



## European Flavors, Fruits and Vegetables for a Healthy Diet

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The European fresh fruit and vegetable products promoted by the European Flavors project – including kiwis, apples, nectarines, chicory and Sicilian oranges, and also processed products such as tomato sauce or orange juice – are an attractive option for US consumers.

In recent years it might have appeared a passing fashion, but now it has become a consolidated and growing trend in the US: fruit and vegetables are increasingly becoming the protagonists of all kinds of dishes.

This is confirmed by the results of a survey carried out by the National Restaurant Association involving 1,800 chefs, which demonstrates that consumers in the USA have become more aware that



a diet rich in fruit and vegetable products is healthier and more balanced.

In this context, we must mention [European Flavors](#) [2], an ongoing project in which the public and private sectors – in this case the European Union, Italy and the members of the CSO fruit & vegetable service center – join forces to promote consumption in four major markets. Namely Russia, Japan, Canada and, naturally, the USA.

“It is a project that aims to promote the extraordinary flavors and characteristics of fruit and vegetables produced based on the best European traditions, thanks also to a fertile and generous soil.

As suggested also by the Mediterranean diet, they are amongst the basic components of a rich and healthy diet. Eating 400g of fruit and vegetables a day helps keep us in shape and protects us from many diseases. The level of protection is proportional to the quantity consumed; the more fruit and vegetables we eat, the better protected we are. Even small increases in the amounts consumed can bring significant health benefits. Many types of fruit and vegetables are fat-free, rich in fiber and above all, contain over 100 natural components that together guarantee exceptional results in terms of health, longevity, beauty and performance.” (European Health Network)

The European fresh fruit and vegetable products promoted by the European Flavors project – including kiwis, apples, nectarines, pears, plums, chicory and Sicilian blood oranges, and also processed products such as tomato sauce or orange juice – are an attractive option for US consumers. This is confirmed by the positive export figures of Italian fruit and vegetables to the USA, which over the last 3 years have risen to 18 thousand tons, a turnover of 20 million Euros.

This trend is a further demonstration of the fact that – compared to 10 years ago – restaurant customers now demand significantly more (and more sophisticated) fruit and vegetable products. This forces chefs to react by creating dishes that cater to the desire to eat healthier food containing ingredients produced while respecting both traditional methods and the environment. Before ordering a dish, consumers want to know the 'curriculum' of its main ingredients: geographical origin, productive processes and nutritional properties. All of which are guaranteed in the case of European produce, thanks to the efficient compulsory checking and traceability system applied to the entire productive process.

“The high quality of our fruit and vegetables and the awareness of the severity of European sector regulations are both important factors in sustaining our continent's exports, and particularly those from Italy,” Simona Rubbi, the CSO Project Director, said in the past, “Indeed, Italian produce leads in almost all fruit & vegetable segments, a standard-bearer for "Made in Italy" quality. We certainly benefit from the sense of security that our production protocols give consumers, but let's not forget the other indispensable ingredient of our success: as well as being healthy, Italian products are also delicious.”

European Flavors just took part of the Winter Fancy Food Show in San Francisco where visitors were able to see and taste for themselves the flavors and the quality of fruit and vegetable products grown in Europe, through detailed information on productive processes and through mouth-watering tasting opportunities. The booth featured a vast range of tomato-based products, tinned vegetables, such as peas and French beans, and fruit juices, all carefully selected and processed to conserve their fresh and vivid flavor. With 1,300 exhibitors from over 35 countries and 17,000 visitors, the Winter Fancy Food Show is an annual event that offers a global gastronomic shop-window, the perfect place to promote a Mediterranean diet and the consumption of fruit & vegetables from the EU. European Flavors is indeed very active in promoting itself and participating in several key events to be known on international markets.

The official partners of the European Flavors project are: Alegra, Apofruit, Conserve Italia, Consorzio Kiwi Gold, Lagnasco Group, Naturitalia, Mazzoni, kiwi Sole Latina ,O. P. Granfrutta Zani, Veneto Organizzazione Produttori Ortofrutticoli, Oranfrizer Sicilian Orange Experience, Orogel Fresco, Pempacorner, Salvi and Made in Blue.



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