Abstract

Competitiveness of Italian high quality wines. 
A case study on the Collio area in Italy

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Purpose
This study aims to analyse the features of Italian quality wines producers. In particular, it tries to identify the link between their structural features and the strategies they adopt to favour their market competitiveness.
Our purpose, in fact, was to understand the opportunity that producers carry out to value local products, such as high quality wines.

Data and methodology
To verify our theoretical hypothesis we use a database derived from a specific survey. The survey was conducted by submitting a questionnaire to quality wine producers. All producers (177) are members of a Consortium, whose aim is to control that all quality wines meet the required legal standards to obtain the Collio “Controlled Denomination of Origin” (DOC).
The Collio is a viticultural area located in the North-East part of Italy, near the Slovenian border.
Through the questionnaire we collected some information about structural features of wine producers and the options and strategies they use to increase the competitiveness of their quality wines.
In particular, we aimed to explain the linkages between structural features of wine producers and the adoption of specific strategies.
The paper examines the role that wine producers assign to the Consortium, facing the changes in the wine production wrought by globalisation.
The analysis was conducted through the application of multivariate statistics.

Results
The results point out some strong linkages between the structure of quality wine firms and the tactics and options they used to handle the problem of competitiveness.
From the analysis of the collected information we underline that all wine producers try to value their product by a sustainable production, that is able to create a unique cultural identity and to develop rural areas.
We identify the role of sustainable viticulture in producing not only quality wine, but also a lot of further social benefits (externalities-public goods), that seems to be strategic for local development (i.e. the importance of beautiful landscapes to increase the development of sustainable tourism; the existence of wine production in marginal areas to avoid abandon). In fact, the link among high quality wine production, socioeconomic sistem and territory (“terroir”), in particular as regard the landscape, has always been very important.
In this field, the role of a Consortium is perceived as vital especially from bigger wine producers. The results point out that they underline the importance of promotion, but only by cooperation among all stakeholders.