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FACTS & STORIES

Endlessly Fighting Against Italian Sounding Products

NATASHA LARDERA (October 25, 2011)



The war is never over, as recently a well known Italian food company, Parmacotto, has agreed to produce in the state of New York cured meats with Italian names.



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For years now Italian food producers and the Italian Government are fighting against Italian sounding products as their damage done to the Italian alimentary export is really consistent.

The web site www.foodinitaly.org explains that “these are counterfeit Italian food products sold with almost-Italian names like “Rosecco” (UK), “Parmesao” (Brazil), and “Mozzarella Company” (USA). These names, rather than reflecting a general food category, mask a lower-quality food which catches the coattails of an Italian brand’s collective reputation.”

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Yet, news just came out that the Italian Government is actually financing fake "Made in Italy" products. The scandal was raised by **Coldiretti** (Confederazione Nazionale Coltivatori Diretti, Italy's major institution that supports local agriculture) at the **Forum dell'Alimentazione in Cernobbio** (international food trade show held in the province of Como). On trial are the international sales of bresaola (air dried, salted and aged beef) made in Uruguay, but also of finocchiona (a Tuscan salami made with fennel) and culatello (one of the most prestigious Italian cured meats that is made from the back leg of the pig and then only the rear part of the leg, freed from the bone and skin. It is really the heart of the Prosciutto) made in the USA and sold in New York by **Salumeria Rosi**, owned by **Gruppo Parmacotto**. The company has just settled on an agreement with **Simest** (Società Italiana per le Imprese all'Estero, Italian company in support of businesses abroad under the control of the Ministry of Economic Development) for 11 millions.

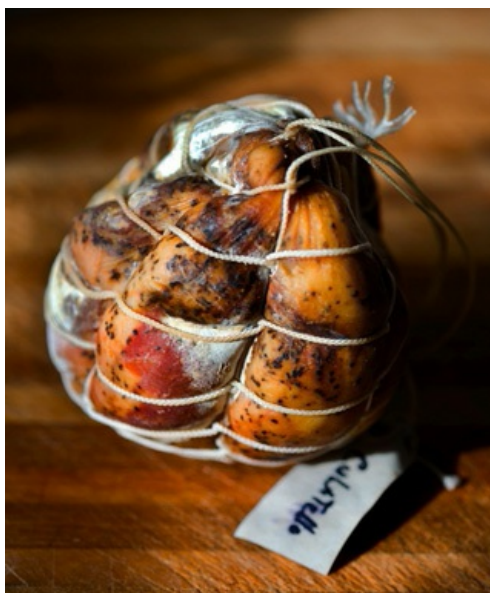
Basically they are producing a product with an Italian name but production is 100% foreign. But Simest replies that the Parmacotto project follows the law. "It is not politically acceptable for the Government to sponsor, directly or indirectly, the production or distribution of food products that compete with authentic products in a treacherous way," the president of Coldiretti, Sergio Marini, who is also asking for the resignation of the President and the whole board of directors of Simest, said and then added "a demonstration with the participation of consumers and businessmen who believe in the one and only Made in Italy label will follow soon."

The accusations are rejected by Simest, that in a release explains that Parmacotto is "an excellent company," that has presented "a valuable project that follows lawful rules." In addition, Simest "supports all the aspects of Made in Italy, including agro-industry" and its mission "is exclusively finalized to reinforcing the presence of Italian businesses abroad."

Therefore "the social test is addressed to an economic evaluation of the project in compliance with the regulations, also regarding the interdiction of financing in the hypothesis of relocation."

Parmacotto's president, Marco Rosi replied right away: "We ask Mr Marini to get familiar with the laws in the United States about imports from Italy" that does not allow imports of cured meats. "His controversy is totally sterile and against companies, just like Parmacotto, that export the Made in Italy label in the world." The ex minister of Agriculture and Mayor of Rome, Gianni Alemanno fully supports Coldiretti and declares: "I am first in line to protest against this shame," while the consumer groups **Adusbef** and **Federconsumatori** are ready to protest too.

"This is a real scandal, something to be ashamed of," the president of Adusbef and senator of Idv, Elio Lannutti said "we are ready to fight."



Culatello is one of the most prestigious Italian cured meats.



Salumeria Rosi is one of New York City's favorite Italian spots.



Finocchiona is a real Tuscan treat.

Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata



Casa Italiana NYU, "The Towers, the Portico and the Farm"



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