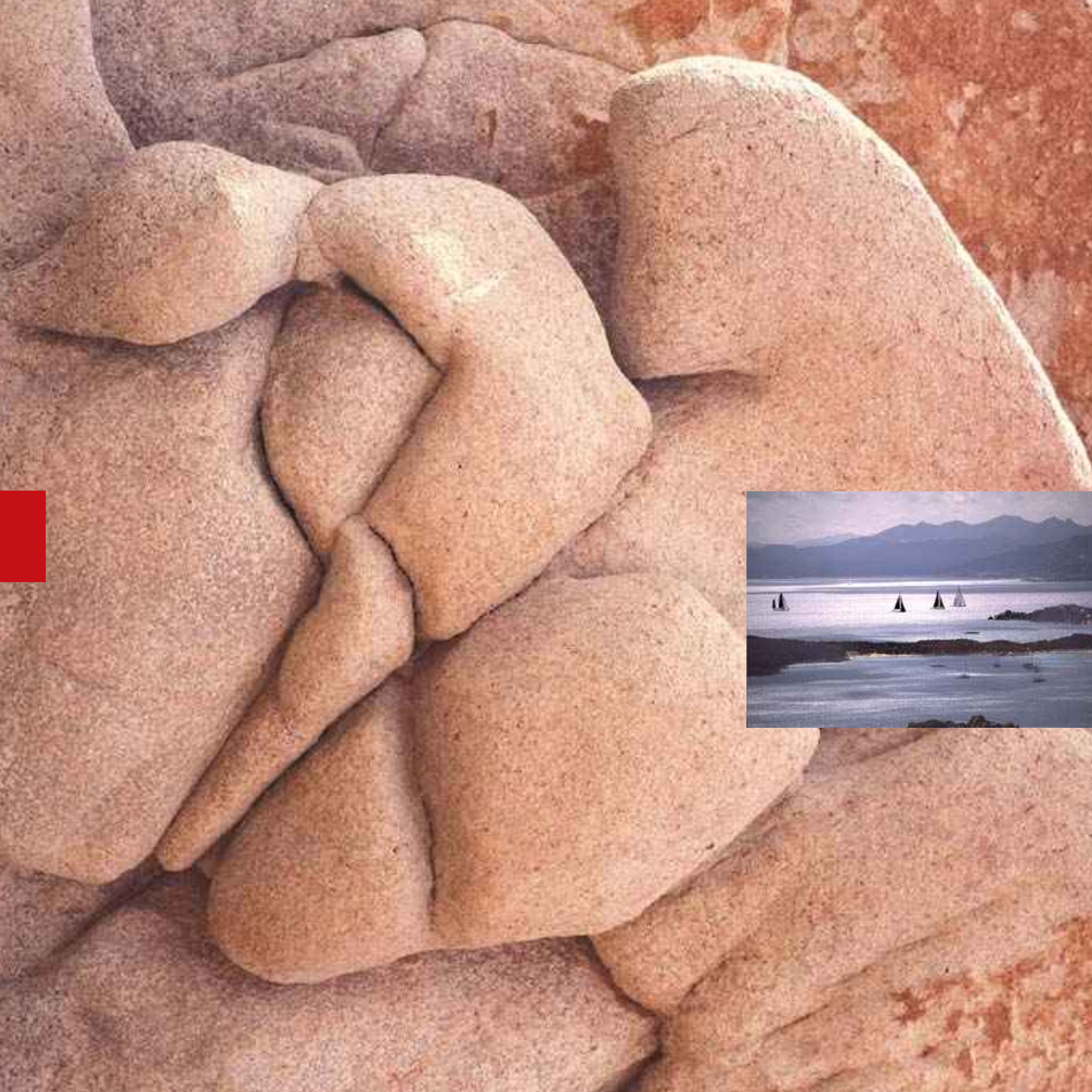
Our stringent policies concerning quality control and respect for the environment are a good calling card for presentation on European markets.

This is where our land becomes a *caput viae* from which we measure the ever shorter distance that separates us from the rest of Europe, where we send the incomparable flavours and fragrances of Sardinia's produce.

Over the years, our commitment has seen the seed grow into a robust plant, the fruits of which now cross the sea.

They say that we have succeeded in our challenge. But we prefer to say that we have not yet stopped striving for victory...







COOPERATIVA
SANTA MARGHERITA

COOPERATIVA SANTA MARGHERITA TERRA E SOLE

Producer organization recognized under EC 2200/96

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GREEN-HOUSE GROWING
GRADING AND PACKAGING OF TOMATOES



PRODUCT TRACEABILITY SYSTEM