



32° Salone internazionale del biologico e del naturale
32nd International exhibition of organic and natural products

THE ORGANIC FREE FROM COMPARTMENT MEETS AT SANA 2020 AT THE “FREE FROM HUB” THE NEW PROJECT BY BOLOGNAFIERE

Bologna, April 21st, 2020 –The know-how and experience of BolognaFiere and Bos has given life to the **Free From Hub**, a series of appointments dedicated to the free from segment at BolognaFiere’s main international trade fair platforms.

The **Free From Hub** will make its official debut at the 32nd edition of **SANA**, the international exhibition of natural and organic products, due to take place at BolognaFiere from **3 to 6 September 2020**.

The market for natural and organic products is seemingly untouched by crises and the free from sector is accompanying and supporting the growth of this compartment, not only at national level but also internationally.

Organics and free from: a growing trend

According to the **Global Industry Outlook Report 2019** by GRS, in fact, as far as the most important trends in the food & beverage sector are concerned, in first place is the **organic free from compartment with 54.2% of consensus**. GRS, moreover, has taken into consideration also the market opportunities by highlighting that 30.7% of professionals in the food & beverage sector believe that particular attention needs to be paid to the growing demand for healthy prepared products and natural ingredients that are increasingly popular for consumption at home and outside the home.

Concerning the Italian situation, according to the **2019 BioBank Report**, free from characteristics are dominating the organic product trends that represent an important chunk of consumption both in terms of product numbers on the shelves (18.6% of retail food products) and for sales volumes (6.8 billion euros). Of particular note are the gluten-free and lactose-free products that are driving sales in this segment, followed by products free from soya, added sugar, salt, yeast, nuts and palm oil.

Gluten-free and lactose-free driving sales with an array of 12,000 products

The world of free from products is continuing to expand, offering consumers an array of products that extends to almost **12,000 items** (Source: OI Osservatorio Immagine Nielsen GSI Italy), with an important presence of organic free from products.



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One in five Italians buys gluten-free products and one in four purchases lactose-free items (Source Eurispes). The purchasers are frequently those who don't have diagnosed intolerances, although the number of people that suffer from food intolerances is growing. Coeliac disease for example, affects 1% of the population with an increase of the incidence among the youngest members of society. Figures show the frequency of the disease has increased fivefold in the last 25 years, with 206,561 positive diagnoses in Italy (145,759 women and 60,802 men). Coeliac and lactose intolerance make up 26% and 66% respectively of food intolerances.

Free from: a global phenomenon

The growing demand for free from products is a global phenomenon: at international level the market is worth some dozens of hundreds of millions of euros, while at European level in recent years the business surrounding these products has increased considerably. For gluten-free products (which together with lactose-free are followed in the European rankings by palm oil-free and GM-free) the business volume has grown by over 35% and around 20% for lactose-free products. At European level, Italy, the UK, Germany and France are the countries with the highest turnovers (Source: Euromonitor).

More is less: clean labels for healthy and ethical choices

More is less is the slogan shared by organic and natural products, this affirmation is even more accurate for free from products that, in addition to eliminating one or more ingredients, are often characterised by so-called clean labels, a short label with few, wholesome ingredients in order to respond to the demand for healthy and ethical choices.

The current positive trend in sales of organic products (therefore those created without chemical substances, safeguarding the health of consumers of all ages) reflects how these are perceived as good, healthy and free from certain unwanted elements, for a target of consumers who are extremely careful about their purchasing choices and what they put on the dinner table.

Producers and consumers focus on a market in expansion

To respond to these purchasers, an increasing number of companies are including free from products alongside their traditional production. The trade category is gaining traction also in the Grocery Retail sector that is increasing its branded ranges. As part of the Grocery Retail sector, "organic-eco" ranges make up 7.7% of sales of Private Labels, having increased its representation by 8 percentage points; a similar increase has been recorded also for the ranges of protected denomination of origin products and those for functional food. In September 2019 sales of organic-eco-products, which include free from products, represented a share equal to 819.6 million euros with a growing percentage, compared with September 2018, of 8.1 % and 9.1 % for functional foods (Source: MarcabyBolognaFiere Observatory 2020). These statistics indicate the



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dimensions of an expanding market and one that both producers and consumers are regarding with growing attention.

Organics and free from: the reference hub at SANA

From the perspective of getting to know, and finding out more about, the issues surrounding **organic free from products**, **SANA**, the reference event for the organic and natural sector in Italy and one of Europe's leading events, is the ideal platform and the **Free From Hub** at the event will provide companies with the opportunity to present the latest products, and to determine and condition future market trends in addition to meeting buyers and national and international players.

Alongside the extensive **exhibition line up that will include the latest innovations and features of the market**, is also a part dedicated to events including show cooking, with renowned chefs and companies from the sector plus a programme of conferences and speeches, created in collaboration with leading experts in order to provide a close-up view of this sector with the aim of boosting the credentials of SANA and the Free From Hub as the only international fair event capable of fully representing the compartment.

The layout of the event will allow for the simple identification of all of the companies present at SANA 2020 with free from products in order to assist visiting professional operators that are interested specifically in developing business in this sector.

The Free From Hub was conceived in order to meet the requirements of all stakeholders in this market and the appointment at **SANA from 3 to 6 September 2020** is a unique opportunity to meet with the leading companies and to enjoy a close-up view of the Italian and international free from markets.

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