

Guest Author

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The Italian milling industry: an excellence in evolution

“Italian boasts an ancient milling tradition of excellence. Thanks to the extensive use of automation, the new century’s Italian milling industry is a technologically advanced sector. A sector that holds the acknowledged leadership in the European Union, by processing over 11 million tonnes of soft and durum wheat each year to produce 4,1 million tonnes of soft wheat flours and 3,8 million tonnes of durum wheat semolina of well-established quality and absolute safety in terms of hygiene and health.”

Dear readers of Miller Magazine,

In Europe, and today perhaps in the world as well, “eating Italian” has taken on the meaning of eating well, not just in terms of the type of food but also as a way of sitting at the table to be stirred by food, and share these feelings with others. In this sense, being invited to lunch or dinner is a time for sharing a lifestyle which goes far beyond sharing food.

When one thinks of Italian food, one’s mind fills with memories of bread, pizza, pasta, slow-leavened produ-

cts such as Christmas-time Pandoro and Panettone and Easter-time Colomba. In other words, food products that are symbols of “Made in Italy”, obtained from the transformation of wheat.

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The Italian milling sector is certainly facing a number of challenges, first and foremost concerning proper and consistent supplying of high-quality raw materials. It should be noted that national production covers 55% of the needs of the durum wheat milling sector and 40% of the soft wheat milling sector. The production of high-quality flours and semolina, therefore, stems from the ability of Italian entrepreneurs to skillfully select and mix national and foreign raw materials and process them according to original recipes and modern technologies.

On the demand side, the main critical issue appears to be attributable to a stagnation or a slight reduction in some domestic consumption - especially for bread and, to a lesser extent, for pasta - fortunately more than offset by a particularly positive trend in the consumption of

bread substitutes (crackers, taralli, grissini...), pizza, biscuits and leavened products on one side and in exports (especially concerning the pasta) on the other side.

To combat the rise of unhealthy fad diets creating misperceptions about carbohydrates, Italmopa has launched in 2018 a new communication program, especially through the social networks and through "Molini d'Italia" (the official Magazine of Italmopa), to clarify the myths and the misinformation surrounding the consumption of carbohydrates. It is important to change people's perceptions of bread or pasta by informing, educating and encouraging eating them as part of a healthy lifestyle

The challenges certainly appear to be complex, but Italian millers are fully capable of tackling them, both thanks to their skills and to the sector's long and glorious history. Being a miller means being passionate about one's enterprise, developing a product, watching it grow, placing it on the market. A whole set of actions that make up a challenging yet thrilling activity.