



FRESH FRUIT



► Go to the **ITALIANFOOD.NET** platform to discover the authentic products and suppliers

by **Giuseppe Catapano**

R&D will 'save' Italian exports




Euromonitor has recently found a precise trend for the world consumption of fruit and vegetables: there will be an increase over the next 15 years from 2.1 billion euro in 2015 to **4.8 billion euro in 2030**. Middle Eastern and Asian countries will spearhead the consumption charts and will go from 966 million euro to 2.7 billion euro, reaching 56% of the world consumption. So where does this leave Italy in this global game? Italy exports only 17% of its production in comparison to the 50% Spain markets abroad. These disappointing figures have also been confirmed by some ISMEA data, which show how Italy's export has decreased by 13.2% to Germany, by 4.9% to the United

Fruit and vegetable consumption

Year	World	Asia
2015	2.1 billion euro	966 million euro
2030	4.8 billion euro	2.7 billion euro

Source: Euromonitor

Kingdom and by 26.5% to Austria over the three-year period from 2016 to 2018. To top things off, this trend has continued up to the first 10 months of 2019. According to Fruitimprese, **Italian exports of fresh fruit** are down in the dumps by over **124.5 million euro** compared to the same period of the previous year.

	Alegra	Apofruit	Brio	Donnalia
Product	Green-fleshed and yellow-fleshed kiwis 	Green kiwi 	Organic Kiwi 	Sicilian peaches and nectarines 
Characteristics	Ready-to-eat, quality-controlled from field to table.	Exclusively produced in Italy. Control of the whole supply chain and quality parameters based on dry matter and brix degrees.	A 100% Italian product, with a controlled organic supply chain and high organoleptic qualities.	Juicy and very sweet product, eco-friendly packaging.

Source: these charts refer to some products of this category that have been launched abroad by Italian companies in the last 18 months

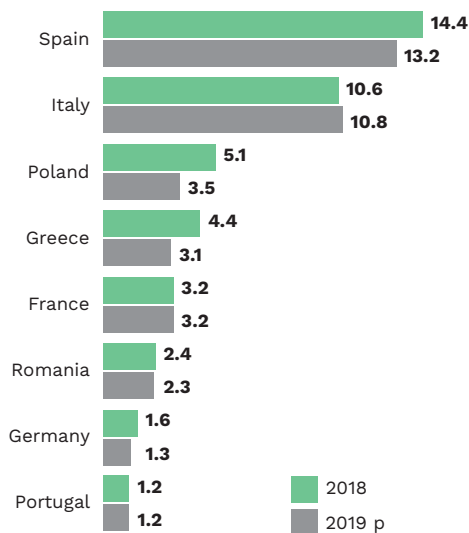
Go to page 83

Trends

- **ECO-SUSTAINABLE** packaging
- **ORGANIC** products are gaining market share
- Great boost of **VARIETAL** innovation to respond to different tastes on different markets
- Trends reward the **SWEETEST** fruits and, particularly for apples, the crispest pulps

Top fresh fruit producers

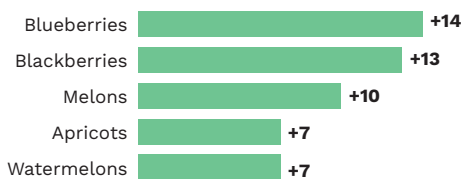
(million tonnes)



Sources: AMI-informiert.de; CSO; Eurostat; ISTAT; Wapa

Top 5 fresh fruit exports volume growth

(% p.a. 2009-2018)



Sources: AMI-informiert.de; CSO; Eurostat; ISTAT; Wapa

Italian fresh fruit exports

Volume	Jan- Oct 2019	Trend %	Value Jan- Oct 2019	Trend %
Citrus fruit	162,713	-9.5%	162,403	-7.5%
Fresh fruit	1,921,407	+4.9%	1,925,887	-6.1%

In tonnes and in thousands of euro – Source: Euromonitor

Italian fresh fruit exports volume (K Tonnes)

Fresh Fruit	2016	2017	2018	2019p
Apples	1,010	976	673	1,010
Table grapes	474	502	465	330
Kiwifruit	413	322	293	310
Watermelons	234	215	299	220
Peaches/Nectarines	253	223	160	135
Pears	150	138	155	115
Easy Peelers	88	94	80	100
Oranges	152	111	138	95
Lemons	46	47	47	45
Others	240	350	280	260
TOTAL	3,060	2,977	2,590	2,620

Sources: AMI-informiert.de; CSO; Eurostat; ISTAT; Wapa

● PACKAGING

⌚ Sustainability is key

Innovation is also tantamount to greater attention to the issue of sustainability. “Melinda has been using eco-friendly packaging for some time with the aim of minimising the use of non-recycled/ recyclable plastic, thus reducing the impact on the environment as much as possible”, the company concludes. “In terms of packaging”, comments **Rita Biserni, international marketing manager at Alegria**, “we are constantly on the lookout for solutions that are truly sustainable. It is for this reason that there is a line using compostable packaging. However, I believe that **the big challenge for fruit producing companies like Alegria is to maintain the level of taste**. We have been

working on varieties and techniques that focus on preserving the authentic flavour of our products. This latter characteristic has taken a backseat to high productivity and prolonged shelf life in the last few decades. We undoubtedly pay great attention to the processing. Nowadays, we use in-line technologies where the fruits are selected and classified according to their characteristics. In addition, thanks to the total automation of our packaging lines, we can quickly process even the most complex orders as well as being ready to face the “emergencies” that may arise on the demand front. Our green and yellow kiwis are exported throughout Europe, North America, Australia and in South America and Asia. To maintain our market share in these markets, precision and speed are essential”.

● INNOVATION

🕒 New apple varieties from Italy

What all the top players undoubtedly agree on is the crucial importance of the research work on the variety front: “It is a resource we use to conquer consumers who seek to move away from classic varieties”, explains **Walter Pardatscher, General Manager of the Consortium Vog**, which today trades 67 countries for about 63% of the total turnover. “Vog has been trying to tap into this opportunity for years, offering innovative apple varieties such as Pink Lady®, Kanzi®, envy™, Crimson Snow®, yello®. At the moment we are in the full roll-out phase of a profound varietal renewal strategy. This undertaking will entail that from now to 2025 the 4,600 producing members of the Vog Consortium replant about 1,800 hectares of apple orchards, grubbing up the older and less profitable plants. In this context, we will reduce the share of Golden in our varietal portfolio, making it drop from 25% to 15%, in favour of those new varieties that we have identified after years of market analyses and tests. In concrete terms, **we will increase the hectares of Kanzi®, envy™ and yello®. We will participate in the Crimson Snow® and Joya® project and we will launch three new varietal projects, of which Vog**





Consortio Melinda: in store promotion in Madrid

together with V.I.P holds the European exclusive rights. Last but not least, we will increase the organic share. Over the next few years, 170 hectares that are currently being converted, will be added to today’s 850 hectares of organic and biodynamic production with the aim of reaching 1,000 hectares as soon as possible”. Continuous innovation and differentiation is Melinda’s strategy. “Innovation is a fundamental asset for Melinda”, the company comments. “Even a simple product like an apple is subject to continuous investments, as differentiating in an increasingly crowded market has become fundamental. All this materialises in our **Organic Plan** we have set up for the upcoming years, which envisages a conversion of hundreds of hectares to organic production but also

a varietal renewal that our members are beginning to implement. Eight new varieties are being launched, selected on the basis of the characteristics of the fruits and the most suitable areas of our territory.” Among the objectives of this strategy there is the desire to further improve performance on markets other than the domestic one: “We want to reach distant markets and to offer excellent products, hence the new varieties that meet these requirements. The latter are more responsive to modern consumer demands, such as Kissabel®, the red-fleshed apple, or Isaaq®, the small prêt-à-porter apple and finally the fact of offering a variety, such as **Morgana® with a resistant peel and pulp that is therefore perfectly suitable for facing long export journeys**”.

Following from page 81

	Marlene/Vog	Melinda
Product	Envy®, Kanzi®, Yello® 	Golden Delicious 
Characteristics	Territorial origins in South Tyrol – Sudtirolo is a territory that is suited for apple growing, innovation, variety, controlled quality.	Golden Delicious Melinda has had PDO certification since 2003. Cultivated in Val di Non, it is a versatile product since the organoleptic qualities, from the taste to the texture of the pulp, contribute to making it always good.

Source: these charts refer to some products of this category that have been launched abroad by Italian companies in the last 18 months



The Evelina Melinda at Riyadh - Saudi Arabia



● IN STORE 1

🕒 **Organic Italian fruit: kiwis are playing the lead role in Germany**
 “We operate in 24 countries that cover 35% of our turnover, offering a complete range of over 80 products including continuous and seasonal, organic and 100% Italian, in terms of origin, processing and packaging”, explains **Mauro Laghi Sales Director at Brio, a cooperative specialising in the production of organic products.** “As a commercial strategy, we are PL suppliers abroad. With some customers, we have created important promos and in-store activities in

core countries such as Germany. One example is the action taken in 140 stores of the German retailer Tegut that belongs to the Swiss Migros Group. Our Italian organic kiwis were in the limelight of those stores for a week with dedicated islands and information material. The promotion is part of the numerous trade and b2b activities envisaged by the **Made in Nature project of CSO Italy**, a project funded by the European Union to promote the values and culture of organic fruit and vegetables in Italy, France and Germany and which places Brio among the leading companies”.

● IN STORE 2

🕒 **The Middle East loves Italian apples**

“We were among the first to face the Far East and Middle Eastern markets”, states **Gianluca Casadio, Marketing Manager at Apofruit**, a group that has seen its export volume increase by 4% in the last 12 months, “primarily by exploiting the transport by ship and in some cases also by air. Today, we are present in these countries with activities in the stores also thanks

to projects fostering the promotion and enhancement of Italian products that are also financed by the European Community. Most notably, there was an in-store promotion activity last January in the United Arab Emirates with the characterisation of the store. Our main products are green kiwis,



Apofruit Box: Candine® variety

which we export all over the world, including China, and the apples with which we reach above all the Middle Eastern countries, which are

heavy consumers especially of red apples. We focus on products with a long shelf-life that allow us to manage transport and logistics times. This context also includes the production and marketing, which we hold exclusively for Italy and for some foreign countries, of a new variety of apples, Regal'You®, marketed under the Candine® brand with exceptional organoleptic characteristics.” **La Candine®, which is harvested from 20 September in the plains and at the end of September in the foothills, has an excellent shelf life.** Under normal atmospheric circumstances it can be kept until January and can last up until early June in a controlled atmosphere”.



Apofruit promotion activity at Carrefour in UAE