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Italy Expands Alibaba Partnership to Protect All 892 Geographical Indications Online

New agreement aims to curb counterfeit Italian food and wine products and boost global recognition of authentic Made in Italy goods

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Italian Minister of Agriculture Francesco Lollobrigida addressed the challenges facing the wine sector during a conference in Rome organized by Federvini, where he emphasized the need to invest in promoting wine consumption. Lollobrigida pointed out that over the past 30 years, drinking habits have changed significantly, with a notable decline in wine consumption, especially among younger generations. He attributed this trend to factors such as the perception of wine as expensive and concerns about alcohol content, as well as evolving lifestyles.

The minister described the current situation as a “perfect storm” for the wine industry, citing international trade tensions, tariffs, and currency devaluations in key markets like the United States and Japan. These issues, combined with global crises, are putting pressure on Italian wine exports. Lollobrigida highlighted that despite these challenges, Italy now has a unified wine sector table, which he sees as a sign of maturity within the industry. This forum allows stakeholders to contribute actively to a shared strategic vision and helps inform government actions to support the sector.

Lollobrigida also noted that his ministry has significantly increased resources for international promotion. He mentioned that this year’s Vinitaly event will focus on positioning wine at the center of Italian cuisine, which is recognized as UNESCO heritage. The minister referenced recent promotional campaigns, including a television spot that reached 71 million connections. He announced plans for another campaign aimed specifically at younger consumers.

Addressing logistical issues and rising costs faced by producers, Lollobrigida said efforts are underway to expand into new international markets. He identified the Mercosur region as an area of potential growth for Italian wine exports and mentioned ongoing discussions about trade agreements with Australia. According to Lollobrigida, expanding market access is essential for the future of Italy’s wine industry.

On March 25 in Rome, the Ministry of Agriculture renewed its agreement with Alibaba Group for the fourth time. The deal aims to combat counterfeit Italian food and beverage products on major e-commerce platforms. The signing took place in the presence of Minister Lollobrigida and Alibaba Vice President Matthew Bassiur. This new agreement expands protection from 44 Geographical Indications (GIs) covered in 2023

to all 892 GIs currently recognized in Italy.

The initiative is considered one of the most advanced examples of public-private cooperation in protecting Made in Italy products online. It focuses not only on fighting fraud but also on increasing awareness among online retailers about the value of Geographical Indications. Iconic Italian products such as wine are central to this effort to safeguard authenticity and promote Italian tradition in global digital markets.