



ASIAGO, PARMIGIANO REGGIANO AND PECORINO ROMANO: THE CONSORTIUMS OBTAIN SEIZURE OF COUNTERFEIT PRODUCTS AT ANUGA IN COLOGNE

Protection consortiums united to defend Made in Italy

8th October 2013 – A new counterfeiting operation has been uncovered by the Consortiums for the protection of Asiago, Parmigiano Reggiano and Pecorino Romano cheese at Anuga, the international food fair being held in Cologne, in Germany, where the Italian PDOs jointly requested the German authorities to immediately seize the false Asiago, Parmigiano Reggiano (called “parmesan”) and Pecorino Romano (also called “romano”) produced by an American company.

The operation was triggered after the counterfeiting was reported by the legal advisors of the consortiums involved. The PDO designations identify a product produced according to specific rules and regulations and in delimited geographical areas. In this case, the “made in Usa” counterfeiting was designed to exploit known designations to offer products totally different from the originals. The phenomenon and the damage caused are well-known: it is estimated that over 60 billion euros are lost to our country each year by Italian-sounding products, not to mention misleading the consumers, who are victims of fraudulent exploitation of the powerful image of the original product. The operation by the Protection Consortiums against this abuse has therefore been hard-hitting and promptly implemented, in line with the national and community legislation which establishes, among other things, the obligation to safeguard the PDOs “ex-officio” in all the EU member states.

“In this case – stated the Chairman of the Consortium for the protection of Asiago cheese PDO, Roberto Gasparini – it is important to note the effectiveness of the prompt joint action and the role of the Consortium which protects, throughout Europe, brands which are public and therefore of collective interest. This protection cannot be confined solely to repression, it must increasingly go hand in hand with a strong commitment to spreading the culture of the PDO product, reflecting a unique identity and heritage.”

“We hope that this new seizure, which took place at one of the most prestigious world agri-food fairs, and the decisive intervention of the Protection Consortiums – underlined the Chairman of the Parmigiano Reggiano Consortium, Giuseppe Alai – will serve to discourage phenomena of this type which continue to occur both within and outside Europe: also for this reason it is important that our action is supported by a more incisive system of rules and regulations in terms of recognition of the PDOs and repression of fraud at world level, because this is the only way we can guarantee more effective protection of producer and consumer interests”.

“Once again we have reacted to the umpteenth case of counterfeiting – thanks to the coordinated action of the Protection Consortiums involved”- declared Gianni Maoddi, Chairman of the Consortium for the protection of Pecorino Romano PDO - “We have obtained immediate satisfaction, sending out a message loud and clear, i.e. that the Protection Consortiums are the spearhead for the defence of Italian food specialties. We hope that our example is followed by many others and that the institutions give it their full support.”

Today the Protection Consortiums are necessarily committed to combating counterfeit products and safeguarding PDOs on a world scale that knows no boundaries. Where the Made in Italy brand represents a value, there is no lack of fraudsters ready to take advantage of the consumer’s good faith. This is why it will be increasingly important, in the coming years, to rely on an efficient network controlling both the national and international territory, joint protection actions and increasingly well-informed consumers, able not only to appreciate the product but also to recognise it and distinguish it from attempts at falsification.

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