

Press release

## **‘MADE IN ITALY’ ORGANIC PRODUCTS ARRIVE IN CHINA AND OPPORTUNITIES OPEN UP IN E-COMMERCE**

**The strategic partnership between BolognaFiere and FederBio is offering new opportunities to companies in the organic sector that want to make inroads into the promising Chinese market and is also broadening its horizons to include online commerce.**

### **Italian organic products finally have a platform to enter the Chinese market**

Bologna, 9 December 2020 - An agreement has been signed between FederBio Servizi and China Organic Food Certification Centre (COFCC) – the main official organisation for the control and certification of organic products in China, authorised by the Agriculture Ministry of the People’s Republic of China, active also abroad with 118 foreign businesses certified – which will open up the Chinese market to Italian companies interested in expanding their business in a country that is paying increasing attention to the quality of its food products.

To support businesses, assisting them in the procedures for obtaining the certifications that authorize the sale of organic foodstuffs on the Chinese market, a dedicated desk has been created at the offices of FederBio Servizi in Parma.

**This step forward should be seen within the context of the strategic pact signed by BolognaFiere with FederBio to boost the organic sector, aiming to develop a fully-fledged internationalization platform to provide services for companies, a platform that will benefit from the direct involvement of ICE-ITA, the Italian Trade Agency, in promoting the internationalization of Italian producers of organic products.** The agreement sets out to support businesses in accessing diverse foreign distribution channels. Within this scenario are numerous missions that will be organized in collaboration with ICE-ITA and Chinese buyers at BolognaFiere events (SANA and MarcabyBolognafiere), where the leading Italian organic producers exhibit, to then enable these Italian companies to then enter China with their products certified for this market.

*“We were among the first in Italy to understand the importance of organic products both in economic terms and from the perspective of creating a sustainable future,”* announced Antonio Bruzzone, General Manager of BolognaFiere, *“For more than thirty years we have been organising SANA, the international exhibition and conference for natural and organic products, which provides an opportunity for the market and its partners to discuss its development. We are also strongly committed to supporting internationalization, supported by BolognaFiere’s experience of global markets and specifically those in Asia in which we have transferred some of our leading events and in which we operate through BFChina, the Group’s company dedicated to event organization as well as work with Asian operators considering attending events in Bologna. We are pleased to make our know-how available to the organic sector and to do so in partnership with FederBio, with whom we have shared this long experience. The agreement signed by BolognaFiere and Alibaba.com, for whom we are the only trade fair event partner worldwide,”* concludes Bruzzone, *“is a further important opportunity for businesses and operators in this sector, which is experiencing constant growth.”*

*“The signature of this agreement through FederBio Servizi,” announced Paolo Carnemolla, President of FederBio Servizi, “is part of the framework of strategic collaboration with BolognaFiere to create a platform for the promotion and internationalization of Italian organic products, with the aim of supporting and further developing Italy’s role in the fastest growing international markets. The market for organic products is regulated by standards and certification systems that, outside the EU and existing equivalence agreements, require specific skills and capabilities in addition to direct relationships with local certification systems that are often particularly complex and rigorous, as is the case in China. The Chinese market,” continues Carnemolla, “is a great opportunity also for Italian producers, given that China exports raw materials but imports transformed products certified with the EU’s organic logo. In order to equip Italy too with a service to access the certification system, and counting on the synergy with a system of promotion implemented by BolognaFiere and ICE-ITA in collaboration with FederBio, is a systemic action that is now more necessary than ever to promote the recovery of our exports.”*

Also providing further tangible support to the strategies for internationalization is the partnership recently agreed between BolognaFiere and Phenix Exhibitions, which each year in Xiamen organises China’s leading event for the organic food sector, the **China International Organic Food Expo (CIOFE)**, a now consolidated appointment for the sector of organic food in general and that enjoys substantial participation from businesses specialised in organic fruit and vegetables, a compartment that represents an ideal launch pad from which to enter China. The event has been identified as a priority also by ICE-ITA, which intends to use it as a platform for the promotion of ‘Made in Italy’ organic products once the Covid-19 emergency has been overcome.

In recent years sales of organic products in the Chinese market have registered growth of 35%, becoming the second largest market in Asia for this sector, demonstrating growth that is of potential interest also for the Grocery Retail sector. That is why BolognaFiere decided to launch **Marca China**, the new project scheduled to make its debut from 8 to 10 June 2021 in Shenzhen, a metropolis in the Greater Bay Area in the province of Guangdong in southern China. The new event will present to Chinese operators the vast range of Italian organic products to propose their use for private labels in China’s burgeoning Grocery Retail sector. The Chinese businesses that express interest in the Italian offer will then be invited to learn more in Bologna, where each year the specialist event MarcabyBolognaFiere is held. Grocery Retail is a strategic channel in China and is experiencing an important phase of evolution, increasingly attentive to the requirements of Chinese consumers, who are particularly sensitive to the issue of food safety and therefore also to quality organic foods like those ‘made in Italy’.

Also in China, at the same time as **Marca China**, the exhibition centre in Shenzhen will be the venue for the event **Wine to Asia 2021**, a new fair that will provide the opportunity to monitor emerging trends from the Wine sector in Asian markets and create further synergies with visitors.

With these two fair products in the promotional schedule (CIOFE Xiamen and MARCA China Shenzhen) Italian companies in the sector are being offered a double possibility when it comes to entering the Chinese market, to then consolidate their position once certification for this market has been obtained, a process that has been simplified thanks to the agreement signed with COFCC. In addition to working with Chinese Grocery Retail and accessing traditional physical retail points for the organic sector, the project also involves helping businesses position themselves with online sales platforms, which will be increasingly present at these fair events.

Online marketplaces in Asia are experiencing double digit growth. The effects of the lockdown resulting from the pandemic meant that in the first quarter of 2020 the increase in online sales in the food sector reached +32.7% in China.

The need for a multi-channel approach, in truth, does not concern only the Chinese market given that the greater use of e-commerce and the integration between the digital and physical channels is a necessity that is reflected in all global markets. On this front, FederBio and ICE-ITA are already promoters of an initiative to create new opportunities for companies that wish to access e-commerce, such as the partnership that ICE has established with Amazon with its 'Made in Italy' showcase.

Within this context is also the organization of the in-depth webinar for professional operators from the sector. The next (organized by BolognaFiere in collaboration with FederBio and ICE-ITA) will be held on 9 December (at 3pm) and will be dedicated to **"The internationalization of 'made in Italy' organic products: Focus United States"**. This will include the presentation of the ITA.BIO Platform and discussions on: dimensions and positioning of Italian organic products on international markets, with a particular focus on the USA, opportunities and promotional pathways for Italian organic products in the USA with digital strategies and the presentation of some success stories.

**Since mid October the internationalization of the organic compartment in Italy has also been able to rely on further support thanks to the agreement signed between BolognaFiere and Alibaba.com**, which has created a synergy between the BolognaFiere trade fair platform (in particular SANA) and the world's leading platform for online B2B trade, **Alibaba.com**, which sees more than 26 million buyers active each day and is present in 190 countries around the globe.

BolognaFiere and Alibaba.com, in order to enable businesses to learn in detail about the commercial opportunities activated by the agreement, have scheduled a series of themed meetings dedicated to different industries. Following the first webinar for the Health&Wellbeing sector (held on 25 November), a meeting is planned for the Food&Beverage industry on 9 November (at 11am) with further appointments set to follow.