

## **Floriculture and Floral Design. New high added-value markets and innovative origin-based qualification strategies for a sustainable revival of the Tuscan floriculture system**

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**Abstract:** *Today Italian floriculture suffers from market globalization and the dominance of quality, low-cost industrial productions distributed by the Dutch market. Tuscan floriculture experiences a lack of initiatives for redevelopment and to safeguard its centennial biocultural heritage.*

*The paper offers the first results of an action-research project deriving from a local actors' initiative aimed at valorising a differentiated Tuscan autochthonous flower supply to be positioned in a high added-value niche emerging market, the floral design one.*

*The identified tool was the activation of a long-term cooperation between a group of local producers, wholesalers, research institutes and authorities aimed at co-designing and implementing both an innovative shared origin-based qualification strategy for penetrating the niche and a governance model of the strategic and operational processes.*

*On a theoretical basis, floral design was characterized as a luxury niche of the flower market and a B2B2C luxury marketing approach was evaluated for the strategy definition.*

*From a methodological point of view, the leading partner Flora Toscana, one of the main Italian flower trading cooperatives, engaged the University of Florence in coordinating a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach aimed at engaging and supporting the partners and other local stakeholders towards the fulfilment of the project purposes.*

*This paper led to: reconstruct the relevant theoretical framework; validate the local actors' initiative potential; define and assess the niche market and the Tuscan supply system role within the supply chain; validate the potential of a shared B2B2C origin-based qualification strategy according to luxury marketing principles as a useful tool for the niche penetration.*

**Keywords:** *Floriculture; Floral design; Slow Flowers; High added-value markets; Sustainable localized floriculture system; Origin-based qualification strategy; Luxury B2B2C marketing strategy*