



## Italy Shines as first First Partner Country and Sponsor at 2015 SFFS

Natasha Lardera (June 29, 2015)



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Everybody going to the New York City's 2015 Summer Fancy Food Show is Italian. Indeed, as you walk around the busy corridors of the Jacob Javits Center you realize that all badges, no matter what country you are from, no matter what type of food you sell, are sporting the Italian flag and a logo designed on purpose to announce that Italy is the first Partner Country and Sponsor of the Summer Fancy Food Show, since the days of its inception.



Italy is indeed the main protagonist of the 2015 edition of Summer Fancy Food, the largest marketplace devoted exclusively to specialty foods and beverages in North America. For the first time in the 61 years of show history, the organizers, Specialty Food Association, a not-for-profit trade association based in New York for food artisans, importers and entrepreneurs, have elected a partner country as well as the sponsor of the great event.

"We are very proud of the work we've accomplished in these recent months," Donato Cinelli, President of Universal Marketing, the exclusive show agent for Italy, has said. "The 2015 Summer Fancy Food is our icing on the cake. Not only is Italy the first-time partner and sponsor of the show, Universal Marketing gets the honor to work with the Specialty Food Association at one of the most important commercial events in the world and this, to us, is not only an immense pride and satisfaction but, also, the confirmation of our growing reputation in the industry, that we have been steadily building all these years in North America and beyond."

Chris Nemchek, SVP, Business Development & Member Relations Officer at The Specialty Food Association had more to say. "We at the Specialty Food Association are pleased and proud to announce that Italy has been named our first ever Partner Country for the Summer Fancy Food Show. We have partnered with the Italian Trade Commission and with Universal Marketing for many years to build programs that would bring more and more Italian specialty foods to the US consumer. Italy has brought some of the highest quality foods to the US through the Fancy Food Show. The Partner Country Program has given Italy the opportunity to further promote these brands to the US buying community."

Through the years the Italian pavilion has always been the largest yet this year, sponsored by PGI Gragnano Pasta, Fratelli d'Amico, Kimbo and De Nigris, there are 375 food companies spread out on more than 26,000 square feet of exhibit area, carrying the finest in pasta, cheese, olive oil, cured meats, rice, vinegars, pastries and more from all regions of Italy.

The sense of pride is not only that of the organizers but of the exhibitors as well, pride of participating and pride of presenting some of the best, high quality products Italy produces. "This is the first year we participate in the show," Cristina Lucera, Business Development Manager of Sotto il Tetto della Puglia said, "And we are here to introduce the American consumer to the simplicity of Italian ingredients." At their booth a welcoming Italian "mamma" is quietly making fresh orecchiette, Puglia's typical pasta. "It's hard to believe but not many consumers are familiar with this ear-shaped pasta which traditionally is paired with cime di rapa (broccoli raab) but is also delicious with tiny meatballs or just ricotta salata (a variation of ricotta that has been pressed, salted and dried). Orecchiette do make an appearance on some menus here in New York, but they are not known in other states. The Fancy Food show gives us the right exposure to buyers across the US."

Along with newcomers, there are companies who are leaders back home and that often attend the Fancy Food Show as it is an important promotional tool, as well as a unique opportunity to "conquer" the North American market. Roberto Ravanelli, Sales Manager at Delicieux, talked about the benefits of attending. "Buyers from top names in specialty retailing, restaurants and food service, including Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, Dean&DeLuca and Fresh Direct among others, are all here. The Fancy Food brings them all together and in three days we have maximum exposure. Today Delicieux is the Italian leader in the anchovy, mackerel, sardine and prawn markets. We work on a global scale and we have widened our product range by combining great attention to today's consumer and great tradition."

Tradition is a key element to the great quality of all Italian products, not only the ones presented at the show but always. And as always all Italian producers participating at the show are bringing over the best.



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