Overview of Exchange Program at Università di Parma

1) Background:

This program is designed to expose students to the variety of agricultural production practices in Northern Italy, specifically the Parma, Modena and Reggio Emilia and the surrounding provinces. A particular emphasis is put on studying the intimate connection between production, culture and tradition—a key aspect of Italian food production. Seventy percent of Italy’s milk production is destined for cheese that is consumed primarily on a local and regional level. These food products have a long history and as such have become a part of the tradition and culture. Parmigiano Reggiano production can be traced back almost 900 years, and the production system is still very similar today, being closely and deeply connected with the production of the Prosciutto di Parma (Parma Ham). Prosciutto di Parma is another excellent example of how a deep appreciation for tradition, coupled with an integrated approach to production can lead to a truly exquisite product. Thus, there is much to be learned about culture and the agricultural industry from studying how Italian agricultural products are made, marketed and consumed.

2) Curriculum Description

The overall program has been designed to provide students with applied instruction on the following areas:

- EU Agricultural Systems (Economics) and Italian Agricultural System (Economics and quota system)
- Principles of Food Safety and Quality
Free Italian courses for International Students will be available in the campus (See http://www.cla.unipr.it/cla/index.asp?slang=IT).

The description below is for an exchange program covering ~15 weeks (one semester). Below find a typical timeline for the experience.

Timeline

The official semester will start on January 22, and will end on May 18 2018
There will be Easter break from April 1 to April 8, 2018.

The program will start on January 22 and will end on May 18 as follows:

Week 1 (Morning): Exchange Student Orientation

Introduction to the courses in the morning. Meet with professors, tutors and Program advisors. The design of this period is to provide exchange students with a ‘settle in period’. Parma students will be able to introduce exchange students to life in Parma, as well as the principles of transportation, dining, etc. The program advisors (Prof. Righi and Prof. Quarantelli) will introduce the students to the members of the Faculty, and will begin an informal language instruction. A first approach to the places of practical experience will be provided.

Weeks 2-8 (Mainly in the morning*): Classroom Instruction

Instruction with professors in each of the focus areas. Typical set up will be approximately 7 days of instruction, with several field trips to visit industry.

EU Agricultural Systems and Italian Agricultural Systems

Main Instructor: Prof. Giuseppe Bonazzi ; Assistant instructor: Doct. Giovanni Ferri


Principles of Food Quality and Safety

Main Instructors: Prof. Sergio Ghidini, Prof. Emanuela Zanardi

Focus: Italian and European legislation on sanitary and hygienic control of food of animal origin. Structure, organization and hygienic requirements of

**Cultural Aspects of Food and Food production**

Main Instructors: Doct. Stefano Bentley, Doct. Emanuela Zanardi, Doct. Massimo Malacarne; Assistant instructors: Doct. Paolo Formaggioni

Focus: history, places of production, warranty of quality, production process, nutritional value and related scientific aspects of the traditional and typical products of the Po river valley (Regions of Lombardia, Emilia Romagna, Veneto and Others).

**Weeks 9-15 – Practical Experience**

Students will be assigned a flexible schedule of practice in the industry, depending on each student’s individual interest. The goal of this part of the program is to provide the students with hands-on experience, allowing them to integrate the classroom instruction with real world experiences. The program follows the supply chain from feedstuffs inputs all the way to food production and marketing. The available experiences are described below.

---Housing during this period will be primarily the student’s university dorm or private flat or possibly home stay, however; there may be a period of time during which the student participates in a farm stay or similar arrangement.

1) **Feedstuff industry**

*Description:* Experience in a feedstuff producing plant providing feed for the farms of the region. Provides services and support for specialized dairy, poultry and swine producers.

*Services and facilities include:* Production consulting, feedstuff processing plant, farm assistance

*Possible student experiences available:*
- Laboratory assistance for quality control (feedstuffs and raw materials)
- Assistance in feedstuff production process
- Consultant shadowing/assistance (farm analysis and problem solving)

In the past years, the students mainly attended the activities of the Consorzio Agrario di Parma ([http://www.consorzioagrarioparma.net/](http://www.consorzioagrarioparma.net/)) and EMILCAP ([http://www.emilcap.it/](http://www.emilcap.it/)), both located in proximity of the Department of Veterinary Science in Parma.

2) **Dairy Production**

*Description:* Experience on a dairy farm with milk going for Parmigiano Reggiano production. Students will have the opportunity to participate in production practices including: dairy herd management, veterinary procedures, young stock management, forage production, and nutritional management unique to Parmigiano Reggiano production. One of the main farm involved in the project in the past years was Paganina, a big and
modern fame for the production of milk to be transformed into Parmigiano Reggiano. New farms are now connected to the University and are ready to host students. Examples are BioHombre (https://www.hombre.it/en), located in Modena and Fattoria Amelia (https://it-it.facebook.com/FattoriaAmelia2/), and Società Agricola Santa Lucia, located in Parma provence. Due to distance of some farms to Parma, farm stays may be arranged for this period.

3) Parmigiano Reggiano Cheese Production

*Description*: Students will be able to participate in Parmigiano Reggiano production. Experience will leave the students with an in depth understanding of production from raw milk processing to final brand certification. A key aspect of the Parmigiano Reggiano system is traceability from farm to final product. Examples of cheese factories available for practical experiences and visits are Punto Latte (http://www.puntolatte.com/home/), located in Modena provence, and caseificio C.P.L. Parma (http://www.cplparma.it/), located in Provence.

4) Cured meat and/or Prosciutto di Parma Processing

*Description*: Students will be exposed to the traditional processing of cured meat (e.g. salame) and/or of Parma Ham, with emphasis on the connection between raw material selection and final end product. Food quality assurance is integral in this system, and students will be exposed to the various practices used to create a quality end product. A previous experience is represented by Italia Alimentari, located in Parma provence (http://www.italiaalimentari.it/).

***According to the student’s interest and the host structure availability and work schedule.

1) Credit and Assessment

**Credit Hour Allotment**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Credits CFU=ECTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>EU Agricultural Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italian Agricultural Systems***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economics of livestock and food production</td>
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<tr>
<td>Principles of Food Quality and Safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hygiene and technology of food of animal origin</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health and hygiene rules for food of animal origin</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slaughter technologies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed analysis and quality lab</td>
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<td>3</td>
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PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE will include special meetings, congress and thematic seminary.

The course will include farm visits.

Assessment of Course work:
Classroom instruction: Oral test for each course at the end of the semester
Practical Experience: Report due at end of the semester

2) Housing and Accommodation

There is a wide variety of housing options available, ranging from private apartments to university housing to home stays. In the case of the experience rotations, there may be some opportunities for exchange students to stay with farm families or in on-site apartments.

3) Orientation.

The first week of the exchange program is designed to provide the student with an orientation to the Parma area. Peer tutors may be available to assist exchange students in learning the use of public transportation, dining options, and recreational activities. The program advisor will assist exchange students in course preparation, and enrollment/registration.

4) Language

Courses have been designed specifically for this program, and as such, will be taught in English. Throughout the classroom instruction, students may also have daily language instruction provided by the instructors and program advisor. The goal is to have students familiar with the language in preparation for second session of the practical experience.
5) Semester dates

Fall semester: September-mid December
Spring semester: January- mid May

6) Travel/ Getting around

Parma is an easy town to travel around. The city is very bicycle friendly, with designated bike lanes, and plenty of secure parking locations. The central district is very condensed, and easily navigated by foot. The Veterinary Faculty is situated outside of the city center, easily accessible by bus or bicycle.

Travel outside the city is achieved easily through Italy’s expansive train network. The Parma station has services to Milan, Venice, Rome, Bologna, Genoa, Florence, Turin, and Verona. High speed services are available in select cities along the Milan-Rome corridor. Major cities, such as Milan, have services to many destinations throughout Europe.

Parma also has a small regional airport with services to select cities including Rome, London, Catania, and Palermo.

7) Semester Costs.

Estimated Budget information for 2017-18

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Per semester</th>
<th>Full Academic Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>2.400 €</td>
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<td>Food</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>9.830 €</td>
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