



## Fancy Food Show and Italy - A Partnership in Specialty Food

Natasha Lardera (April 16, 2015)



The 2015 edition of the Summer Fancy Food Show is going to be super special as Italy signed on as partner country sponsor of the show. This is the first time since its inception in 1955 that the show organizer, the Specialty Food Association, has partnered up with a country to sponsor the event.

Every late June/early July New York City hosts an event for food lovers coming from all corners of the world: the Summer Fancy Food Show is North America's largest specialty food and beverage event that, with every edition, presents hundreds of thousands of products including pastas, condiments, cheeses, coffee, snacks, spices, ethnic, natural, organic and more coming from 50 countries and regions. The 2015 edition is going to be super special as Italy signed on as partner country sponsor of the show. This is the first time since its inception in 1955 that the show organizer, the Specialty Food Association, has partnered up with a country to sponsor the event.

Italy has always held a position of relevance at the show, being the largest international

exhibitor with about 325 companies presenting specialty food products from every region of the peninsula. The announcement was recently made at the headquarters of the Specialty Food Association in Manhattan at a press reception. The special event welcomed the main characters of this new venture: Chris Nemcheck, Senior Vice President, Business Development & Member Relations Officer, Pier Paolo Celeste, Trade Commissioner in New York, Donato Cinelli, President of



Universal Marketing, organizer of the Fancy Food Show's Italian Pavilion, and Louise Kramer, Communications Director at the Specialty Food Association.

"This year is going to be special," Pier Paolo Celeste told i-Italy, "this is the first time ever that something like this happens. Italy deserved to be nominated partner country as we always play an important role in the show and bring together the largest number of producers. We are really honored. This year we will have 325 exhibitors as it has been in these past years. This is a moment of great interest for Italian food and wine culture. We just had Wine Week where we welcomed than 1700 operators coming from all corners of the US. For 5 days we put together 395 vineyards and 1200 wine labels. Our work at the Fancy Food Show is similar, we are working hard to consolidate our position in the American market."

"Italy has been a wonderful exhibitor with a pavilion filled with small Italian food producers for many years," Louise Kramer added. "We usually have 50 countries represented at the show, and Italy has always had the most companies. This year they are actually sponsoring the show. Italy is so famous for its quality of food, for its small producers, the people who are passionate about food and its traditions, plus there are new great twists on the classics like pasta made with ancient grains or gluten free...so all of these things are very on target for what consumers are looking for at the moment."

And what products are consumers looking for? Donato Cinelli had his say "All Italian food products are loved here in the US - from the most common ones like pasta and olive oil to the most unique ones. Truffles are cherished, sweets are successful. Being the Fancy Food a show focused on specialty products it helps small, unique, artisanal companies introduce their products in this market."

Apart from truffles, there are so many products that just a few years ago were not available but now can be found everywhere. We have to thanks Mr. Cinelli and Mr. Chris Nemcheck for this. "My mother's family is from Battipaglia and I have so many great memories growing up eating Italian specialties so when I started working here and Italy was our big client bringing all the Italian specialties I was at home. Together with Donato Cinelli, who has been one of the best business colleagues I have ever worked with, over time we grew the Italian participation at the show from about 150 to the 325 of today. Specialty has been an ever growing industry here in the US because people have disposable income and they are willing to spend higher amounts of money of specialty food. They really love to eat well, entertain their friends and family. When we opened up the Fancy Food to the Italians they really saw the value of coming to the US. Everybody loves Italian food, especially Specialty food."

"Selecting the companies which showcase their products at the show is no easy feat," Mr. Cinelli explained, "We receive an unbelievable amount of requests. We look at those producers who carry the products that are in greatest demand and then we select those of the highest quality. We also like to give the possibility to new companies who are looking for their spot in the market to show us what they have...but still, only if the quality of their products is exceptional."

"The Fancy Food show gives chefs like me, the chance to get to know the Italian producers who are looking to come to the US with their products," Chef Cozzolino of Ribalta and Prova said. "There is always the possibility to find those products that at the moment are still unknown. There are so many cheeses that are still missing from the American market, like conciato romano. At our restaurant Prova we are indeed trying to bring some products that are not here yet. They are products of the highest quality that deserve to be known."

At the press reception the high and unique quality of Italian food products was represented by the cuisine of Chef Cozzolino and the products provided by Caffo, Dolciaria Monardo, Colacchio, Wine Worldwide, Inc. and International Wine Masters, Legends from Europe (Grana Padano, Montasio, Prosciutto di Parma, Prosciutto San Daniele) and Tradizione Italiana (D&D Italia, Kimbo, La Doria, Pastificio G. Di Martino & F.lli, Aceitificio Marcello De Nigris).



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