

REPORT OF THE STUDY TOUR TO ITALY- MAY 2005

ORGANIZED AND FINANCED BY METHYL BROMIDE PHASE OUT PROJECT UNIDO,
PROJECT NUMBER: MP/TUR/01/214

SUBJECT: Soil less farming as methyl bromide alternative in protected horticulture and cut flowers production

DATES: from 15th MAY to 22nd MAY 2005.

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TURKISH DELEGATION:

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Italy in brief:

Italy is one of the developed countries located on the southern Europe. Some economic, social, agricultural and protected cultivation indicators are shown below as comparison to Turkey:

Indicators	Italy	Turkey
GDP	1.18 trillion \$	300 billion \$
GDP per capita	20.800 \$	4.000 \$
Inflation rate	1,8 %	10 %
Growth Rate	1,5 %	9 %
Agr. Pop. rate	5,3 %	35 %
Population	58 million	70 million
Surface area	301.000 km ²	714.000km ²
Agricul. Area	15 million ha	27 million ha
Protected Cult. area	53.000 ha	55.000 ha
Soil less Cult. Area	900 ha	100 ha



STUDY TOUR PROGRAM:

Sunday, 15 May 2005: Group arrived at Fiumicino Airport, Roma. Met Dr. Battistel, and went to Battipaglia (Salerno city) by car.

Monday, 16 May 2005: With the assistance of Mrs. Rosa Paparello, specialist in roses crops management, we visited:

1. Fiorimport Saint Antonio Import-Export Company (1,3 ha soil less on perlite media + 0,9 ha cut roses in soil);
2. Ascione company (1,5 ha soil less on perlite and volcanic material + 1 ha cut roses in soil);
3. Annuziata Company (0,5 ha soulless cut roses on volcanic material);
4. Crizantem Cut flower greenhouse (4 ha soil cultivation area, modern, well controlled greenhouse);
5. Transferred to Naples and visited to Fontana gerbera farm (0,8 ha plastic house, soil less cultivation on coco pet pots for gerbera production and breeding as cut flower).

Tuesday, 17 May 2005: Transfer to Bologna, in the way we visited:

1. Socobi Company EUROP-GAP certificated in Caserta (2 ha cherry tomato on rock wool);
2. Larian Laboratory near to Rome (soil, plant and nutrient solution analysis);
3. Aquarium Plant grower's company in Bologna (hydroponics system),

Wednesday, 18 May 2005: We visited:

1. Bologna Wholesale Market;
2. Eurofruit Firm (packaging, storing, marketing of vegetables and fruits),

Thursday, 19 May 2005: We visited three Farms in the area of Mantova and Verona:

1. Gandini Farm: 2 ha beef tomato on rock wool with artificial CO₂, 1 ha cucumber on rock wool and 50 ha open field lettuce;
2. Pagani Farm: 2 ha beef tomato on rock wool, 1 ha open field eggplants;
3. Strawberry Farm: 4,5 ha soil less on peat, 4,5 ha on soil;
4. Lecture: 2 hours lesson on soil less crops management by Dr. Battistel.

Friday, 20 May 2005: Transfer to San Remo by car and visited a carnation company:

1. Di Giorgia carnation Seedling and Breeding Company: carnation on perlite + peat (1/1);
2. Transferred to Venice by car.

Saturday, 21 May 2005:

1. Evaluation of the study tour comments and clearing up;
2. Trip to Venice.

Sunday, 22 May 2005: Return to Turkey.

BRIEF EVALUATION OF THE STUDY TOUR:

The study tour to Italy has been very helpful. The group had the possibility to see the real situation of protected vegetable and cut flower sector in Italy. The soilless cropping is considered one of the MeBr alternatives within the framework of MeBr phase out project (Turkey) and the group had the opportunity to see and evaluate advanced soil less culture production in Italy. This will be used to evaluate Turkish soil less culture potentiality compare to Italian sector and will help to make recommendation to Turkish soil less growers. Some of the important stories about the study tour are;

1. Private agricultural consultancy is a 'production factor'. The group felt the need to establish similar system in Turkey, as protected cultivation requires high input and advanced knowledge and technology. Dr Paolo Battistel was an extraordinary example for this.
2. Openness of Italian farmers and officials, their sincerity and honesty without hiding any information created a very positive influence on us.
3. Similarities on marketing, pricing occurs at the wholesale markets in Italy as in Turkey. However, retailing happens in bigger shops like supermarkets in Italy. In addition, contracted production is very common in Italy.
4. Production with EUROPGAP certificate is increasing similar to Turkey.
5. Average greenhouse area in Italy is 15 da (1.5 ha). However, It is 1-1.5 da (0.1÷.015 ha) in Turkey. Standardization and quality control is carefully monitored and the "cold chain" rules are followed. The relatively big greenhouse area of a given company allows it.
6. A general misreading in Turkey is that soil less culture is too expensive and unnecessary. Because Turkey has large enough land for production. Total soil less greenhouse area in Turkey is about 100 ha. However, companies with large enough greenhouse areas are more prone to go for soil less cropping. 1.9% of Italy's greenhouse uses soil less cultivation. Initial investment cost is between 27-150 €/m².
7. It was noticed that standardization and packaging for crops produced for export is as important as production itself in Italy.

Dr Battistel excellently organized the Program. We were all pleased. The time was suitable for the study tour and the duration of the study tour was fine. On behalf of our Institute and the Country, we would like to thank for UNIDO's support in this study tour.