CHIANTI CASHMERE GOAT FARM
Radda in Chianti
Siena, ITALY
VIDEO OF ACORN HUNTING
Predator Issues

In the early 2000s, the Chianti Farm started losing goats to wolves. The cultivated fields that had been prevalent in the surrounding terrain for centuries were disappearing. Much of the land was being put into vineyards and the remaining fallow fields were reverting to brush and eventually woods. This provided an attractive habitat for wolves and their natural diet of feral pigs. However, as the wolf population increased so did attacks on the goat herd. Something had to be done!
Non-lethal methods of predator control – we invested in electric fencing systems for the properties we graze
And brought in livestock guardian dogs to protect the herd
We have agreements to graze many properties in the valley below us.
We feed Almo Nature Dog Food as part of Almo Nature’s Farmers & Predators Program.
Almo Nature:
• Founded in 2000 with the aim to change the approach to how we feed our companion animals
• First company to use ingredients originally fit for human consumption in cat and dog food (HFC)

Now it embodies a unique dual model:

Almo Nature, a for-profit company, has been donated to a foundation, Fondazione Capellino, to ignite its unique purpose of supporting solidary projects that safeguard animals and nature

That makes consumers into real activists because each cat or dog food purchase directly contributes to helping cats and dogs in need and developing projects that protect biodiversity and wildlife.

This is why Almo Nature is literally owned by the animals...
Because all profits are given back to nature.
Farmers & Predators aims to promote peaceful coexistence between wild animals and humans (farmers in particular) by performing two key actions:

- **Reduce the Conflict:** up until 2019, the initiative has supplied 627 guard dogs to 150 farms that chose to peacefully coexist with wolves. Training and food are also provided for the dogs.

- **A Possible Alliance:** The next step is to promote the activities and produce of the farmers who made a sustainable, animal-friendly choice.

**Key project results as of May 2019:**

- **150** farmers have joined the project and now rely on cruelty free prevention methods.
- **627** guard dogs are currently helping farmers in Tuscany, Liguria, southern Italy and more.

Is it possible for humans, bears, and wolves to coexist?
Provide a peaceful solution
Protect wolves and help farmers, by providing sheepdogs and dog food on a long-term basis. There’s only one essential condition that the farmers need to adhere to: a sincere commitment to the well-being of the dogs and the predators.

Support the work and produce of farmers who choose peaceful coexistence.
Support the food production industry in the European highlands. The initiative has two conditions:

1. Pay attention to quality, and show respect for biodiversity, including predators.
2. Create a platform to support product sales from farmers who have/want to join the initiative.
Shepherd for a Day Program
an agritourism program where visitors accompany our goats on their daily forage through the valley to the properties we graze on
In the Spring we offer «Goat Camp», an agritourism program where visitors come and help comb the herd for our Cashmere harvest.
We use approximately 11 to 12 Abruzzo Shepherds for our herd of 200 to 250 goats
The herd is regularly in contact with the public because of our agritourism businesses and the constant travel through the valley to the different properties we graze. Therefore it is imperative that our dogs be well socialized.
More about the wolf situation in Tuscany
Reasons for return of the Wolf

Renewed Habitat and Prey Availability

Source: M. Apollonia

The forest in Italy grows by about 110,000 hectares per year. This favors the expansion of the wolf species. The Apennines, from Liguria to Calabria, functions as a long green highway which facilitates favorable conditions for the wolf and facilitates travel. Even around the cities the woods are returning, the crops are being lost in favor of wooded areas.
Fallow land is returning to woods

Passo del Giogo, ora.
1956 Val di Susa - Roe deer release. An example of many successful attempts to reintroduce wild ungulates
Of the 109 wolf packs in Tuscany, some are content to stay in «natural» habitats where they serve a positive role in terms of keeping the ecological balance by controlling deer and wild boar populations.
Other packs have settled in farming districts where the risk of wolf attacks on livestock are very high. The density of wolf packs as compared to actual farms within home ranges is a valuable tool to determine «hot» spots for properly distributing funds for intervention.
Regional Vulnerability Assessment

Sheep Density

Cattle, goat and sheep risk in mountain and hill regions

Berzi e Mattioli, C.I.R.S.e M.A.F. - Regione Toscana, 2017
Wolves and wolf X dog hybrids in Italy

Foto di Lazzeri, Pieragnoli, Capriotti, Novelli, Cecconi, Berzi
Wild boars comprise the main red meat diet of wolves in Italy although wolves will generally avoid adult boars or nursing piglets protected by sows. Instead adolescent pigs are most vulnerable. As wild boars encroach on periurban areas (farming areas surrounding cities), the wolf follows this natural prey into these regions.
Wolf in vineyards on properties grazed by the Chianti Farm
Wolf and feral pigs near the farm
Comparison of wolf intervention funds spent for prevention (prevenzione), monitoring (monitoraggio), and compensation (indennizzi) in Switzerland versus Tuscany.

**Svizzera 2015, 41.285 km²**
- Spesa totale: 3.3 mil. euro
- 90% prevenzione
- 6% monitoraggio
- 3% indennizzi

**Toscana 2015, 22.994 km²**
- Spesa totale: 1.3 mil. euro
- 40% prevenzione
- 40% monitoraggio e interventi
- 20% indennizzi

**Toscana 2017**
- Spesa totale: 460.000 euro
- 100% indennizzi

*Chart showing the proportions of funds spent on prevention, monitoring, and compensation in Switzerland and Tuscany.*