

Reflections on the role of healthy eating style. Insights from citrus of the South of Italy

Cristina Lupu¹ , Antonietta Ivona² , Donatella Privitera³ ,
Marius Constantin⁴ 

¹ University of West, Department of Geography, 16A Pestalozzi, Timisoara, Timis, 300115, Romania;

² University of Bari, Aldo Moro, Department of Economy and Finance, Piazza Umberto I, 1, 70121 Bari BA, Italy;

³ University of Catania, Department of Educational Sciences, Via Biblioteca 4, 95124 Catania CT, Italy;

⁴ The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Department of Agri-food and Environmental Economics,
5-7 Mihail Moxa, 010961, Bucharest, Romania

cristina.lupu@e-uvv.ro (C.L.); antonietta.ivona@uniba.it (A.I.); donatella.privitera@unict.it (D.P.);

marius.constantin@eam.ase.ro (M.C.)

Received: 8 November 2024; Revised: 7 December 2024; Accepted: 11 December 2024;

Published online: 16 December 2024

ABSTRACT: As nutrition has become more of a challenge globally and sustainable eating practices receive renewed emphasis, understanding the important role of local foods can contribute to finding efficient solutions. Shedding new light on the Mediterranean diet, this research was aimed at examining citrus cultivation in Southern Italy and its vital role in developing healthy eating practices by preserving and enhancing cultural heritage. This paper contributes new insights to the literature, as it describes specific effects of locally sourced citrus fruits on nutrition and local identity, which are often overlooked in current literature. Methodologically, a qualitative analysis was conducted, introducing an overview on agricultural statistics for each of the two emblematic cases examined: the Syracuse Lemon (PGI) in Sicily and the Clementines of the Gulf of Taranto (PGI) in Apulia. The research shows that certified citrus products offer high-quality nutrition and support local identities and economies by using traditional farming practices. Findings show that growing citrus not only improves public health by encouraging people to eat local nutritious foods but also helps empower local economy and helps to the preservation of ethnic landscapes. The interdependence of gastronomy, health and ethnic heritage was highlighted in this paper, advocating for policies that strengthen small-scale producers and protect heritage crops. Research implications refer to the fact that increasing consumer awareness can strengthen both public nutritional quality and regional economic vitality. Research limitations should be acknowledged – this paper was focused on only two case studies, opening a window of opportunity for future research to incorporate a broader range of regions to further empower research findings.

KEYWORDS: Apulia, Sicily, mediterranean diet, local typical products, sustainability, food culture.

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE: Lupu, C., Ivona, A., Privitera, D., & Constantin, M. (2024). Reflections on the role of healthy eating style. Insights from citrus of the South of Italy. *Central European Journal of Geography and Sustainable Development*, 6(2), 23–36. <https://doi.org/10.47246/CEJGSD.2024.6.2.2>

<https://doi.org/10.47246/CEJGSD.2024.6.2.2>

| [Full text](#) |