

Italy at Foodex

Foodex 2009

Italy aims to introduce Asia to the Mediterranean diet

The largest professional food and beverage fair in Asia, Foodex Japan 2009, opens Tuesday, March 3, at Tokyo's Makuhari Messe exhibition center. Some 2,500 exhibitors from 65 countries will present their products, and Foodex organizers are anticipating 100,000 visitors, wholesalers and consumers during the show. Japan is one of the world's leading food importers and as such, one of the largest and most dynamic food markets on the planet. Consumers here are particularly culinary and eager to embrace innovative products. Market analysts know that if they seduce the Japanese market, they will eventually gain access to the whole of Asia — the most densely populated continent on the planet.

Italy, home to a universally recognized cuisine, plans this year to send some 300 food and beverages companies to Japan to represent it. Umberto Vattani, president of the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade (ICE), says that Italians "appreciate the Foodex exhibition for its commercial impact, but also because it is particularly well organized. It's always

pleasant to come here. Also, Japanese consumers are very sophisticated and very curious about European products. They know, for instance, how to distinguish the various kinds of olive oil according to their color and texture. They're not satisfied with simply knowing that Parmigiano cheese is produced in Parma. They also want to learn about all the products of the Emilia Romagna region. You can also find quite a few encyclopedias about Italian wines written by Japanese sommeliers. The Foodex show is not the only event where we promote Italian gastronomy. For instance, we organize an annual gourmet event to celebrate our National Day, on June 2. The venue last year was the Hokkaido baseball stadium." Some 1,300 Italian products are distributed in Japan, each of them complying with rigorous hygiene controls. "We are extremely careful with regard to sanitary protection and proof of this is that the European Union has chosen Parma as the headquarters of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)," says Vattani. Italy is particularly proud of its Mediterranean diet, a gen-

uinely original, and healthy cuisine based on fresh fruits and vegetables, cereals, cheeses, meat, fish and olive oil. Indeed, many of its adherents — and with particular enthusiasm among dietitians — are in favor of adding the Mediterranean diet to the UNESCO World Heritage List. Italian farmers must satisfy a stringent set of norms to be able to apply for the denomination of origin certification.



Umberto Vattani
President, Italian Institute for Foreign Trade (ICE)

"We have a record 174 denomination of origin labels and geographical indications registered in Brussels," says Minister of agriculture, food and forestry policies, Luca Zaia. "There are some 45,000 farms in Italy covering a total of around 1.1 million hectares, which makes us the fifth most important country in the world in terms of biological agriculture, after Australia, China, Argentina and the United States." A country devoted to the sense of taste since time immemorial, Italy has built a strong food industry that contributes around 15 percent to the country's gross domestic product, with a yearly turnover of 250 billion euros. There are more than 70,000 companies in the sector; 93.8 percent of which have fewer than 10 employees.

Italy and Japan have an historically entwined shared history, which began when Marco Polo first ventured to the Orient in the 13th century. "The first official visit of em-

issaries from Japan to Italy took place in the 12th century," says Vattani. "Both our countries had a comparable experience in the aftermath of World War II, and a similar arch of economic development. Both are now part of the G-8 group of the world's richest countries." Furthermore, Italy and Japan are fascinated by each other's culture. This is why they signed a commitment to create the Fondazione Italia (The Italy Foundation), in 1999. The institution, based in Tokyo, was created to showcase and promote Italian culture in Japan.

"Our main clients are Germany, the U.S. and France. Most of our exports go to European countries, but we are also growing in other regions, particularly in Russia, China, Brazil and Mexico. The attractiveness of the 'made in Italy' brand has not decreased over time — quite the opposite in fact. It has extended to new generations and new social classes," says Vattani. But then, Italians have cleverly transformed the natural charm of their country into a potent and well-marketed "brand Italy" that is particularly irresistible to the Japanese public. Every Italian event here has been a hit: the Italian Fair in 2001, the International Exhibition in Aichi, the Italian Spring... And there is more to come. "We are planning an Italian Fall to showcase some parts of our country that are still not known here," says Vattani. "The Italian Renaissance and our contemporary culture are well known, but there are other areas that few people are aware of, such as our scientific sector, and in particular nano- and biotechnologies."

In September 2009, Tokyo's Science Museum will host a large-scale exhibition of Italy's most innovative applied research initiatives, with particular emphasis placed on the needs of the elderly popula-



Takamasa Sato, professional sommelier is conferred the title of Ambassador of Italian Wines in Japan 2008: Thierry Cohen, vice president JET; H.E. Luca Zaia, Italian minister of agriculture; Sato; and Walter Brunello, president of Buonitalia.

tion. Other events slated later this year are the 21st Italy Japan Business Group and a quintessentially Italian treat: the Japanese tour of the Scala of Milan.

The Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies in order to join the efforts of all the subjects charged to promote Italian agro-food abroad, established in 2003 a control room, Buonitalia Spa, whose partners besides the ministry are the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade, Unioncamere and Ismea, and that awarded in November the title of Ambassador of Italian Wines to chef sommelier Takamasa Sato. "The award ceremony took place in the Oenological School of Conegliano, in the Veneto region. Promoting the quality of Italian wines abroad is one of the key objectives of the minister of agriculture, food and forestry policies, Luca Zaia," says Buonitalia's President Walter Brunello. "We have awarded a top professional who is very active in promoting our best wines in Japan,



Walter Brunello
President, Buonitalia Spa

one of our major commercial objectives. Japan is a very important market for us, since we are their second most important provider of wine." That's why in collaboration with the Italian Association of Sommeliers Buonitalia realized something that is unique in Japan. "We gave laureates a Japanese translation of the Italian Association of Sommelier superior course. We help them give information as complete as possible about the characteristics and qualities of our wines to the clients of their restaurants."

Buonitalia is also involved in Vinitaly Tour Japan, a promotion campaign that will tour Japan's largest cities. "Each of our initiatives is conceived as part of a global campaign to promote Italian food and wines all over the world. The wine sector is fundamental for us and our top-priority is to expand abroad, in particular in Japan," says Brunello. One of the priority-targets of the campaign is the clientele of Japan's trendy restaurants and bars.

Buonitalia is also developing, together with the Italian association of Geographical Indications, a campaign to educate the Japanese public about the European system of Labels of Origin. Called Food Roots, the campaign aims at fighting fraud by teaching consumers how to recognize genuine and fake labels.

"It's very important for us that consumers understand clearly the concept of Labels of Ori-

gin," explains Giuseppe Tripoli, general secretary of the federation of Italian Chambers of Commerce (Unioncamere).

"They already have a very positive perception of the label 'Italy'. But this also means that Italy is a coveted label. A recent study has shown for instance that 45 percent of all products sold in



Giuseppe Tripoli
General Secretary, Unioncamere — Italy

the U.S. have something Italian about them, including those that have no relation whatsoever with our country. The only way to fight fraud with efficiency is through a global, coordinated plan of action, whereby the international community would agree on common mechanisms."

Unioncamere is planning for November a commercial tour in Japan, a key market for Italian companies wishing to expand abroad. "Quality and innovation are the main assets of our food and beverage industry," stresses Tripoli. "By promoting the Labels of Origin and modernizing our agriculture, we offer our cus-

tomers a guarantee of security and quality."

Italy is the leading European producer of biological agriculture, ahead of Spain, Germany, Great Britain and France. More than 1.1 million hectares of arable land is dedicated to biological culture.

President of the Consortium Il Biologico, a private organization of control and certification of products of biological agriculture, Lino Nori says that the sector represents "far more than an economical field; it is also a cultural movement." "We have defended and promoted a new method of cultivation, respectful of the environment and human health," he adds.

The consortium is a well-established enterprise, whose rigorous methods and proceedings have been officially recognized by Italian, American and Japanese authorities. Apart from its core activity of control and certification, it also helps farmers to promote their products abroad, supporting them in all the major international food fairs. Five certified Italian bio-producers have traveled this year to Japan with the Consortium Il Biologico, to participate in Foodex Tokyo. Proof of Italy's know-how and commitment in sustainable agriculture, the city of Milan was chosen last spring to host of the 2015 Universal Exposition, with a project titled "Feeding the planet, energy for life."

Economic data

Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies: Luca Zaia

Italian agricultural sector ranked 2nd in Europe, with more than 1.7 million companies and 15 million hectares of arable land (49% of the entire country).

Italy is the European leader for bio-agriculture, ranking 5th in the world, with more than 45,000 companies working on 1.1 million ha.

Agro-industry:

Total turnover of €240 billion, 15.7% of national GDP. 32,000 companies in agro-industry; 174 certified products "DOP", "DOC" and "IGP." EU leader with 21% of European certified products. Main products exported to Japan: pasta, tomatoes, extra-virgin olive oil, wines, mineral water, fish (tuna), citrus fruit (oranges, lemons...).

Trade Balance:

Exports : €24 billion
Imports : €32 billion

For more informations:

www.politicheagricole.it; www.buonitalia.it; www.inea.it; www.agricolturaonline.gov.it; www.ice.it; www.unioncamere.it; www.promofirenze.com; www.firenzebusiness.it; www.sa.camcom.it; www.pe.camcom.it; www.centrosterabruzzo.it; www.tp.camcom.it; www.regione.lombardia.it; www.parmigiano-reggiano.it; www.economicampania.org; www.inran.it



Luca Zaia : the new czar of the fight against the world food crisis

Italian Minister of Agriculture, food and forestry policies Luca Zaia will soon preside G-8. Italy is taking over from Japan, coinciding with the upcoming April summit that will concentrate on fighting the world food crisis. At 41 years old, and still grinning from his successes with the recent reform of the EU Common Agricultural Policy, which adopted most of his country's wishes, Zaia will be at the helm of the G-8 at a crucial moment. He will aim to coordinate the direction that the most powerful countries will implement to reduce ever-rising food prices. Standing today as one of the rising stars of the Italian political scene, he is strongly in favor of seeking foreign markets for Italy's food sector. With the occasion of Foodex 2009, he analyzes the potential and growing success of

Italian products on the Japanese market.

Question: How important is the Foodex fair within Italy's commercial strategy?

Answer: Foodex is a unique opportunity to present the quality of our food products to Asia and Japan. The host country has culinary traditions that are as ancient as ours and it is therefore not an easy task to change consumption habits that go back thousands of years. We also have to take into account international rules and regulations that further complicate the food trade. Despite these invisible barriers, we are having considerable success introducing olive oil, hams, peeled tomatoes, wines and our cheeses. Italy is the second-largest provider to Japan of its wine and bubbly segments. Japan stands today as the most receptive of all Asian

markets to our products.

Q: How does your Ministry provide assistance to Italian producers who wish to attend Foodex?

A: Our work starts in Italy of course. The public agency Buonitalia is instrumental in helping our companies look at international markets and learn how to compete. Italian products are characterized by the highest quality, the result of many multiseccular traditions and security, thanks to a dependable certification system. Japanese consumers are very cautious and we wish to offer them full guarantees. Today our objective is to help educate local producers as to the importance of certification in order to gain international market share and export more. Certification is in fact the first essential step to an efficient marketing strategy. Our products

must continue to distinguish themselves through their excellence. The message we wish to pass to Asian professionals who will be attending Foodex is that Italy is a first class food producer. The Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies participates regularly in the round tables organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of our two nations. We are currently working on the organization of a second edition of the "Italian Spring Festival."

The first edition was a huge success.

Q: What do you think of the relations between Japan and Italy in the agro-industrial sector?

A: Our exports to Japan are still relatively low compared to the potential of this market, but they are increasing every year. The net commercial balance is positive. The

Japanese market is still to be conquered and recent initiatives of Buonitalia and of Italian chambers of commerce contribute to increase market penetration of Italian food products. We hope the World Trade Organization negotiations will lead to lower import taxes on European food imports to Japan, as that will obviously be helpful.

Q: You granted an important distinction to Japanese wine steward Takamasa Sato last November. In your opinion, is the quality of Italian wines recognized to its true value in Japan?

A: There are approximately 5,000 restaurants in Japan that include Italian vintage wines on their wine lists. It is a respectable figure, but we can definitely do better. In 2008, we handed Takamasa Sato the title of Italian Wine Ambassador in Japan to re-

ward his magnificent work in favor of our wines in the restaurant where he practices his art. We also handed him the Japanese translation of the second degree classes taught at the Association of Italian Wine Sommeliers. These texts will be widely distributed in Japan, in the sector, thereby significantly contributing to creating awareness for our vintage wines. The sommeliers are a vital link of the marketing chain because they can explain the rich variety of our wines and the defining characteristics of each wine-producing region to Japanese clients. We will continue to target professionals who can have a sure impact on the market and raise the awareness of our wines.

Q: The G-8 April summit will be dedicated to agriculture. What are the main challenges facing the sector today?

A: I am convinced, as are numerous international observers, that we are at the beginning of a structural phenomenon of rising foodstuff prices. The next world upturn in the economy and the ever-increasing demand from emerging countries are going to exacerbate this tendency during the coming years. The international community must come up with and follow a common strategy to resolve this problem. By presiding over this G-8 summit, Italy also embraces the responsibility of drawing a path toward a solution that is convenient for all. The urgency to resolve the world food price problem is upon us. It is only by restoring the great importance of agriculture and farmers in our society and the world economy that we can begin to address this problem on the long term. The chal-

lenges facing the agricultural sector must be confronted taking in consideration the economic but also social dimensions of the problem. The current model is not sustainable. The summit will take place in Cison di Valmarino, near Venice, and for the first time, representatives of numerous international bodies will participate in it. The FAO, the world food program and the World Bank will all attend. Together, we will try to redefine a sustainable agricultural policy for the world.

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Italy at Foodex

Italian agro-industry exports

A success for the chambers of commerce



View of the magnificent palace Sallustio in Rome, headquarters of Unioncamere.

In spite of the global economic crisis, there is increasingly positive news for the Italian agro-industrial sector. It exported 3.5 billion euros worth of wine last year, a record figure thanks to an increase in production of 5 percent to reach approximately 45 million hectoliters. Total agro-industrial exports during the first six months of 2008 progressed by 13.9 percent, reaching 9.41 billion euros. During the same period, foreign sales of pasta, one of the most attractive products of Italian gastronomy, jumped 48 percent, breaking the 1 billion euro mark. The Asian markets are particularly strong importers, with, for example, an increase of 57.35 percent in pasta exports to India.

Behind these very encouraging figures is the effort of Italian producers to export their products all over the world, supported in their conquest of foreign markets by a strong network of 179 chambers of commerce. "There are 105 of them in Italy, with 74 in 48 different countries worldwide. They play a major role in promoting agricultural products. Our country produces about 5,000 typical products, 174 of which have obtained the classification of 'origin.' This is a very strong statement for our culture and our country," explains Giuseppe Tripoli, secretary general of the Unioncamere, the federation of Italian chambers of commerce and industry. He underlines that the Italian reputation in the field of gastronomy is so great that the mere mention of "Italia" on a product's label will automatically increase sales in any supermarket worldwide. "Our reputation is often damaged by tactless producers who give Italian-sounding brands to their products, whose quality usually is far inferior to the

quality of our genuine products. A number of consumers are fooled by this practice. The Foodex Fair will give us an opportunity to better inform Japanese professionals and consumers," adds Tripoli, who is moreover preparing a commercial mission to Japan: A large delegation of Italian business people will visit Japan next November.

Among the Italian regions to be represented at Foodex 2009 will be Abruzzo. The chambers of commerce of its four provinces — Pescara, Chieti, l'Aquila and Teramo — are participating in the fair through the Foreign Trade Centre of Abruzzo (CEA), an organization that they jointly created in 1978 to promote the globalization of their regional enterprises. "We have attended this exhibition for the past 20 years. Our exportation to Japan increased 5 percent in 2007 to reach 17 million euros and this growth rate was maintained last year, notably thanks to the performance of our producers of pasta products whose sales jumped by 20 percent. It is our sixth-ranking export market," rejoices Ezio Ardizzi, president of



Ezio Ardizzi
President, Chamber of Commerce of Pescara

the Chamber of Commerce of Pescara and of the CEA, who underlines that the Japanese are careful, cautious buyers who place a great deal of importance on the integrity of their interlocutors and the quality of their products. "That is doubt-

lessly why we do good business with them. We only take to Tokyo the products that have the highest levels of excellence in quality and that we can defend with total sincerity," explains Ardizzi.

The Abruzzo food products that are the most appreciated, besides the pasta, are wines, truffles, safran and virgin olive oil. The CEA mainly targets a highly select market, where quality is more important than price, for the enterprises of the region tend to be very small and cannot fill large orders. The CEA offers important logistical support to business people for international fairs and helps them to recover their payments from foreign companies. "The Chamber of Commerce of Pescara and the CEA are the two important motors of the internationalization of the Abruzzo, and they assume the major costs involved in the region's participation in international fairs. The less wealthy provinces, such as Teramo and Chieti, have very few large enterprises and it is only fair that the CEA and the Chamber of Pescara help them with finding markets abroad. Before Tokyo, we went to Moscow and London," adds Ardizzi, who underlines the close cooperation between the CEA and the regional ministers of agriculture. Together they plan the international missions before presenting them to the business community. More than 20 companies from Abruzzo participate in Foodex: It is the largest Italian delegation, a remarkable accomplishment for one of the smallest regions of our country. Our enterprises have understood the importance of these international fairs, and we have reservations for the upcoming exhibitions in Germany, France, Great Britain, the

United States, Canada and Russia. The financial crisis might have an impact on the number of participants, but the CEA is ready to contribute more in order to allow the maximum of enterprises to participate," proclaims Ardizzi. In order to reduce the costs, the CEA collaborates more and more regularly with its Sardinian counterparts and the Chamber of Commerce of Cagliari. "During Foodex, we will organize joint tastings of wines and olive oils from Sardinia and the Abruzzo. We have already worked together in Miami. Italy's regions must understand that they are not only competitors, but also partners," explains Ardizzi.

After globalization, handing over the business to the next generation constitutes the second-biggest challenge that the Chamber of Commerce of Pescara is helping the small and medium-size companies to resolve. "We have more than 40,000 members, with a majority of family businesses where the succession is often difficult to determine. In partnership with the Gabriele d'Annunzio University, we have undertaken a vast study of this subject," announces Ardizzi, who is also organizing events in Pescara to attract more and more international enterprises, for example "B2B Abruzzo," which will be held at the end of September. Another important event: The capital of Abruzzo will host the Mediterranean Games next summer, a sports event that will place the city in the limelight.

Tuscan products are equally popular with Japanese consumers, especially olive oil whose sales in Japan progressed by 60 percent in 2008. "We are talking about quantities which are still quite modest. After a very bad harvest in 2007, the Japanese began to place orders as soon as our oil could be produced once more. We believe that we have a potentially strong Japanese market, but we will have to consider making special promotional offers in order to educate consumers who still regard this product as 'exotic,'" says Vasco Galgani, president of Promofirenze, an organization created by the Florence Chamber of Commerce in 1990 with the goal of making small and medium-sized companies competitive abroad. He cites as an example the promotional campaign organized in Stockholm four years ago: During one week, 20 of the best restaurants in the Swedish capital received free Tuscan olive oil, introducing it to their clients. Promofirenze played a key role in the Italian business delegation that visited Japan last December. "We assured the logistics for the 64 participating

Milan Food Village: all the flavors of the Earth

In April 2008, the city of Milan was chosen to host the 2015 Universal Exposition under a project titled "Feeding the planet, energy for life." Centered around the question of how to feed humanity, the northern Italian city's bid was chosen by the jury for its broad scope and its vital importance at a time when the planet is struggling with a global food crisis. "More than 100 countries are expected to attend the Expo and Milan expects some 20 million tourists," says Roberto Predolin, president of Sogemi, a state-owned company that handles Milan's wholesale food markets — the activities of which around 10 million people depend upon. Predolin adds: "The whole Lombardy region will reap the benefits and our Milan Food Village project — which fits perfectly with the Expo's theme — will certainly be a success too." The Milan Food Village installations will occupy over

140,000 sq. meters, alongside Sogemi's existing buildings, which total 700,000 sq. meters. The new infrastructure will host a "technopole", and a service center entirely dedicated to the agro-food sector. "It will include a cutting-edge laboratory with the most advanced equipment in product traceability, a key part of food products' quality label," explains Predolin. "Also, there will be a training center, and professionals will be able to choose from a wide array of logistics services." The new installations are to be built following strict environmental regulations, in particular aimed at curbing water and electricity consumption. In the medium term, all of Sogemi's buildings will be renovated to include upgraded, environmentally friendly equipment. This ambitious project is set to further boost Milan's wholesale markets, whose activity depends directly

upon the region's dense road, rail and air transport network.

Predolin adds that Milan Food Village "will dedicate more than 5,000 sq. meters to exotic food products. We're confident that the new installation will draw a vast public, keen to discover foreign gastronomy and new flavors. There is great interest in exotic food these days." Indeed, it is estimated that sales in Italy will grow by 40 percent over the next five years, without taking into account the impact of the 2015 Universal Exposition. "With half a million foreigners living in Milan and keen to find products from their country of origin, we already have an important market in place," adds Predolin. "Retailers here have a fantastic investment opportunity. They will have easy access to goods as we are situated just a few meters from the wholesale markets." The Milan and Osaka



Roberto Predolin
President, Sogemi

Kuromon wholesale markets have been twinned since 1999. This partnership brings together two of the planet's most exquisite and original cuisines, and fosters commercial and cultural exchanges between the two cities. Predolin concludes, "Ahead of the 10th anniversary of the association between the Milan and Osaka markets, we were honored to receive the visit of Japan's general consul in Milan, Azuma Hiroshi. The cooperation between our two countries is set to grow." The Milan Food Village is scheduled to open in 2014.

Italian enterprises, nearly all of them from the agro-industrial sector. Ten were from Tuscany. Each enterprise had an average of 72 meetings with Japanese companies. Retail representatives were also there. We had arranged to put up stands in some stores to reach the general public. Olive oil and vintage wines

Promofirenze always brings an Italian wine steward on its missions abroad. He underlines that Italian products, in general, and Tuscan ones in particular, carry a very strong brand image: They are immediately associated with a certain art of living. "They are not considered as simple foodstuffs. We must energize our ex-

Moscow.

Moreover, visitors to Foodex will have the chance to discover the natural beauty of Sicily, thanks to a promotional film especially prepared for the occasion. "It is a fair that is attended by many restaurant owners and managers, an important outlet for our products. We will praise the excellence of our olive oil and vintage wines, not forgetting the capers of Pantelleria, which are undoubtedly the best in the world. And we will take advantage of the opportunity to show to all the many natural attractions our island has to offer," explains Giuseppe Pace, president of the Chamber of Commerce of Trapani, who ordered the production of the film. He is pleading for improved coordination between the Sicilian region and the other island provinces. "We need to speak with a sole voice and to coordinate our investments in commercial promotions. Our products are the best in the world: as soon as consumers taste them, they adopt them. The problem is that our enterprises often lack the financial means to participate in international fairs abroad. This is why we must have full collaboration among all actors in the Sicilian economy," adds



Augusto Strianese
President, Chamber of Commerce of Salerno

Pace, who wants to succeed in creating a veritable regional brand image that will have the strongest impact on a global scale. Remarkable fact: One can count in the province of Trapani alone, 57 percent of all the products designated with the "controlled origin" label and protected geographic areas of the island. The chamber of commerce of Trapani counts approximately 50,000 members, including 8,000 from the agro-industrial sector.

The love of work well done and the talent for design are two things that the Italians and Japanese have in common. The Italian producers' main concern is to offer products that are as beautiful as they are good and healthy, which may explain the great success they are having in the Japanese markets.

« Exports of the agro-industry sector of Salerno rise regularly, particularly for all the high-quality products, like mozzarella cheese, vegetables, fruits, wines and liquors. We help the companies to explore new markets, like Japan, Russia, India and China. »

Augusto Strianese
President of the Chamber of Commerce of Salerno

are the products that attract the most interest, in China and Japan alike. We are going to pursue our efforts to make headway in the Japanese market," proceeds Galgani, who points out that



Vasco Galgani
President, Promofirenze

by emphasizing the values that the Tuscan gastronomy represents. Innovation and globalization are our top priorities. We manage certain community funds that we distribute to enterprises to help them grow, and we collaborate with a number of financial groups to facilitate their development projects," adds Galgani. Promofirenze is equally implied in a finance program conceived specifically for companies interested in South American markets, and it shares with a number of Italian regions an international network of 10 business representations from Tokyo to Sao Paulo to

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Italy at Foodex

Italian wines

Quality and character



Melini's estate, owned by the company Gruppo Italiano Vini S.p.A.

In 2008, Italy became the world's largest wine producer ahead of France, with 45 million hectoliters, representing a 5 percent increase in production. Although Italy has strived for many years to make a name for itself in the international wine sector with a controlled denomination of origin, its producers have made remarkable progress in recent times. With a total of 800,000 hectares dedicated to viticulture, Italy now markets wines that are considered to be as fine as many French and Californian products. The Franciacorta, the Prosecco di Conegliano-Valdobbiadene and the Brunello di Montalcino, to name a few, are some of the most sought-after.

Italy is the main wine provider to the United States, with greater exports than Australia and France, and the second-largest exporter to Japan. Indeed, many producers will be attending the upcoming Tokyo Foodex fair.

The Vinitaly Wine and Spirits Fair of Verona, in the northern Veneto region, is one of the country's most important trade shows. Inaugurated in 1967, last year it drew more than 4,300 exhibitors from 30 countries, and 150,000 sectorial professionals from 110 countries. The majority of buyers are European but Vinitaly is also well known abroad, thanks to its international roadshow that travels the globe year-round.

Last year, Vinitaly made stopovers in India (Mumbai, New Delhi), the U.S.



Luigi Castelletti
President,
Veronafiere

(New York, Chicago, Miami), Russia (Moscow), China (Shanghai) and Japan (Tokyo).

"Our main targets are countries where there is little or no culture of wine," explains Luigi Castelletti, president of Veronafiere, the Verona Exhibition Authority that manages Vinitaly. "We know we have no more than around 100,000 clients in Shanghai, for instance, but they are refined gourmets and ready to pay top prices for a product they love. This is why we have opted, instead of having a mega-event abroad, to organize a series of mini-shows in specific countries and cities, targeting an upmarket clientele of connoisseurs: mainly restaurant owners, importers and distributors."

Vinitaly first opened in Tokyo in 2001 and has returned annually since. "Tokyo is very interesting for us because there are many restaurants that might include Italian wines on their wine lists," adds Castelletti. "Nat-

urally, Vinitaly attends Foodex. Our aim is to promote the quality of Italian food products, and we also have shows dedicated to olive oil and delicatessen products."

Japanese aficionados of sparkling wines will undoubtedly be aware of the Franciacorta spumante, the Italian equivalent of French champagne. Franciacorta is a region situated near Brescia, in Lombardy, and dotted with rolling hills. The sparkling wines produced here are protected under a Controlled Denomination of Origin (Denominazione di Origine Controllata, or DOC). "We represent some 90 enterprises, all of which have to follow a very strict set of rules in order to be authorized to use the name Franciacorta," explains Ezio Maiolini, president of the Franciacorta Consortium. The denomination covers an area of 2,000 hectares, which represents a capacity of 10 million bottles a year. "The production of sparkling wines necessitates a careful process that involves two phases of fermentation, which can last from 18 to 30 months in the case of vintage wines. It takes at least 25 months from the time the grapes are harvested until the product is ready," says Maiolini. "Our main markets are Germany, the United Kingdom and Scandinavia. We are also expanding more and more in Asia, particularly in Japan, South Korea and China. Our region is not very well known yet, so we invest heavily in

promotion campaigns." Another fine Italian sparkling wine is the Prosecco di Conegliano-Valdobbiadene, produced under a DOC that covers a large part of the Veneto region. Sales last year totaled around 60 million bottles. "Sparkling wine is our raison d'être, even though we also produce small quantities of



Giancarlo Vettorello
Director, Consortium
Prosecco Wine - Conegliano

white wine," comments Giancarlo Vettorello, head of the Prosecco di Conegliano-Valdobbiadene Consortium. The organization represents 83 percent of the region's producers.

"The international wine festival Vino in Villa, created 11 years ago, is our most important promotional event," he adds. "It's not only a trade show but also a discussion forum about the future of viticulture. This year we have invited French producers from the Loire region, where, as here, viticulture is a very ancient tradition."

Indeed, Conegliano is home to Italy's oldest and most prestigious wine school, founded in 1876. One of the most well-known graduates of the Oenological School is Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies Luca Zaia, a native of the Treviso province. "Zaia has done a lot to boost agricultural education," says Vettorello. "Italy has an exceptional heritage that needs to be better exploited. Our most refined products are bestsellers. We export about a third of our production to a total of around 40 countries. Germany, Switzerland, the U.K., the U.S., Canada and Japan are our top markets internationally."

The famed wine region of Montalcino, in Tuscany, is home to four DOC labels: Brunello di Montalcino (6.5 million bottles per year), Montalcino red wine (4.5 million bottles), Montalcino white wine and Sant'Antimo. Twenty years ago, the total production here was less than 3 million bottles. "Our

denomination is very well known and we have to fight relentlessly against fraud," explains Patrizio Cencioni, president of the Brunello di Montalcino Consortium. "We do a lot of control on site, estate by estate, to measure their production and to ensure that the norms are followed meticulously. For instance, there is a limit of 80 quintals of grape per hectare. Red Brunello must have aged at least one year and white Brunello four." Sixty-two percent of the Brunello di Montalcino's production is exported, 20 percent of which goes to the U.S., and its yearly turnover reaches 140 million euros. "Italy's wine consortiums have been in charge of quality control since 1979, and their power of control and decision was reinforced in 2004 by the Ministry of Agriculture," continues Cencioni. "Our mission is to guarantee the quality of our wine."

Alongside Italy's thousands of small producers, there are also a few large companies that play a key role in the success of Italian wines abroad. One of them is Gruppo Italiano Vini, which owns 14 estates situated in various parts of the country. The group has invested 80 million euros over the last decade to improve the quality of its production. "We are planning another 80 million euro investment over the next four years to expand our international distribution network," says Gruppo Italiano Vini's CEO, Emilio Pedron. "Foreign markets represent 75 percent of our turnover." Already distributed in 60 countries, Gruppo Italiano Vini is now looking to open fresh markets in Asia, India

and Russia. The quality of the group's products stems in large part from the fact that it contributes directly to the whole production process: from the vineyard to the bottle and then on to distribution. "We feel our mission is to 'brand' Italy abroad," adds Pedron. "The fact that we are Italian is our best asset in competing with so many products and brands. We consider ourselves ambassadors for Italy."



Emilio Pedron
Chief Executive Officer,
Gruppo Italiano Vini

The country's total exports reached a record 3.5 billion euros in 2008, thanks to strong demand in the U.S. and Germany. The most popular Italian wines are the Chianti and the Brunello, closely followed by other, lesser-known vintages such as Barolo, Barbaresco, Barbera and Grignolino.

Mediterranean diet

The benefits of the sun



The Parmigiano Reggiano cheese (Parmesan Cheese) is an extraordinary and highly versatile dairy product. It can be easily combined with other food products, creating incredibly smooth and tasty combinations.

The benefits of the traditional Mediterranean diet have long been proven. An abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables — an excellent source of anti-oxidants — legumes, grains, little red meat, lots of fish, fats in the form of olive oil — rich monounsaturated fatty acids — unripened cheeses and yogurt, all accompanied by a generous glass of red wine... This healthy menu, which protects against cardiovascular disease and increases longevity, is wonderfully appetizing as well. Supporters of the Mediterranean diet are working to have it included on UNESCO's World Heritage List. "This form of cultural heritage is not made up of the foods themselves, but rather it constitutes a specific relationship to eating, a certain way of relating to a particular place and the products that humans derive from it, a tradition based on frugality, conviviality and an authentic lifestyle. This goes above and beyond a strictly nutritional concept of food," explains Carlo Cannella, president of the National Institute of Food and Nutrition Research (INRAN), a government agency that is part of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies. Cannella regularly works in collaboration with the private sector. "For example, we established organoleptic standards for buffalo-milk mozzarella for the manufacturers' consortium. We are trying to make the public aware of the results of our work. People who eat tomatoes, Parmigiano cheese and cured ham have no need whatsoever for probiotic supplements," assures Cannella.

The original Parmigiano cheese is guaranteed by a Pro-



Giuseppe Alai
President, Consortium
Parmigiano Reggiano

tected Designation of Origin, and manufacturing has been supervised by a consortium since 1934. "There are 429 members and they produce around 111,000 tons of cheese per year. Parmigiano cheese is especially recommended for older people, the sick and babies, and we export one-fifth of what is produced," says Giuseppe Alai, president of the Parmigiano Reggiano Consortium. Alai emphasizes that no additives are allowed and that authentic Parmigiano cheese is aged for a minimum of 12 months, to a maximum of 30 months, sometimes even more. "The sector must adapt to new eating habits by marketing small, pre-packaged portions of Parmigiano so that people come to think of it as a convenient snack," continues Alai, adding that the Parmigiano is one of the few authorized food that American and Russians astronauts are allowed to bring with them in to the space. In fact the bone decalcification is a big problem in a gravity-free environment, but this cheese in one of the best sources of calcium known. A lot of consumers still ignore the nutritious virtues of this product.

The organizations that supervise the Protected Designations of Origin subject manufacturers to rigorous monitoring and inspections. "In order to be officially recognized by the European Union we described precisely the different steps in the making of grana padano cheese. We verify that each one of our 180 members strictly follows the prescribed production method and, at the end of the aging period, which lasts a minimum of 10 months, a specialist inspects each wheel of cheese with a mallet to guarantee that consumers get the best quality," explains Nicola Baldrighi, president of the Grana Padano Consortium. This cheese is made in the Po River Valley, in Lombardy, Piedmont, Trentino and Veneto, as well as in the province of Cremona. One-fourth of the milk produced in Italy is used in making grana padano, and 4.3 million wheels were produced in 2007. "We spend 6 to 7 million euros in monitoring and inspection

every year, and we have increased the number of inspection trips abroad in order to verify that our label is not being used fraudulently. Chemical analysis and the detection of specific isotopes are two ways that the product can be traced," adds Baldrighi, and he notes that one-tenth of the grana padano produced is export-



Nicola Baldrighi
President, Consortium
Grana Padano

ed. For years, gorgonzola has been the most dependent Italian cheese on foreign markets. There are many people all over the world who love this creamy, blue-veined cheese, which can be mild or slightly sharp. "We export more than 30 percent of what we produce. Our 41 members are all based in Lombardy and Piedmont, and their combined annual revenue adds up to 400 million euros," notes Renato Invernizzi, president of the Gorgonzola Cheese Consortium.

Italian cheese producers have seen their international sales grow regularly. The inventor of an exclusive manufacturing method for provolone, Gennaro Auricchio founded a company in 1877 that has since spread over five continents. "Our ancestor began as a peddler. Today our revenue is over 130 million euros, and we export 20 percent of our production to the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan and Europe. We manufacture and sell a wide range of cheeses, from provolone to ricotta to pecorino, grana padano and Parmigiano Reggiano," explains Antonio Auricchio, president of Gennaro Auricchio, and he notes that provolone, the flagship product, also exists in several different versions: mild, sharp and young. The company sells its products under several dif-

Italian Trade Commission
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The Italian Trade Commission - ICE is the government agency which promotes, facilitates, and develops trade between Italy and the rest of the world. ICE helps Italian companies to grow in foreign markets, and promotes inward-outward investment. Located in Rome, the Head Office operates in connection with a worldwide network of offices: 17 regional offices in Italy and 117 offices in 87 countries around the world.

The Italy-Japan Business Group (IJBG), sponsored by the Italian Ministry of Economic Development and the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry is an informal organization founded by the Italian and Japanese business communities in 1989. The main target is to promote business relationships and improve bilateral investments between the two countries. The Italian secretariat of the IJBG is assigned to ICE - Italian Trade Commission.

italy-japan business group
www.ijbg.ice.it/

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SPECIAL AGENCY
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Italy at Foodex

An appetizing menu for the World Fair 2015

Milan was chosen to host the 2015 Universal Exposition, with a project centered around the question of how to feed humanity. President of the Lombardy region, Roberto Formigoni, says: "The expo will be a forum of discussion and is expected to attract a large public attendance. Our region is directly involved in themes such as food security, technological innovation and sustainable agriculture. We are also working on the entertainment side of the expo in order to find attractions that will draw visitors. And, naturally, gastronomy will be on the menu." Italy has a strict set of sanitary controls that guarantee

the quality of the products delivered to consumers, and which prevent the fraudulent use of names and brands. With a turnover of 11 billion euros, Lombardy's agro-food sector represents 15 percent of Italy's total production. Numerous products from the region have Denomination of Controlled Origin and Protected Geographic Indicators (DOC and IGP, according to their Italian acronyms). "The DOP and IGP system has a positive impact on the competitiveness of our enterprises and adds value to our culinary heritage," explains Formigoni. "Additionally, these controls protect our landscapes. The Universal

Exposition will be an exceptional showcase of our culinary culture."

The public company in charge of organizing the event includes representatives from the Lombardy region, the city and the province of Milan, the Chamber of Commerce of Milan and the Ministry of Economy.

Formigoni hopes the expo will boost the economy, noting that there will be a direct investment of 4.1 billion euros for the construction of the various installations. "We have other projects with a combined budget of 11 billion euros, including the building of new infrastructure that will



Roberto Formigoni
President
Lombardy

benefit the whole region. The projects will be financed on a public-private partnership basis."

ferent brand names: Auricchio, Ceccardi and Gloria. "We also export pecorino to the United States under the brand name Locatelli, which has practically become a synonym for the cheese itself. This cheese is made from Sardinian sheep's milk and 80 percent of it is consumed in the U.S."

His company recently created the "Auricchio Exclusive Reserve" quality stamp, which appears on all top-of-the-range cheeses except provolone. "Our company is dedicated to craftsmanship, as we still make all of our cheese by hand, particularly provolone. That increases our personnel costs, but that's the price of quality," continues Auricchio, who inherited his ancestor's love of cheese. The company employs around 400 people and needs 500 tons of milk per day to keep its factories running: Dairy farmers must conform to precise standards that guarantee the quality of their milk. "As keepers of tradition, we constantly invest in innovation to improve production methods, all the while rationalizing our costs. For example, we equipped our Cremona factory with new aging chambers so we can better control the temperature and produce better cheese," adds Auricchio, who is also the vice president of Assolatte, the Italian milk producers association. Passionate about photography and involved in humanitarian projects in Africa, Auricchio travels each year to Tokyo to attend Foodex, in search of new Japanese customers.

Another key ingredient of the Mediterranean diet, pasta be-

came the nutritional staple in post-war Italy. Made from wheat, the carbohydrates in pasta provide the body with the energy it needs. Pasta has long since become an elegant, gourmet dish thanks to the efforts of certain passionately enthusiastic manufacturers. Antonio Amato, CEO of the family-run business Pastificio Amato, for example, makes traditional pasta cooked at low



Antonio Amato
Chief Executive Officer,
Pastificio Amato & C.

temperatures in bronze pots. "We began internationalizing in the 1970s and today we export 70 percent of what we produce," explains Amato. He positioned his company in the high-end market thanks, in particular, to his Le Due Regine brand, which was launched in collaboration with the Capri Tourist Bureau. The name of the brand is an homage to the "two queens" of jet-set tourism that are the Italian island of Capri and the exclusive Swiss ski resort of St. Moritz. "We sell pasta, wine and olive oil under this brand name. All of these products must meet the same high standards of quality, and our production methods are based on enormous respect for tradition," adds Amato. Wines sold with the Le Due Regine label are aged in the cellars of the

Domini Castellare di Castellina vineyards and the process is supervised by the renowned oenologist Alessandro Cellai. Fine hams, sausages and other pork products also have a place of honor in gourmet Italian cuisine. The cured ham prosciutto is a delicacy and big business: Manufacturers' combined revenue is over 2 billion euros, 20 percent of which comes from exports. There are several consortiums that protect the name and promote the best-known varieties of prosciutto, which benefit from Protected Designations of Origin that distinguish and define products from specific regions.

The Parma Ham Consortium was created in 1963 in Emilia Romagna. "We represent 167 manufacturers whose combined revenue reached 820 million euros in 2007. We have a 40.4 percent market share in Italy and our foreign sales are growing rapidly every year," reports Stefano Tedeschi, the president of the consortium. Tedeschi coordinates promotional operations in some 60 countries. "We have obtained recognition and protection for our product in Japan and we are now entering the Chinese market. The consortium's official label guarantees consumers that the ham has been aged for at least 12 months," continues Tedeschi. In the region of Friuli-Venezia-Giulia, near the Slovenian and Austrian borders, the San Daniele Ham Consortium, founded in 1961, brings together 31 manufacturers. "They produce 2.8 million hams per year and bring in revenues of around 300 million euros. We sell in 58 coun-

tries. Along with promoting and protecting our Protected Designation of Origin, we support our members in a number of ways, such as wholesale purchase of electricity on the open market and wastewater treatment services," explains Mario Emilio Cichetti, the consortium's director. Cichetti is pleading for the cause of strengthening European Union operations in foreign markets, where brand names are often fraudulently used. "Last April we sent ham to China for the first time. Our success is the fruit of a long tradition: San Daniele is located on the old Roman road where salt from the Adriatic Sea, an essential ingredient, was transported inland," adds Cichetti.

Northern Italy also offers the ideal conditions for drying beef. Valtellina, a valley in Lombardy, is famous for its bresaola, a delicacy that is often seasoned with nothing more than a little olive oil. Sixteen manufacturers from the province of Sondrio have come together under the Bresaola della Valtellina Protected Designation of Origin. "We produced 17,000 tons in 2007 and we exported over 2,000 tons. Pre-packaged slices already account for 25 percent of our sales and the fact that that percentage is constantly increasing reflects the changes in society's eating habits," declares Rigamonti, president of the consortium. In September 2009, UNESCO will decide on the joint request from Italy and Spain to add the Mediterranean diet to the World Heritage List. A positive decision could have a colossal impact on sales.

Campania
Flavors of the south

Italy exported approximately 25 billion euros worth of food products in 2008. Campania plays an important role in this area due to its numerous specialties that are greatly appreciated abroad, the leaders being buffalo mozzarella, olive oil and durum grain pasta. "The growth rate of our agro-alimentary exports has greatly exceeded the national average for three years. It is greater than 12 percent. Cheeses, market garden products and wines from this region have had enthusiasts in Northern Europe and the United States for quite some time, and are now penetrating the Asian and Russian markets. We sell authentic, high-quality foods," exults Andrea Cozzolino, regional minister of trade affairs, who emphasizes the reliability of the sanitary controls performed throughout all stages of production of the various brands. The authorities also watch over the protected origin denominations to guarantee consumers that they are buying a good product. A new policing operation in the port of Salerno, south of Naples, illustrates the government's zero-tolerance policy in this area last month. Some 142 tons of tomatoes that were fraudulently labeled as San Marzano were seized. San Marzano tomatoes are used by many chefs throughout the world to prepare their sauces. The first seeds of this variety arrived in Campania from Peru in 1770 and they germinated in the volcanic earth that surrounds Vesuvius.

Mozzarella also has a controlled origin name, granted in 1996, which covers the provinces of Salerno and Caserta in their entirety, as well as some towns in the Naples and Benevento provinces in the Campania region. "In order for a producer to be approved, they must submit to an examination by a certification organization recognized by the Ministry of Agriculture. The manufacturing standards are very rigorous," ensures Francesco Serra, president of the DOP Consortium for buffalo mozzarella in Campania. The producers' turnover reached approximately 500 million euros last year. "Sixteen percent of our total production is exported,



Campania can offer all the main products on which the Italian Mediterranean diet is based.

mainly to France and Germany. Since 1986, the region has a specific program for this traditional activity in the younger generations. Fortunately, the region has received 1.8 billion euros from the Rural Development Plan to try to put a halt to this tendency.

Following the example of the majority of Italian regions, Campania is also seeking to increase its sales in the Japanese market. The regional president, Antonio Bassolino, met the Japanese ambassador to Italy, Hiroyasu Ando, on Jan. 23. "Exchanges between Campania and Japan have been intensifying for several years in the tourist and cultural areas. Japan appreciates cities of art, gastronomy, fashion and jewelry. We offer them all of that with a unique quality guarantee. We intend to participate in the event, 'Italy in Japan 2009,' to better make ourselves known

only black spot in the picture is the lack of interest for this traditional activity in the younger generations. Fortunately, the region has received 1.8 billion euros from the Rural Development Plan to try to put a halt to this tendency. Following the example of the majority of Italian regions, Campania is also seeking to increase its sales in the Japanese market. The regional president, Antonio Bassolino, met the Japanese ambassador to Italy, Hiroyasu Ando, on Jan. 23. "Exchanges between Campania and Japan have been intensifying for several years in the tourist and cultural areas. Japan appreciates cities of art, gastronomy, fashion and jewelry. We offer them all of that with a unique quality guarantee. We intend to participate in the event, 'Italy in Japan 2009,' to better make ourselves known



Antonio Bassolino
President
Campania

in their country," assures Bassolino on this occasion, who also adds that discussions are under way with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to include a large delegation from Campania in the various planned activities. The Japanese ambassador expressed the desire to see the regional president go to Japan next autumn to support the promotion of Campania through a high-level institutional presence.

Economic data

Regional Minister of Trade, Economy and Agriculture: Andrea Cozzolino

The Agricultural sector has a GDP of €77 billion, with more than 170,000 companies in Agriculture and more than 1,200 in bio agriculture.

Agro-industry:

Total turnover of €1.1 billion, 5.5% of the national GDP. 220 companies in Agroindustry; 16 certified products "DOP", "DOC" and "IGP." Main products exported to Japan: pasta, tomatoes, extra-virgin olive oil, cheese (mozzarella), wines (Greco di Tufo, Taurasi, Fiano di Avellino), mineral water, citrus fruit (oranges, lemons).

For more informations:

www.regione.campania.it ; www.sito.regione.campania.it/agricoltura ; www.saporedicampania.it ; www.vinocampania.it ; www.shaker.it ; www.limonedisorrentoigp.it ; www.limonecostadamalfiigp.com ; www.mozzarella.dop.it.



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Italy at Foodex

Sicily

The isle of gastronomy



Sicilian bluefish is one of the most loved seafoods on the Japanese market. Its fishing tradition has always been part of the Sicilian culture.

The empire's breadbasket during the Roman Era, Sicily has always remained faithful to its agricultural tradition, most notably due to the richness of its volcanic soil. Wine, olive oil, vegetables, wheat, almonds, pomegranates and citrus fruits are its main products. Fishing also plays an important role in the coastal areas, where tuna fishing dates back to the mists of time.

"We have numerous traditional products that we are beginning to successfully sell on the international market. We have been exporting blood oranges to Japan for quite some time. It took us three years to create an effective sanitary mechanism to avoid contamination by a species of Mediterranean fly. We are continuing our efforts to widen the range of our agricultural exports," explains Giovanni La Via, regional minister of agriculture and forestry. Blood oranges are a novelty for Japanese consumers who are willing to pay the extra cost of a 28-day sea voyage.

Delivered cargoes have increased exponentially over the past three years, going from one to 45 containers. Sicilian table grapes are starting along a similar path, with studies under way to remove all of its parasites. New methods have already increased their shelf life to 30 days.

"Olive oil also occupies a choice role among our specialties, as does wine. Our exports to Japan for these two products are in development. More than a dozen wine cellars regularly send cases there. Preserves and dishes prepared with fish, with tuna being the main type, are also being met with growing success. Several Sicilian companies can be found at Foodex in order to increase their market," continues La Via, who adds that a promotional campaign for Sicilian products will begin in Japan at the end of this year, lasting until March 2010, thanks to a partnership with a large Japanese distributor.

A commercial operation that was intended to charm Japanese consumers has already taken place: 100 Italian restaurants located in the main cities throughout the country introduced island specialties to their customers, primarily olive oil, wine and cheese. "We are in the process of building our brand image based on quality. Our foreign sales of market garden products and fruit are around 120 million euros per year. We also export two-thirds of our bottled wine production. The province of Trapani has a particularly strong wine network. Our main customers are in Western Europe, but the flow toward Eastern Europe, including Russia, is



Giovanni La Via
Regional Minister of Agriculture Sicily

becoming more important," specifies La Via who announces that the networks and companies who rely on quality are those who are suffering less in the crisis. To help the producers modernize, the region has signed an agreement with financial establishments on the island: Entrepreneurs have advantageous conditions for the reimbursement of their loans. In addition, the regional government has received a billion euros from the European Rural Development Plan. "We are the first administration to use all of the funds allocated to us. There are still many networks to develop. Japan is very interested in our flowers. Bougainvilleas

and geraniums are highly favored. They are willing to pay 2 euros per kilo with air transport costs for products that cannot travel by boat. We are dealing with a cultivated public for whom price is not an object if the quality is there. Sicilian agriculture has higher costs than its competitors: It must target the high end and play the 'difference' card in order to sell its products," concludes La Via who gives the island's olives as an example, which cannot be mechanically harvested.

Price cannot be the only sales point for oil producers. The size of the farms is another weakness in the island's agriculture: They are generally less than 1 hectare. It is difficult under these conditions to build an effective commercial organization. "We are working on several fronts to create synergy between producers. The traditional individualist mentality is not helping us, but we are working toward building consortiums that will be able to effectively manage our controlled origin names and finance research activities. The Sicilian agro-alimentary sector is gradually being built. Our objective is to project a strong image of quality products on the national scene. We have neglected marketing and the additional revenue it brings for too long," affirms Giuseppe Morale, managing director general of the Department of Structural Operations within the Regional Ministry of Agriculture. A hundred offices distributed throughout the island reflect the various measures supporting innovation mainly financed by European Community funds.

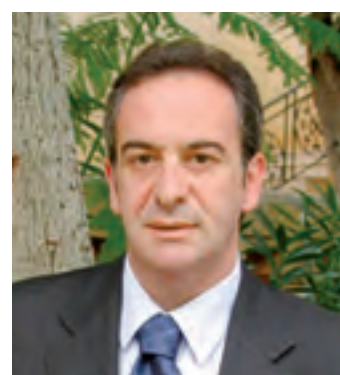
The province of Trapani — Sicily has nine provinces — has taken a leg up on marketing and brand image. "A



Girolamo Turano
President Trapani

few months ago we drew up a new logo, a flower that has the contours of our territory with the sun at its center. It will identify our local products. We have also founded a scientific committee whose objective is to improve the quality of our agro-alimentary products and particularly that of our wines, a very important sector for us in which we must increase our competitiveness," declares Girolamo Turano, president of the province. Trapani also has a Traditional Product Development and Promotion Agency whose mission is to unite the efforts of the private sector in order to conquer foreign markets. "The idea is to allow the agro-alimentary sector to benefit from the know-how of the most powerful companies. There is no room for improvisation in this area. The introduction of a free-trade zone in the Mediterranean area in 2010 also opens good prospects for us. Our entrepreneurs will be more easily able to create partnerships with their counterparts on the southern coast in order to reach a certain critical mass," analyzes Turano.

The agro-alimentary sector is about 8,000 companies strong in the province of Trapani. Many of them are participating in Foodex 2009. "Perseverance is essential and we are there each year to keep our customers faithful and to make new ones. Our



Giuseppe Pace
President, Chamber of Commerce of Trapani

promotional efforts must also be used to attract foreign investors. The message to be passed on is that we have excellent-quality raw materials here to develop their products. The province has the largest vineyard and the most powerful fishing fleet in all of Sicily," ensures Giuseppe Pace, president of the Chamber of Commerce of Trapani, for whom the bursting of the agro-alimentary sector into a myriad of family-owned SMEs has some advantages: These small companies show an incredible capacity to adapt and call for little public aid. "Many of them will end up being even stronger after the crisis. They are accustomed to getting by on their own resources. The best way to support them is by investing in our infrastructure and in the promotion of our products," adds Pace.

One of the assets of Sicilian agriculture is its traditional know-how, the result of a long history that is able to captivate consumers who are increasingly more eager for authenticity. "We have nothing to invent. Our climate and our soil gave birth long ago to characteristic products and practices that are still relevant today. Modernization and internationalization are our two priorities in order to make these resources profitable," explains Roberto Di Mauro, regional minister of cooperation, crafts and fishing, who announces that specific organizations were created to help the different networks. The Fishing Development Consortium (COSVAP), for example, is in charge of attending to the development of fishing and the fish-processing industry. Its headquarters is at Mazara del Vallo, where this sector employs more than 6,000 people, mainly in the canning industry. "Sicilian fishermen work in the Mediterranean as well as the Atlantic. There are 156 active companies that face morato-

riums imposed by the European Union on several species. We have entered into partnerships with countries such as Egypt and Tunisia. In exchange for a transfer of knowledge, several Sicilian ships will fish in their territorial waters and we share the catch. We hope to make our island a turntable for fishing in the Mediterranean by increasing the number of bilateral agreements," continues Di Mauro.

In order to achieve this goal and guarantee top-quality fish to the final customer, the authorities have launched a large infrastructure modernization program. "Harbor installations at Catania and Palermo, cold rooms, logistical services... We have set up an efficient distribution chain to deliver the goods under the best conditions to the most distant markets. We have also opened a line of credit for shipowners who wish to equip their boats with cold rooms," states Di Mauro.

The Sicilian fishing fleet represents 35 percent of the Italian fleet. European Community policy condemns a third of the boats to extinction. In order to deal with this decline of facilities, Sicily must increase the productivity and profitability of its remaining boats. "Numerous companies revolve around our fleet such as shipyards and net manufacturers. Our concern is preserving maximum employment. In many families there have already been four or five generations of fishermen. A whole section of Sicilian culture is related to this activity. The necessary passage from craft to industry must be done with delicacy and dialogue," emphasizes the regional minister of cooperation, crafts and fishing. In the long run, modernizing the traceability of marketed fish: Ecologists and consumers will benefit from it. A label "Fish of Sicily" will soon identify the island's fish.



Roberto Di Mauro
Regional Minister of Fishing Sicily

Economic data

Regional Minister of Agriculture:
Giovanni La Via

Regional Minister of Fishing and Cooperation:
Roberto Di Mauro

The Agricultural sector has a GDP of € 4 billion, with 330,000 companies. Italian leader for bio agriculture with more than 8,500 bio companies (200,000 ha).

Main productions:

Red Oranges of Sicily IGP certified (€ 700 million)
Wines (€ 350 million)
Extra-virgin olive oil (€ 200 million)

Agroindustry:

38,000 companies in agro-industry; 261 regional traditional (9 DOP, 5 IGP, 23 DOC certified products).
Main products exported to Japan: extra-virgin olive oil, wines, red oranges, fish (tuna).

For more informations:

www.regione.sicilia.it ; www.regione.sicilia.it/mangiaresicuro ;
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www.terra-multimedialeagricoltura.it ; www.sprintsicilia.it ;
www.distrettopesca.it .

"Quality alone will make it possible for consumers to accept an increase in price and to increase revenue for our companies. At the same time, the region also worries about safeguarding its fishing resources. In order to counter the decrease in catches we must launch programs to repopulate the seabeds," continues Di Mauro. To develop exports, the region finances a total of 50 percent of the expenses of those companies that decide to participate in fairs and international shows. It also organizes visits to Sicily by potential buyers in order to convince them of the quality of local products. "The regional government has decided to grant tax credits to the entire agro-alimentary sector for a total amount of 100 million euros. The law will be voted on in June. Poultry farming, the marketing of fish and meat... We want to give a nudge in the right direction to our producers in this time of crisis and help them open new international markets," concludes Di Mauro.

The authorities are mobilizing all institutions, economic agents and scientific personnel in the creation of organizations to aid the various networks as can be seen in the Regional Fishing District, the municipality of Mazara del Vallo, the Chamber of Commerce of Trapani, the National Research Center and the universities of Trapani and Palermo.

"The contribution of biologists is essential. In 2006, we founded an Observatory for Fishing in the Mediterranean to improve our knowledge of commercial species and to set up protection meas-

ures for fishing resources. We succeeded in pulling together several Mediterranean countries and private contractors in this initiative," exults Giovanni Tumbiolo, district president, who hopes that Mediterranean fishermen will quickly manage to unite in an interdependent and rational network of companies to fight competition from the other great fishing zones in the world such as Southeast Asia and the American Pacific. "To reach that point, we are seeking to become partners with many countries in these poles of excellence. With respect for local traditions, we must export our production methods and modernize all trades that revolve around fishing in countries such as Libya, Egypt, Malta, etc. The standardization of practices will allow for common resource management. Pisciculture, training, naval construction... the guidelines for cooperation are numerous and Sicily intends to play a central role in bringing together the two banks of the Mediterranean," adds Tumbiolo. The island wants to revive its medieval vocation of being a cultural bridge between East and West, a golden era that gave it some of its most beautiful monuments.



Giovanni Tumbiolo
President, Fishing District of Mazara del Vallo

Sicilian IGP-certified red oranges had to undergo a strict phytosanitary check in order to access the Japanese market. Currently, the market request for this product is very high.



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Italy at Foodex

Piedmont

Well-known know-how



Wine, cheese, white truffles, pork, pasta, rice, desserts... all traditional and certified products from Piedmont.

Economic data



Regional Minister of Agriculture and Agroindustry: Mino Taricco

Agro-industry:

Total Export turnover of €3 billion, 10% of the national data, 370 regional traditional products, 17 certified products "DOP" and "IGP," 58 certified wines, 7,675 agroindustrial companies exports to Japan for €40 million (Import €2 million). Main products exported to Japan: cheese, wines, meat, chocolat, white truffles.

For more information:

www.regione.piemonte.it ; www.pie.camcom.it ; www.slowfood.it ; www.fieradeltartufo.org ; www.centroestero.org ; www.regione.piemonte.it/agri/vetrina.

The Piedmont region represents 10 percent of Italy's agro-food sector. With 1.1 million hectares of cultivated land, this region dotted with gentle hills and irrigated by the Po river is home to a powerful agro-industry, with thousands of small family businesses specializing in upmarket products and large multinationals such as Ferrero. Some 67,000 farms and 7,675 food-processing factories are based here. "Piedmont is characterized by a rich variety of land, which is why we produce so many different food products," says the regional minister of agriculture, Mino Taricco. "More than 370 tradi-

tional products are made in Piedmont, including 58 Controlled Denomination of Origin wines (DOC according to the Italian acronym). However, the variety of our production is also an obstacle, in particular for our exports, because our small producers do not have enough financial resources to expand on foreign markets. We are working on how to restructure the sector to boost our sales abroad." Piedmont wines have already benefited from the generalization of the system of certification and label of origin. Piedmont produces 60 percent of Italy's rice output. And the only Italian rice that has a Denomination of Origin label is produced here, the Baraggia Biellese

and Vercellese. There are many other fine delicacies "made in Piedmont," such as fruits and vegetables, cheeses, delicatessen and chocolate. "There are lots of cultural and professional shows and events dedicated to our products and gastronomy," adds Taricco. "To name a few, Turin's International Taste Fair, the Truffle Fair in Alba, the Douja d'Or wine festival in Asti.... The list is so long! Our objective is to create synergies among all these initiatives in order to promote more effectively all our products. We're encouraging professionals from all sectors to coordinate their actions." A visit to Piedmont is an absolute "must" for cacao buffs. The region's chocolate factories have been known since the 18th century for their creativity. Among the region's most famous chocolate creations are the Easter egg, Nutella cream and, a sweet known to television audiences all around the world, the Ferrero Rocher. "Quality is more important than ever to gain market share. We target upmarket consumers who are willing

to pay for quality, but at the same time, our prices must remain competitive," explains the regional minister of agriculture. "Many producers are modernizing their business, and more and more young entrepreneurs choose the agro-business, which is very encouraging. More than 2,000 young adults apply each year to the Rural Development Program, which grants loans specifically adapted to food start-ups. Also, by promoting small enterprises and quality products, we support sustainable agriculture, rather than mass production." One of the richest countries in the world, Japan is also home to one of the finest cuisines on the planet. As such, it is a key market



Ferruccio Dardanello
President,
Unioncamere Piedmont

Mino Taricco, herald of diversity

Since his appointment at the helm of the regional Ministry of Agriculture, Mino Taricco has been successful in negotiating key agreements for the region of Piedmont's agricultural sector. The payment from the national government of 1 billion euros to his region as per the 2007-2013 Rural Development Plan is perhaps most noteworthy, but he also brought about the simplification of administrative procedures linked to community aid to producers. Taricco was also the driving force behind the modification of the regulations that apply to the DOC labels and successfully repositioned the Asti sparkling wine in the market. At the same time, this dynamic 50-year-old dedicates great energy to convincing the local producers in his region to go global. He has particularly high hopes as far as the potential of the Japanese market is concerned.

Question: What do you think of the current exchanges between Japan

and the Piedmont region?
Answer: The Japanese market is of growing importance to our region. The country offers significant commercial potential for our producers, especially as relatively few products have made it to date. The Japanese greatly appreciate the quality that we are capable of offering consumers worldwide. They are already ranked the fourth-largest importers of our products outside the European Union. The value of our exports exceeds 40 million euros and we support all the initiatives that will permit us to grow this figure in the coming years. This is a very demanding market that abounds with lovers of Italian products. More generally, our exports jumped 13 percent during the semester of 2008 with regard to the same period the previous year. This represents 1.5 billion euros in just six months.

Q: What measures can you take to facilitate exports of agro-industrial goods from your region?

A: Certain of our products already enjoy strong brand recognition in international markets, but clearly some require specific promotional campaigns to develop a following. Since 2008, wines such as La Barbera d'Asti and La Barbera del Monferrato Superiore benefit from DOC, but despite this, they are still little known. The same goes for our rice: A protected origin naming was approved last year. We should be multiplying our communication efforts to raise awareness in international markets of the great strides we have made. This will also concern our bovine meat.

Q: How is Piedmont preparing for the 2015 Universal Exposition, which will take place in Milan?

A: This event, organized around the theme of Food for Humanity, is creating much interest among the farmers of our region, even though it is clearly



Mino Taricco
Regional Minister of Agriculture
Piedmont

most interesting for the provinces in the east of the region for obvious proximity reasons. The local authorities are negotiating which role they are to play with the region of Lombardy. The increase in tourism to the region will doubtless be significant. The variety of our territory bequeathed us with a range of 370 traditional products, of which 16 benefit from a DOP and 58 from a DOC by the European Union. The Universal Expo of 2015 will represent a unique opportunity to present all our gastronomic treasures to the world, just as we are going to do during Foodex.

for Piedmont producers. "We travel each year to Japan to attend professional fairs and exhibitions," comments Ferruccio Dardanello, president of the Piedmont Federation of Chambers of Commerce, the Unioncamere Piemonte, and of the Chamber of Commerce of Cuneo. "Of course, Foodex is at the top of our agenda. Some 20 to 25 enterprises attend the fair each year. This is proof of the emphasis we put on marketing, something we had neglected for many years. But we're catching up fast. One of our most recent achievements is that we have become the first foreign wine provider of the United States. In Japan, we still have a relatively low turnover, but we're on a positive trend."

Out of 753 Denominations of Origin officially recognized by the European Union, Italy has a record 173, of which 42 are from the province of Cuneo. "We are truly the European capital of quality food," says Dardanello. "We export cheese, wine and pastries. The majority of our producers are SMEs. In order to help them export to foreign markets, the regional government has created, in partnership with regional chambers of commerce, the Centro Estero per l'Internazionalizzazione (Piedmonte Agency for Investments, Export and Tourism). Japan is Piedmont's fourth export market, with sales totaling some 40 million euros a

year." Exports from the region are set to grow thanks to the recent opening in Tokyo's posh Daikanyama district of the Eataly gourmet store. Regional President Mercedes Bresso attended the inauguration. Eataly is a gourmet food chain created in Turin a few years ago and now rapidly expanding abroad. Wealthy gourmets will undoubtedly find at Daikanyama's Eataly the rare white truffles of Alba, a genuine Piedmontese treat whose market price can vary, depending on the year, from an average 4,000 euros a kilo up to the record 7,000 euros/kilo registered two years ago. President of the White Truffle International Fair of Alba, Alberto Cirio, explains, "From September to December, the whole life of the city revolves around the white truffle. Once a year, producers sell their lots at the auction market, a system that was first put in place 80 years ago." Nowadays, bidders from around the world take part in the auction, which is broadcast live by satellite to various large foreign capitals. "During the fair, there are lots of events around town, especially in the medieval quarters, with shows of folkloric music and dance," adds Cirio, who also notes that the city has known a "tourism boom" in the past 15 years. "Wine in the spring, truffles in the fall and skiing in winter: Our offer is very attractive," explains Cirio. "Also, we have new events each year. For instance, an exhibition on Caravaggio, the Chocolate Fair and the White Truffle White Nights. We are becoming the world's truffle capital and since it is a rare and luxury product, we celebrate it with first-class events."

Piedmont's regional government traveled to Tokyo last September for an of-



Carlo Petrini
President,
Slow Food International

official visit during which Regional President Bresso held talks with Japan's vice minister of economy, Hiroyuki Ishige. Officials announced a calendar of events that includes, among others, a Taste Festival. They also agreed on common measures to guarantee food security. Delegates of Japan's Isetan department store chain will attend Turin's Taste Fair and Japan will host an exhibition on the residences of the House of Savoy, as well as on the Piedmontese sites on UNESCO's World Heritage List. Any gourmet knows that

and we're losing our heritage, skills that are no longer transmitted to new generations. There is no more biodiversity. We have sadly traded our heritage for low-quality food." He adds that the Slow Food movement, which already has 100,000 members, including 30,000 Italians, aims to "raise public awareness and defend quality."

One of the most recent initiatives by Slow Food is the Terra Madre exhibition, organized for the first time during the 2008 International Taste Fair of Turin. "Terra Madre is a showcase for thousands of small producers," comments Petrini. "Around a thousand chefs and some 250 universities attended this event. This success shows that our ideas are now widely spread." Slow Food's revenues are mostly based on the sales of two very popular guides, the restaurant guide Guida delle Osterie d'Italia and the wine guide Guida dei Vini d'Italia. Another initiative led by

« Piedmont agro-food exports jumped 13 percent during the semester of 2008 with regard to the same period the previous year. This represents 1.5 billion euros in just six months. The Japanese market is of growing importance to our region, with more than 40 million euros of exports. Foodex is a great opportunity that will permit us to grow this figure in the coming years. »

Mino Taricco
Regional Minister of Agriculture

good food has to be savored slowly to be really appreciated. It's no wonder that it's in Piedmont, home to some of the most demanding gourmets in the world, that the concept of Slow Food was born. Slow Food has become a worldwide movement (it now operates in 105 countries) advocating a radical transformation of our eating habits. The founder of Slow Food, Carlo Petrini, explains, "Industrialization has forced many artisans to close shop

the Piedmont region in Japan is the recent deal with several supermarket chains to include a Piedmontese food stand in local stores. Another initiative, which doesn't have anything to do with food culture, but with culture, is the current traveling exhibition of part of the collection of Turin's Egyptian Museum. This world-famous establishment holds the second-largest collection of Egyptian art in the world, after the Cairo Museum.

Discover Piemonte at Foodex 2009



The exhibitors at the Foodex in Tokyo, coming from the area of Piemonte are mostly wine-producers, thus confirming the appreciation that the Japanese market has always shown for Piemonte autochthonous wine. With the support of Piemonte Regional Ministry of Agriculture - under the coordination of Piemonte Agency for Investments, Export and Tourism - the delegation counts on exhibitors such as: Cantina Terre del Barolo, Capetta, F.lli Casetta and the Association of Moscato d'Asti Producers. To represent the local agri-food production, the Piemonte delegation at the Foodex will also include a selection of top class companies: Acetificio Varvello (vinegars and dressings), Lauretana (mineral waters), Perla and Biraghi (dairy products), Tab Green Line (sauces, dressings and appetizers including truffle products) and Sanmichele (filled pasta).

Come and visit Piemonte at the FOODEX (Tokyo, 3-6 March) at Makuhari Messe in Chiba Pavilions 2 and 3 stands from n. 42 to 51 (Acetificio Varvello, Cantina Terre del Barolo, Capetta, F.lli Casetta, Perla, Biraghi, Tab Green Line, Sanmichele e Produttori di Moscato d'Asti Associati) and stand n. 185 (Lauretana)

For further information on Piemonte and its products:



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Show of White Truffle of Alba