



Unione Sindacale di Base

USB initiative for World Food Day: healthy food, healthy work Agriculture, in Italy it's a security emergency



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In Italy you don't die of malnutrition, but working in the fields means risking your life every day or being treated like slaves. The quality of Made in Italy is guaranteed on the skin of workers. Just to keep up with the recent news, in north of Italy a farmer died crushed by a tractor and a farmhand lost his life in an accident with a trailer. And in Terracina an agricultural entrepreneur threatened the farm workers with a rifle to make them work more and, of course, pay them less. Still in the Pontine countryside, another farm worker, driven by despair, laid down on the tracks in a railway station.

USB has always denounced the condition of exploitation and insecurity that prevails in the Italian countryside. Accidents have been repeated in thousands for decades, causing a massacre covered by the silence of the media and especially of the institutions, while episodes of exploitation by unscrupulous entrepreneurs no longer count.

Despite the fact that the labour inspectorates have been put in a position not to fully carry out their task in relation to more than 400,000 farms, the official data certify that 50% of the 7,500 farms controlled were not in order. Against the backdrop of this bleak picture, there are the strict regulations imposed by the large-scale retail trade.

The interministerial tables, the regional tables, the quality agricultural network, have remained empty words in the face of a situation in which agriculture bases its profit on the broken backs of the workers, often and willingly migrants kept in a condition of constant blackmail, aggravated by the recent xenophobic and repressive measures signed by the former minister Salvini.

In view of the World Food Day, which is celebrated on Wednesday 16 October, USB launches the watchword "Healthy Food, Healthy Work" and addresses all actors in the agricultural supply chain to ask:

Compliance with safety standards in agricultural work

Compliance with contractual conditions for all agricultural workers

Respect for housing and health conditions

Regularisation of all migrant workers engaged in agriculture

European contributions to farms conditional on compliance with contractual conditions