



Italian Farm Trucks

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As cool as my Vespa "farm truck" is, I must officially retract my previous statements, apologise and announce that the Vespa is not in fact the coolest agricultural vehicle possible.

That honor would go to the little three wheeled scooter trucks called Ape (Ah-Pee).

One of my favorite features of the Italian small farmer scene is the way products get to market.

The owner of the Ape in the photo is a local small farmer.

She has a nice flat piece of ground by one of the smaller creeks that run down from the surrounding hills, and she grows vegetables and a few fruits.

She also collects and sells flowers and the mixture of wild greens called Preboggin.

She sells some of her products to local restaurants, she has a few regular customers who have standing orders, and she has a little booth at the local daily fruit and vegetable market in the center of town.

To carry her products on deliveries and to the market, she drives her Ape, which is essentially a little truck, built around a scooter.

The handlebar and seat of the scooter are enclosed in a little cabin, and the truck bed behind is about three feet by four feet. There is one wheel in front and two wheels in the rear.

These Ape are by far the most common type of agricultural truck in all of Italy.

I like trucks. I've owned a 49 Ford flatbed, a 59 El Camino, a 66 Ranchero, a 72 Chevy pick up, and a 1995 Isuzu Trooper in the states and I drove a Ford 250 Diesel for awhile as a work truck.

That's all history now.

These days I can't wait until I finally get my own three wheeled Ape. Now's that's true agricultural chic!