

Loacker and Cattolica Assicurazioni join forces to plant 30 hectares of hazelnut trees in the Ca' Tron estate in Veneto

Thanks to its collaboration with the Cattolica Assicurazioni Group and the University of Padua, the Bolzano-based company is running “Nocciole Loacker Veneto”, a project that forms part of the long-term “Noccioletti Italiani” plan carried out by Loacker in partnership with Intesa Sanpaolo.

The project aims to develop a chain for the production of 100% Made in Italy hazelnuts that are sustainable and have guaranteed quality and traceability.

*Unterinn (BZ), 20 November 2018 – Loacker, the South Tyrol-based company specialised in the production of wafers and chocolate delicacies, **has announced its partnership with Cattolica Assicurazioni**, the parent company of the Group with the same name representing one of the main actors on the Italian insurance market. **30 hectares of hazelnut trees will be planted in the Ca' Tron estate**, one of Italy's largest single-unit agricultural estates. It was purchased by the company in 2012 in a bid to strengthen its brand identity, which has always been linked to agriculture and the agrifood system.*



Their collaboration has two objectives: on the one hand, **to introduce the hazelnut to a new area** in order to increase the number of zones involved in the **project started by Loacker in 2011** and **devised to meet its requirements for Italian hazelnuts**, one of the essential raw materials used to make its famous wafers. On the other hand, starting the project will also constitute an opportunity to create concrete working alternatives for local farmers.

In coming weeks, thanks to its collaboration with Cattolica Assicurazioni and the University of Padua, Loacker will plant **30 hectares of hazelnut trees on the Ca' Tron estate** (which will serve as a pilot estate for Veneto). As a matter of fact, the “Nocciole in Veneto” project, which has just kicked off, saw a great deal of interest from farmers, outlining the planting of additional hectares in 2019.

The hazelnut is one of the most important raw materials in the production of Loacker products. In fact, the company has **only ever used 100% Italian hazelnuts toasted “in house”**. Meeting the demand for Italian hazelnuts, however, is no simple feat. The international hazelnut market is

dominated by Turkey, with inevitable price conditioning. The production of Italian hazelnuts, albeit a higher quality product, cannot meet the quantity demands of the companies that use them.



Because of this, in 2011 Loacker began a long-term project involving various regions on the Italian peninsula to identify and develop new areas for hazelnut cultivation. The project got under way in 2014 in Tuscany, with the planting of the first 50 hectares in the agricultural holding Loacker Tenuta Corte Migliorina in the municipality of Orbetello. In Tuscany, around 200 hectares have been planted to date, with the prediction that just as many will be planted in the next two years. Again in Central Italy, Loacker hopes to extend the project to another 100 hectares of hazelnut trees in Umbria and Lazio. The project also involved some areas in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, with very positive results. Loacker is working on the possibility of opening a pilot estate of excellence to assess the prospect of further expanding on the areas in the region.

Furthermore, in February 2018, Loacker and Intesa Sanpaolo signed an important collaboration agreement to support the Italian hazelnut production chain. Intesa Sanpaolo, a leading group for financial support in the Italian agrifood sector, will support Loacker and farmers by providing a credit line dedicated to reconverting land and implementing new production systems.

The agreement promotes the collaboration between the Bank and a relevant leading company such as Loacker, which allows for significant advantages to be brought to its own supplier companies, thereby supporting the growth of Italy's small and medium enterprises.

“Everyone in the Loacker family has always believed in this project; it has the scope of not only being able to offer our consumers an extremely high-quality product thanks to the use of 100% Italian hazelnuts, but a guarantee of its traceability, too”, confirmed **Andreas Loacker**, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors.

“Cattolica’s commitment to the Nocciolati Italiani programme underlines the importance granted by the company on participating in innovative and sustainable agricultural experiments that positively and ethically impact the work and income of the agrifood sector”, added **Gino Benincà, Chairman of Cattolica Agricola**. *“Cattolica has always strongly supported this sector with a view to*

bolstering the entire Made in Italy production chain.”

Loacker, pure goodness!

Pure and natural goodness and maximum quality and love for nature are combined to become delicious wafer and chocolate specialities: this has been the Loacker way since 1925. Founded by Alfons Loacker, the family business grew in the past 90 years from a small patisserie in Bolzano to a brand of world renown, whose products delight consumers in over 100 countries. Today, all Loacker products are still made in the heart of the Alps, in Unterinn (South Tyrol) and Heinfels (East Tyrol), at more than 1,000 metres above sea level, following the highest quality standards and most modern processes. The company grants particular importance to selected natural ingredients and makes its products without added flavours, colourings or preservatives. Despite its strong international influence, Loacker follows sustainable business strategies that respect the environment and people. The family-run business works in all sectors to optimise resources and continues its commitment to social and environmental issues in the territory.

Cattolica Assicurazioni

Cattolica Assicurazioni is one of the biggest actors on the Italian insurance market and the sector's only cooperative listed on the Borsa di Milano, where it has been listed since November 2000. With over 3.6 million customers who trust in its insurance solutions and products distributed, the Company recorded a premiums income of over €5 billion at the end of 2017. At Group level, Cattolica operates through 1486 agencies distributed in cities and towns throughout the entire country, and a network of 1,967 agents. For more information: www.cattolica.it

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