

Varese salami gets a regional label

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The first, important step to obtaining GPI recognition for Varese's Filzetta salami has been made.

The new label, which identifies the Varese pre-Alpine salami as GPI, and which has just been given the go-ahead by Lombardy Region to present the regulation throughout Italy and Europe, was officially presented at the "Ville Ponti" Conference Centre.

The go-ahead was given by the Provincial Councillor for Agriculture, Bruno Specchiarelli, the Regional Councillor for Agriculture, Luca Ferrazzi, the Mayor of Varese, Attilio Fontana, representatives of the Alpine Communities, representatives of the sector from this area, and the top representatives of the local economy. Furthermore, there were the executives of the pre-Alpine salami consortium who promoted the initiative.

The long procedure to obtain confirmation from Lombardy Region that they would make the applications in Italy and Europe to use the GPI label began in 2005, the year in which the promotion committee was established. The Consortium for the Pre-Alpine Salami of Varese, the second step in the procedure, was established in February 2006, and it currently has 18 manufacturing companies as members.

Andrea Minoli, chairman of the Consortium explained, “The idea came from a project of a number of Varese vets, who analysed all of the steps of the production process, starting with the raw materials and the mince, and ending with the maturing process. The analysis was carried out by the Institute of Experimental Animal Prophylaxis in Binago, and resulted with the production of detailed documentation, which contains the description of the maturing techniques and of the final quality of the product.”

And the recipe has an “original touch”: thyme. “When we were deciding on the characteristics that would make the Pre-Alpine salami original, we came across a herb that grows freely in the meadows and pastures, *thymus vulgaris*, which gives the salami a particular aroma,” explains the salami producer Venegoni. “I won’t bore you with how the salami is made, which is by hand, although this is described in the regulations.”

“It was a wager that enabled us to reach this first objective,” explains Franco Turri, who, in his capacity as officer of the veterinary department, was one of the first to promote the “healthy” GPI for the salami. “It was a partial achievement, although it was important for the morale of the producers.”

“It is also important if I think about the evenings of comparing and tasting to see how the quality of the product was progressing,” comments the councillor Specchiarelli. “And this is no joke, because that’s what happened.”

And so, even if this is just an initial stage, it has already been described as “one of the victories of the farming and animal rearing in Varese, for which the consortium should be complimented for its tenacity,” concludes Ferrazzi.

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