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News



Antinori's Antica unscathed

While California is still reeling from the devastation caused by the huge wildfires, with at least 31 dead and eight wineries razed to the ground, Antica Napa Valley, the Napa estate of the Antinori family, has apparently sustained only minor damage. "The latest news we received from California", Marchesi Antinori's CEO, Renzo Cotarella, told WineNews, "tells us that the situation is gradually getting better. The cellar and the vineyards are safe, and the fires, which have run out of things to feed on, are losing momentum, at least in the area around Antica Napa Valley. The worst", he concluded, "might be behind us, but we'll still have to wait a bit more to be sure".



The declaration of Bergamo

This weekend, the Lombard city of Bergamo will host the meeting of the G7 Ministries of Agriculture, and will feature the future of GI products, which were represented this week by 30 of the most important international wine & food organizations that jointly signed a fourfold document. The "Declaration of Bergamo", as it was titled, calls for a multilateral safeguarding system, through the application of the 1958 Lisbon Agreement as revised by the 2015 Geneva Act; better transparency of Internet governance through the participation of all stakeholders; promotion of studies and researches on their positive contribution towards economic and environmental sustainability, and finally, more resources for international cooperation aimed at their strengthening.

Report

Green light on CMO funds

After a months-long wait, finally, the decree that officially allows for the distribution of EU CMO funds for wine promotion in non-EU countries has arrived. Firms will now have until Nov. 3rd to put their projects (be they national, regional or multi-regional, and no longer than 12 months) up to be evaluated by a specific Commission. Following that, beneficiaries will be able to sign contracts with State Agency AGEA by Feb. 20th, 2018, and go on with their projects starting the day after the signature.



First Page

Italian wine supremacy at risk in the USA

Many an Italian winemaker's worst fear seems to be close to becoming reality. The Italian wine performance is markedly slowing down on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, probably because of the bureaucratic chaos surrounding CMO promotion funds more than President Trump's protectionist stance, which is yet to become real or tangible, and in the meantime French wine exports in the States keep on growing. Therefore, after 16 years, the supremacy of Italian wine in the United States runs the risk of becoming a fading memory. "The States are not a mature market for wine. France is demonstrating this, while Italy, sadly, is not. Our promotional initiatives are hobbled by bureaucratic problems and uncertainties, but theirs are working magnificently, and the result is that after 16 years France has reached Italy in the world's most important wine market, growing over 130 million Euros in value in 8 months", explained Silvana Ballotta, CEO of Business Strategies, commenting on the latest data on Italian wine exports. According to Business Strategies' Non-EU Countries observatory, Italy and France are neck and neck in the U.S. wine market. Customs data says that Italy has closed the first 8 months of 2017 at 1.099 billion Euros in value, France at 1.091 billion, and the respective market shares are now 31.5 and 31.3%. This result is due to an explosion of French wine sales (up 18.9%) and a slowdown of Italian ones (up 4%), which is less than half the growth of wine imports in the States (up 8.6%). Additionally, even if volume-wise Italian wine demand is almost double the French one, France is answering in kind value-wise, with an average price of 9.7 Euros per litre, compared to Italy's 4.9 Euros. Bottled still wines are still Italy's forte, but that is also the sector that is suffering more, with 881 million Euros' worth of imports versus France's 706 million Euros, but our growth is markedly weaker than France's (2.2% and 20.6%, respectively). When it comes to sparkling wines, though, Italy is showing more mettle: imports value is at 377 million Euros (France is at 201 million) and growth at 11.8 (France's has been 15.3%).

Focus

2017, the year European wine collapsed

The 2017 harvest will remain in the minds of European winemakers for many years because of its scarcity. Preliminary data coming from the EU Commission confirm that spring frosts and summer droughts have wrought havoc. Italy's drop in production is around 21%, while Italian oenologists association Assoenologi estimates a 24% drop, and "maybe a bit more", Riccardo Cotarella, its President, told WineNews. France's should be around 19%, but, Cotarella explained, "the association of our French colleagues, led by Serge Dubois, thinks it's going to be around 25%". In Bordeaux the drop will be around 45% compared to 2016, Alsace's will be around 30% and Languedoc-Roussillon's drop will be similarly eye-popping, with Beaujolais as the only wine region in the green (up 4%). When it comes to Spain, finally, EU data speaks of a 16% drop, but Spanish oenologists disagree: "it will most probably be closer to 24% less", Cotarella pointed out, "since their situation is similar to Italy and France. These three countries have all suffered from the same dynamics, and, in one way or another, they've been hit hard in the same way, especially in hotter territories".



Wine & Food

More vineyards for Prosecco DOC denomination

As WineNews previously reported, the Council of the Regional Authority of Veneto has approved the request of the Consortium of Prosecco DOC, led by Stefano Zanette, regarding the expansion of Glera vineyards. 1,200 new hectares have been authorized (978 in Veneto and 222 in neighbouring Friuli Venezia Giulia), bringing the grand total to 24,450 by 2019. The rules for authorizations will favour young entrepreneurs and wineries that produce organic wines, or those that follow the rules dictated by the National Integrated Production Quality System, particularly for new plantings.

For the record

Great numbers for Italian food exports

According to data coming from trade association Federalimentare, Italian food exports have grown 6% in q1-q2 2017 compared to the same period in 2016, led by Germany's performance - still the main market, value-wise (2.25 billion Euros, down 0.1%) - the United States (up 6.9%, to 1.9 billions) and France (up 7.6%, 1.7 billions).

