



Pro-Alpe: a system project for management of pastoral resources and valorization of Italian typical alpine dairy productions

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Objectives

The *Pro-Alpe* Research Project (<http://proalpe.entecra.it/>) aims to **define operative models for the characterization and valorization of typical mountain dairy production systems**. The systemic approach adopted investigated the main components of the system (pasture resource, dairy cattle, milk production, processing and quality, cheese characteristics) to assess the relationships among them, to **build traceability models from pasture to cheese** and to **obtain technical information to improve the efficiency of alpine production systems**.

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Main results

The Project comprises three research work packages related to:

- 1) **models for the traceability** of the “alpine typical cheese” production systems and the improvement of their efficiency, with particular reference to the pastoral sward characteristics;
- 2) **chemical and microbiological characterization of milk and cheese** in relation with the exploited pasture vegetation;
- 3) **identification and characterization of different vegetation types** in the alpine area to support typical dairy production systems.

Within a wide range of research actions, investigations were conducted on **chemical compounds which may be useful as traceability markers of the vegetation-milk-cheese systems**.

The Project is carried out by **nine Research Units**, which operate in different locations of the Alps. **The whole traceability model is investigated at two sites, each with two contrasting vegetations**. They encompass the production areas of Asiago d'Allevo, Toma Piemontese and Bitto PDO cheeses.