

PRESS RELEASE

“Sunrise for Banco Alimentare”: a sustainability model that brings together environment, economy, and human dignity

Sicily’s first solidarity solar plant inaugurated today

From ERG and Crédit Agricole, a gift that strengthens Banco Alimentare della Sicilia with more energy, fewer greenhouse gas emissions, and greater social solidarity for families

CATANIA 21 OCTOBER 2025 - Clean energy that becomes food, technology that turns into solidarity. From today, the sun lights up not only the warehouses of Banco Alimentare della Sicilia ODV but also the hope of thousands of Sicilian families. This is the essence of the project “Sunrise for Banco Alimentare – Positive Impact: New Energies, Growing Communities,” presented and inaugurated today at MAAS (Mercati Agro Alimentari Sicilia) in Catania, in the presence of Regional Councillor for Energy and Public Utility Services Francesco Colianni, Hon. Giuseppe Carta, President of the Environment Committee of the Sicilian Regional Assembly, Emanuele Zappia, President of MAAS Catania, and Gaetano Vecchio, President of Confindustria Sicilia.

The new “solar solidarity canopy,” installed at the entrance of Banco Alimentare della Sicilia’s warehouse, is the result of a synergy between the profit and non-profit sectors: Crédit Agricole Italia, providing financial support for the initiative; Banco Alimentare della Sicilia, which will convert the energy savings – around €7,000 per year – into new food aid for the most vulnerable families; and ERG, donating regenerated modules as part of its “Social Purpose for Solar Revamping” program, giving a “second life” to decommissioned solar panels from its plants that are still perfectly functional for self-consumption.

A 19.74 kWp plant, with an estimated annual production of 23,000 kWh – equivalent to the average consumption of about nine households (based on Arera estimates). The project was carried out with the technical contribution of MCA Energy, which supplied the equipment, and with free design and project management by engineer Carlo Bruno, alongside the technical support of engineer and Banco Alimentare volunteer Salvo Puleo.

“Social sustainability is not the crutch of environmental sustainability – it is its accelerator,” said Pietro Maugeri, President of Banco Alimentare della Sicilia ODV. “Every kilogram of food we save from waste has a dual value: social and environmental. On one hand, it restores dignity to those in vulnerable situations; on the other, it prevents greenhouse gas emissions and the waste of resources required to produce that food. Thanks to this system, we will reduce energy consumption by 25%, freeing up resources to support even more people. This shows that when companies, institutions, and the third sector work together, sustainability becomes a development strategy for the whole territory. Sustainability is not only an ethical duty but also an enlightened economic interest: when a person feels well, is productive and generative, the entire community benefits.”

During the event, moderated by journalist Assia La Rosa, speeches were delivered by Alessandro Garrone, Executive Vice President of ERG; Filippo Corsaro and Frantz Puccetti for Crédit Agricole Italia; Donato Didonè, Director of Fondazione Banco Alimentare; and Pietro Maugeri himself.

“Supporting this initiative was not simply an act of corporate social responsibility, but a strategic vision intrinsically combining sustainability, solidarity, and innovation — three fundamental pillars for Crédit Agricole Italia. It demonstrates that finance has both the duty and the power to transcend its traditional role. Through this partnership with ERG and Banco Alimentare, we offer tangible proof that companies, by acting responsibly, can trigger virtuous cycles and contribute significantly to the resilience and sustainable growth of the Sicilian region,” stated Filippo Corsaro, Head of the Sicily Regional Division of Crédit Agricole Italia, and Frantz Puccetti, Corporate Banking Project Coordinator, Crédit Agricole Italia.

“We are particularly pleased with this very concrete collaboration with Banco Alimentare della Sicilia,” explained Alessandro Garrone, Executive Vice President of ERG, “which is part of our ‘Social Purpose for Solar Revamping’ project that combines sustainability, circular economy, and social impact — promoting energy independence and value creation for local communities. ERG is committed to continuing this virtuous path with Banco Alimentare to generate shared value across the regions, and we are already assessing further projects nationwide that could benefit from our panels under the Social Purpose for Solar Revamping initiative.”

Councillor Francesco Colianni, who concluded the event, emphasized the importance of “the Regional Government’s presence and the need to contribute — as major players such as ERG and Crédit Agricole Italia are already doing. We are here in a facility belonging to the Region — the MAAS — which serves as a point of reference not only for the province of Catania but for the whole of Eastern Sicily. As the Regional Councillor for Energy and Public Utility Services, I can proudly say that Sicily has positioned itself as a leading player in the energy transition, becoming a national model. My presence and that of the Region at this event — which also carries great social value thanks to Banco Alimentare — are a source of deep appreciation. I hope this initiative marks the beginning of a path looking toward the future of our territory.”

The ceremony concluded with the blessing by Monsignor Vincenzo Branchina, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Catania, in front of the new 150-square-meter photovoltaic canopy — a tangible symbol of how technological innovation, circular economy, and solidarity can converge in a single vision of the future, capable of transforming solar energy into social energy.

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