

## News



## China and biodiversity

When one thinks about China, one imagines a homogenized country. But, thanks to Slow Food, the country is not only made of intensive, low-quality agriculture, and has already 60 products as Presidia in its "Ark of Taste". "We began with humility", Piero and Qiao Ling, Coordinator and President of Slow Food China, told WineNews, "but by paving the road to the products of small farmers, an unimaginable biodiversity. We're still in the crib, so to speak, but there is a lot of enthusiasm and a lot of potential for Slow Food, because we're a huge country, with a lot of traditional products". And, among the future projects, they mentioned a "Bank of Tea and Wine".



## SMS Strada, Petrini and Loure

Gino Strada, founder of humanitarian NGO Emergency, which brings medical assistance to war-ravaged countries, is usually engaged in far more serious issues than the ones we normally write on. Still, at the "Salone Del Gusto" in Turin, he told us something as profound as it is simple about food and growers: "agriculture creates food, if the land is not plagued with mines. It feeds people. It costs little, and produces a lot, while war costs a lot and gives us nothing". He also called world governments to action, in order to end both all food embargoes and the issue of land grabbing, which concentrates ownership of land in less and less people, depriving entire communities of it - mainly in Africa, as Masai leader Edward Loure and Slow Food founder Carlo Petrini also pointed out during the panel.

## Report

### What "fair" really means

Both Father Ciotti, founder of the "Libera" NGO, and magistrate Gian Carlo Caselli, at the helm of the Commission on Food Crimes, stated that in order for the global food sector to be truly "fair", legality is simply vital, both in Italy, "where crime costs society over 330 billion Euros a year", said Caselli, and in the world, "where three conglomerates own 63% of all seed production, who also own 70% of the entire market for pesticides, a criminal system", Father Ciotti added.

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### Chefs, growers and citizens all unite

Creating a new and healthy relationship between man and land can only be done through a new kind of agriculture - one that is ecological, balanced and informed, and that focuses and hinges on the grower, who must be able to live decently off the fruits of his labor in South America and Europe alike, and that can do so by being able to count on some new allies: chefs, which are now fully aware of the cultural, social and political value of their profession, and informed citizens and consumers as well. This, in a nutshell, is the message of the conference titled "If Chefs Ally with Growers" which took place during this year's edition of Slow Food's "Terra Madre Salone Del Gusto", with great French chefs Michel Bras and Olivier Roellinger, young Albanian "agri-chef" Altin Prenga and urban chef Cristina Bowerman, who all have started building networks with the rural communities of their territories, thus setting a positive example for this new kind of agriculture. "Today", Roellinger told WineNews, "a quality chef has a duty to serve good food, but that's not all: he must set an example for his collaborators, and be aware of what happens in real life around him or her, from working with schools and institutions to educating on food, and chefs must become spokespersons of the best products of their territories, because it is through those that eating truly becomes healthy, good and fair". Prenga - who came to Italy looking for a better future in the '90s and then came back to his hometown of Blinisht, north of Tirana, to open his restaurant - added that when he decided to come back home, "everyone thought I was mad, but I knew what I wanted, and Slow Food was vital for that. Everyone thought that quality food could only come from abroad, but at my restaurant, "Mrizi i Zanave", together with my brother, we've engaged over 300 growers of the area, and we buy everything we need from them, from eggs to meat and from cheeses to vegetables, for the over 60.000 meals we make every year: we also sell these products in our shop, and the rest is bought by other restaurateurs, who we've contacted in past years".

## Focus

### "Focus on children", says Alice Waters

Even with the today's deluge of information and media spotlight on food, health emergencies abound, but environmental ones as well, all tied to wrong nutrition styles, and to an agriculture that oftentimes degrades land and diminishes the planet's biodiversity. A situation that must quickly be changed, and this can only be done, according to Alice Waters, VP of Slow Food USA and pioneer of food education with the "Edible Schoolyards" initiative, through a "cultural revolution" that must start from the adults of tomorrow. Therefore, Waters told WineNews, the introduction of food education in schools cannot be postponed any longer, "beginning with public ones, and kindergartens as well". According to Waters, "introducing children to the different cultures of the world is fundamental through school cafeterias". And that, she added, is because knowledge and information are the only tools that can be used to defend oneself from "confusion, one of the weapons that the big businesses of GMOs use". And with symbols too, like Michelle Obama's veggie garden at the White House. "I hope that the next President", she said, "that she will grow it even more".



## Wine & Food

### Italian government, politics tip their hat to the "Salone"

Italian President of the Republic Sergio Mattarella testified his affection and respect for the endeavors of Slow Food and its "Salone del Gusto", after the official inauguration, with a walk through the Presidia, the products of the philosophy of the association. And, according to Minister of Culture Franceschini, "acknowledging the identities of people through food is culture", before adding that the pilot project of Mozzarella di Bufala Campana DOP in the magnificent Reggia di Caserta will spread to the museum network of the entire country.

## For the record

### Taste "is a pleasure that knows"

According to Carlo Petrini, founder of Slow Food, "taste is pleasure that knows, and knowledge that tastes. Knowledge alone is boring: taste is the synthesis between pleasure and

knowledge". And, commenting on the concept of "agro-ecology", "tomorrow's growers are heroes that defend land and young ones that come back to it", he concluded.

