

### La Vialla

Az Agr Fattoria La Vialla, via di Meliciano 26, I-52100 Arezzo

Tel+39 0575.430020 Website [www.lavialla.it](http://www.lavialla.it)

Certified organic since 1983. Demeter biodynamic since 2006. 190-ha of Sangiovese and Canaiolo for Chianti and Chianti Superiore plus Malvasia for dry Valdichiana whites and Vin Santo on a 1,342-ha mixed farm. La Vialla was purchased by the Lo Franco family in 1978. Current incumbents, the Lo Franco brothers Antonio, Bandino and Gianni, represent the second generation. As well as having Europe's largest Demeter certified vineyard they have 14,000 olive trees (115-ha) for oil pressed on the estate, and over 200-ha of arable land. This produces grain for bread, biscuits and other products baked on site, durum wheat and spelt pasta, vegetables sold as preserves, sauces, jams and honey, as well as other crops. There are also 1,250 sheep whose milk produces both pecorino and ricotta cheeses here. The remaining land is given to chestnut, pine and oak forest. With an estate of this crop diversity and immense size the conversion from organic to biodynamic has taken around 10 years and is always ongoing as new, neighbouring pieces of land are added.

Green waste and sheep manure generated on the farm are composted using the biodynamic compost preparations 502–507, and supplemented with manure from certified organic and extensively grazed cows from neighbouring farms. This cow manure is also used to fill around 600 horns for horn manure 500 which are buried here each year. Roughly 20 kilogrammes of horn manure 500 is required to treat the entire vineyard at a rate of 120 grammes per hectare for each spraying. Horn silica 501 is bought in. The horn sprays are stirred in dynamisers made of clay-lime mortar and copper. There are five sprayers so that the whole farm can be treated with biodynamic field sprays in a working week.

La Vialla shows that no matter how big the farm is it is possible to avoid the kind of short-cut biodynamics many smaller (tiny in fact in comparison to La Vialla) contemporary Italian vineyards seem drawn to. La Vialla also shows the value of having family members strong (bloody-minded?) enough to do their own thing by wanting to remain as a resolutely distinctive mixed farm rather than morphing into just another anonymous monocultural blob.