



## INNOVATION JOURNEY

Francesca Casaluci moved back to her native village in Salento (Apulia) after graduating in anthropology. She then took part in environmental justice movements against industries that destroy the local ecosystem and are held responsible for increasing health problems. Together with other friends, she realized that small farmers (especially those practicing organic and natural agriculture) were particularly affected by the extractive practices of these industries and that a different model of agriculture needed to be supported.

In 2011 Francesca co-founded the association Salento Km0, of which she is currently the president. The aim is to create a network of solidarity economy in the Salento area. In 2012, Salento Km0 recovered and catalogued the seeds of ancient varieties and published a Guide to promote small local farmers who adopt natural and sustainable agricultural practices. They contributed to the establishment of the "Network for Natural Agriculture in Salento," which involves local food producers and associations that share similar ethical values. The project expanded in 2015 when the *To Kalò Fai* Laboratory was opened in a public space provided by the Municipality of Zollino, where events, workshops and dinners dedicated to the enhancement of local products are organized, as well as

a weekly farmers' market. A new, updated edition of the Guide was published in 2017.



## THE INNOVATION IMPACT

Salento Km0's action is characterized by a strong focus on environmental sustainability, interconnected with cultural and social sustainability.

Over time, the collective work done has led to the establishment of several Solidarity Purchasing Groups (GAS) in Salento; to the drafting of a "Manifesto of the Salento Km0 Network", signed by numerous local realities, which are committed to defending the environment, protecting the health of consumers, respecting the rights of workers. The network of farmers who signed the Manifesto was chosen by a local municipality to supply the nursery school canteen. Furthermore, the association organizes events, workshop activities, exhibitions, publications, meetings, audiovisual products, also collaborating with local institutions.

## USEFUL LINKS

<https://www.salentokm0.com/>