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Editorial for the Issue 2/2024

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We are pleased to introduce the latest issue of *Economia Agro-alimentare/ Food Economy*. This issue contains three regular articles plus one guest editorial and three articles selected for an external special issue. As always, all articles have been rigorously peer-reviewed, and are all written in English. The topics reflect a broad spectrum of contemporary challenges and innovations in the agri-food economy, covering themes such as food production, consumer behaviour, and sustainability.

The scope of the research presented spans diverse geographical areas, including Europe (Albania, Ireland, Switzerland), South America (Brazil), and Asia (Afghanistan).

The authors are affiliated with Institutions based in Albania, Brazil, Italy, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the USA.

As the complexity of global agri-food systems evolves, this issue brings together critical research addressing various aspects and ongoing challenges and opportunities within the sector.

In “*Reasons for Milking System Adoption: The Case of Switzerland*”, Dierk Schmid explores the decision-making processes of Swiss dairy farmers regarding their milking systems. This study highlights that while reducing labor and improving flexibility are central motivators, other factors such as animal welfare and family time also play crucial roles in adopting automatic

milking systems (AMS). Schmid's work provides valuable insights into how Swiss farmers balance economic pressures with lifestyle considerations, offering important policy implications, particularly concerning investment subsidies.

Ana Beatriz Goes Maia Marques and her co-authors delve into environmental and socioeconomic sustainability within food systems in their article, "*Elements of Environmental and Socioeconomic Sustainability Related to the Food System: A Meta-Synthesis*". By analyzing case studies, the authors identify key factors that influence the transition towards more sustainable food systems. Their findings emphasize the interconnectedness of production, supply, and consumption and the importance of considering these dimensions when promoting sustainable and healthy diets. This meta-synthesis is a timely contribution to understanding the complexities of food systems as they relate to both the environment and public health.

The study "*Factors that Affect the Intention of Consumers to Buy Food Products Online*", by Eda Luga and Gentjan Mehmeti, investigates the growing trend of online food purchasing. Using structural equation modelling, the authors identify trust and risk reduction as pivotal factors in consumers' willingness to buy food products online. Conversely, performance risks remain a significant barrier. This research sheds light on the evolving consumer behaviour in Albania and provides important insights for retailers and policymakers on enhancing the online shopping experience for food products.

This issue also features a Special Issue titled "*Revisiting the Slow Food Movement: Heritage, Innovation, and Sustainability in Alternative Food Networks*", guest edited by Luca Cacciolatti, Soo Hee Lee, Giovanna Sacchi, and Jinha Lee. This collection of articles reexamines the Slow Food Movement, offering fresh insights into how heritage, innovation, and sustainability intersect within alternative food networks. The article "*Alternative Food Networks in Afghanistan: The Role of Collaborative Agribusiness in Food Security*", by Safia Amirzai and Vinh Sum Chau, explores the critical role of collaborative agribusiness in enhancing food security in Afghanistan. Matthew Pauley's work, "*A Social Practice Perspective of Ireland's Lobster Cultural Food Heritage*", delves into Ireland's lobster heritage, emphasizing how social practices shape and sustain this cultural food tradition. Finally, "*How Living Heritage Relates to Alpine Food? Evidence from the Entremont Region (Switzerland)*", authored by Maria Anna Bertolino, investigates the relationship between living heritage and food culture in the Alpine region of Switzerland, offering a fascinating look into the Entremont area's food traditions. Together, these articles provide a nuanced exploration of the Slow Food Movement's ongoing relevance and its impact on diverse food networks across the globe.

We are also pleased to announce an important transition in the leadership of *Economia Agro-alimentare/Food Economy*. The Presidential Board of the Italian Society of Agri-food Economics (SIEA) has appointed new Editors-in-Chief, Valeria Borsellino (University of Palermo, Italy) and Søren Marcus Pedersen (University of Copenhagen, Denmark), who will take over the management of the journal starting with issue 1/2025.

We are confident that their combined expertise and vision will continue to advance the journal's commitment to academic excellence and its role in fostering critical research within the agri-food sector. We welcome Valeria and Søren warmly and look forward to seeing the journal thrive under their leadership.

This issue also marks a significant milestone for the journal, as our articles from 2022 are listed in Web of Science. This achievement reflects the tireless efforts of our editorial team, reviewers, authors, and the wider community, and we are truly grateful for their ongoing support.

Lastly, we would like to sincerely thank the editorial and production staff at FrancoAngeli Edizioni, whose dedication ensures the continued excellence of our publication. We look forward to working with them in the year ahead to further the success of *Economia Agro-alimentare/Food Economy*.