


# Pastore on Zolla, tomatoes, and the real kilometro zero

Posted on September 22, 2026 by Luca Moretti

TARANTO, Apulia — On the Ionian coast near Taranto, Giovanni Pastore, 48, grows vegetables and writes code. Unable to tell neighbours when his harvest was ready, he built Zolla, a free web app mapping local produce available nearby, right now. Less than 60 days after launch, he counts 260 users, 104 of them producers, across 13 regions and 74 municipalities. A Slovenian distributor, he says, has already found a supplier through it. Pastore tells Italy Now why it is not for sale.

**Q.** What pushed you to build Zolla yourself instead of using an app that already existed?

“Zolla came from a problem I lived directly as a grower,” Pastore said. “I had produce available and wondered how to let people nearby know. I looked for an existing solution, but something fundamental was missing, knowing what is really available at that moment, where you are. So I built it myself, from the code to the algorithm.”

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Growing vegetables, Zolla-style (*Credits: Zolla*)

**Q.** How does the exchange actually work, and have you had any trust problems putting strangers in touch like this?

“Zolla only works as a bridge between producer and consumer, through the product itself,” Pastore said. “It takes no part in the sale, and there are no transactions or commissions on the platform. Buying, paying and delivery all happen outside Zolla, directly between people. Producers are genuinely verified, and if they have nothing available, Zolla does not show them.”

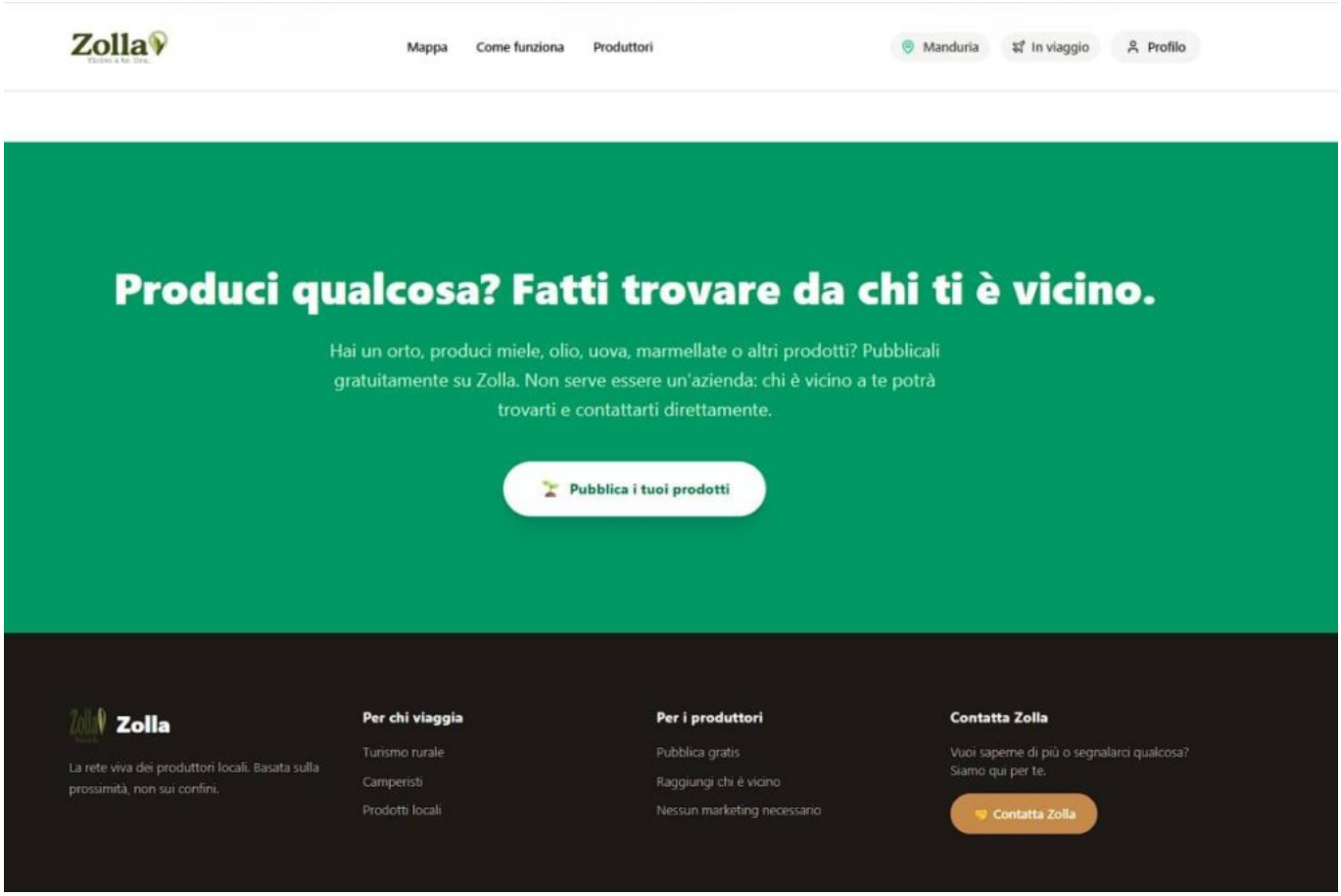
**Q.** What is the most unusual thing anyone has ever posted on the app?

“The most unusual thing was a consequence of the project I did not expect so soon,” Pastore said. “A producer sent me a screenshot of a WhatsApp message from a Slovenian company distributing to restaurants and hotels. They had searched Google for an Italian producer, found Zolla, and ended up agreeing a collaboration with him. It was one of the first moments I thought this could really work.”

**Q.** Has a neighbour ever complained that you stole a customer from him through Zolla?

“No, if anything the opposite happened,” Pastore said. “My neighbours were happy about the idea, and some were among the first to register their businesses on Zolla, with good results too. Seeing

people who know me directly believe in the project first was a real confirmation.”



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Zolla app, various (*Credits: Zolla*)

**Q.** What if a big company called tomorrow to buy the app?

“Zolla is not for sale today,” Pastore said. “Right now I am not looking for someone to buy it, but for people who believe in the project and want to help it grow. I built this little boat alone. Now I would like to find a crew willing to climb aboard and turn it, together, into a cruise ship.”

**Q.** A surprising tip for eating at *chilometro zero* (kilometre zero)?

“Do not look only for the product, look for who produces it,” Pastore said. “Go beyond the label, ask where it comes from, who grows it, and when you can, go straight to the farm. Real *chilometro zero* is not only distance, it is knowing the person and the land behind what you eat.”

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