



Press Release

Asiago PDO in the USA and Canada valorizes the authenticity of Made in Italy.

At the 12th Annual Starchefs - International Chefs Congress in New York, the Consortium launches the new campaign to valorize the link between product and territory of origin

Vicenza, 26th October 2017 – The Consortium for the Protection of Asiago Cheese opens a new season of communication and promotion in North America (the USA and Canada) at the 12th Annual Starchefs - International Chefs Congress in New York, dedicated to the theme "Cook your Culture" with a detailed programme for valorizing the link between product and territory of origin, with initiatives dedicated to consumers interested in discovering the authentic values of Made in Italy products.

Strengthening recognition of the distinctive properties of the product in response to growing appreciation for the "geographically distinct" and valorizing the link with the territory of origin. These are the objectives of the new season of activities of the Consortium for the Protection of Asiago Cheese in the USA and Canada. After a 2016 in which the Consortium initiated a series of communication and training actions targeting the trade sector on American soil, in 2017 these initiatives to promote and valorize the product have been expanded to include two master classes, organized in Los Angeles and New Orleans, and launching of the 2.5 million Euro three-year project "Uncommon Flavors of Europe" dedicated to the US and Canada, co-financed by the EU within "Enjoy, it's from Europe", the new programme aimed at promoting the consumption of European farm products.

Training and information are fundamental steps of the activities underlying the three-year project "Uncommon Flavors of Europe", dedicated to the US and Canada, promoted by the Consortium for the Protection of Asiago Cheese, together with the Speck Alto Adige PGI and Pecorino Romano PDO Consortia. The programme was formally launched during two press conferences in Brooklyn, New York on 23rd October and in Montréal, Canada on 25th October, in the presence of major importers and the media. In particular, in New York the event was held during the 12th Annual Starchefs - International Chefs Congress, this year entitled "Cook your Culture", bearing witness to the desire to discover the regional products used more and more in the American catering industry. During the event, the presence of Lou di Palo, who for generations has been well-known and respected for popularizing authentic Italian food in the USA, confirmed the importance of knowing how to tell American consumers about (and to share with them) the intangible elements of Made in Italy products, learning to valorize the territory also through the stories of the many people who, each day, make it possible for tradition to continue.

In 2016 the per capita consumption of cheeses in the US was 16.26 kg, an increase of 3.2% compared to the previous year. A growth in which the Italian origin of the product is considered an assurance of quality and safety and, in the first seven months of 2017, there has been a 7% increase

Consorzio Tutela Formaggio Asiago

sede legale: Piazzale della Stazione 1 - 36012 Asiago (VI)

sede amministrativa: Corso Fogazzaro, 18 - 36100 Vicenza (VI)

Registro Imprese di Vicenza n. 00703580241 - C.F./P.I. 00703580241 - REA 148240

Tel: 0444 321758 - Fax: 0444 326212

info@formaggioasiago.it - www.formaggioasiago.it - PEC tutelasiago@legalmail.it



in exports of Asiago PDO. The director of the Consortium, Flavio Innocenzi, stated that: "food culture in the United States is growing. Not just foodies, but also the average consumer wants to know the nature and origin of what they eat. Increasingly fewer people agree to buy copied products, poor imitations of ours. This fact, together with a growing appreciation for Made in Italy, allows us to be optimistic about the prospects for development in the North American market for Asiago PDO cheese and for all geographical indication products in general".

The concept of genuine food was the focal point of the two master classes held in Los Angeles and New Orleans in collaboration with the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce of Texas, within the TRUE ITALIAN TASTE campaign established by the Ministry of Economic Development to promote genuine food in the US and Canada. The events, which took place in October, involved around fifty operators of well-known supermarket chains in Los Angeles, while over thirty professionals representing major importers and food retail multiples participated in the training activity in New Orleans.

The commitment of the Consortium for the Protection will continue for the rest of 2017 with a calendar of 350 promotional days out of a total of 1,750 over the three-year period, in points of sale of major US and Canadian supermarket chains to meet consumers and introduce them to the value of the authenticity of Made in Italy.

Press contacts:

Roberta Zarpellon - TRAGUARDI - 0424523073 - 3394187543 zarpellon@traguardiweb.it

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