THE CONSORTIUM

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Parma Ham: when tradition meets modernity

Prosciutto di Parma scores two important results in a vear full of challenges: the celebration of the 60th anniversary since the foundation of the Consortium and the introduction of the new Production Specifications.

2023, in the wake of the previous one, is a year full of challenges for Prosciutto di Parma. The reference context has many aspects in common with the one that had clearly loomed large in 2022: shortages and record costs for raw materials continue to weigh heavily on the production capacity of companies, which also have to deal with the pressure of financial burdens. On top African Swine Fever, which is creating into force of the new Control Plan. a situation of great alarm. Turning to sales figures, it is the inflationary dynamics that are penalizing, as they shift consumer preferences, which see their purchasing power decisively reduced, towards generic products with a lower

The Consortium

In such a complex framework, the results communicated by the Parma Ham Consortium in 2023 are even more significant. The first dates back to April, when the body for the protection of Prosciutto di Parma PDO officially celebrated the 60th anniversary of its foundation: "On 18 April 1963, 23 producers of Prosciutto di Parma had their reatest intuition: they realized that, by joining forces, they would be able to protect and enhance this absolute excellence that they had in common," comments Alessandro Utini, president of the Consortium. "60 years later, the commitment made by the founders is extremely topical and still traces the path of the 134 companies that make up the Consortium today. The anniversary we are celebrating this year is not a milestone, but rather a stage in a journey that will soon involve the new generations. To them we have the responsibility of delivering a healthy sector and a product that is increasingly in line with the needs of the consumer, the environment and, in general, of a world that is constantly changing."



And it is precisely to this last aspect of the president's words that the news recently released by the Consortium relates: after an amendment process that lasted over four years, as of last 4 September, the application of the provisions contained in the new Production Specifications of this there is the threat posed by became mandatory, with the entry

> The changes to the Production Specifications respond to the need, expressed by all the members in the production chain, to update the document to make it consistent with a context that has definitely changed

well-defined: to further strengthen the quality of the product, its distinctiveness from competitors and meet the needs of an increasingly attentive consumer, without ever neglecting the challenges of sustainability and ecological transition.

ago. The objectives are clear and

The changes contained in the new specifications concern all production aspects, from the characteristics of the raw material to the finished product. They start with genetics: the list of permitted genetic types has been reformulated and an explanatory table has been inserted concerning possible combinations of reproductive crosses, emphasizing since it was first drafted 30 years the use of Italian heavy pigs. The







Prosciutto di Parma: la tradizione sposa l'innovazione

Il 2023 per il Prosciutto di Parma rappresenta un anno ricco di sfide. Un anno in cui la specialità Dop ha messo a segno due importanti risultati: il 60esimo anniversario dalla fondazione del Consorzio e l'introduzione del nuovo disciplinare di produzione.



changes also concerned the feeding of pigs on farms, which underwent a revision that focused on the territoriality of the raw materials used: some foodstuffs from abroad were replaced with those from the area, an even more significant aspect given the link between the PDO and its territory. It was also decided to extend the pig breeding area for the production of Parma Ham to the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region.

Speaking of the product, a few important aspects also need to be pointed out. The minimum weight of the fresh leg has been raised from 10 to 11.8 kg while the maximum limit has been set at 18 kg. The minimum maturation period was increased from 12 to 14 months while the minimum weight of the product was raised from 7 to 8.2 kg and the maximum to 12.5 kg. There is also an extremely significant change in the salt content: the maximum permitted salt content drops from 6.2% to 6%, in line with the WHO's indications regarding the reduction of sodium in the daily diet. In conclusion, a note concerning pre-sliced ham: the positive results of scientific tests carried out on the shelf life of Parma Ham in trays allowed the Minimum Conservation Term (MCT) to

"In 2023 Parma Ham strengthens two elements that dialogue in synergy: its tradition and its modernity. Celebrating the 60th anniversary of our Consortium with the introduction of the new Production Specification is undoubtedly the best way to strengthen the necessary link that unites the past and the present, but above all to invest in a future in which the quality, transparency and sustainability of our product will increasingly be the hallmarks of its uniqueness", president Utini conclu-



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