

## ASSOMEDMARKETS THE MEDITERRANEAN NETWORKING

To contribute to the development of the Mediterranean area in the fresh products sector a valorisation of the role of the markets and the reciprocal co-operation of the market Directors is indispensable. It is, therefore, crucial to favour the exchange of information, experience and knowledge. All that constitutes the presupposition to the establishment of a specific International Association of Wholesale Market Directors of the Mediterranean area, open to the contribution and to the membership of associations, agencies and national and international institutions that are interested in favouring the attaining of a mutual purpose.

The idea, launched together by the Italian Association of Wholesale Market Directors ANDMI and Green Med, has reported such an immediate interest at an international level that the proposers have been able to embark on a series of concrete steps towards its realisation.

First of all a declaration of incorporation was drafted and distributed in the languages of the Mediterranean area to many potentially interested organizations. The declaration was examined in some meetings held, starting from last April, in Rome, Alexandria in Egypt and Tunis. The meetings in Rome led to the agreement to the project by the CARGEST and CAR companies, that manage the Rome's Wholesale Agrifood Centre, which has then become a founding partner together with ANDMI and Green Med. The association was given the name "Assomedmarkets" and it was established that its headquarters will be in Rome. The declaration of incorporation of Assomedmarkets was presented for the first time on the 6th of May within the Green Med Forum of Alexandria in Egypt. It has generated interest in the matter in both Egypt as well as the delegations of the other Countries which were present, with positive feedback both on a journalistic level, (Assomedmarkets was presented by the agency Ansamed, and was featured in a long article in Al-Ahram Weekly, the main weekly magazine in the English language of the Arab world) as well as at an entrepreneurial and academic level.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of July a representative delegation from ANDMI, Rome's Agrifood Centre and Green Med met the top management of UTAP (Tunisian Union for Agriculture and Fishery), which oversees the Tunisian wholesale market. The project was presented in detail and the draft of the statute was read. Subsequently, UTAP has underwritten the document of agreement to Assomedmarket together with the founding partners.

Other important contacts are being worked on. WUWM, the representative organisation of the worldwide wholesale market, was informed of the initiative and an operational meeting with its representatives has been scheduled.

The idea behind the association, from one side, is to create a "Mediterranean umbrella" capable of representing the diverse and complex interests of the macro area within the specific sector and, from the other side, to transform the wholesale Mediterranean markets from places of negotiation of goods to training and information centres, capable of giving impulse to rules and common services that the said Assomedmarkets will be able to implement.

As can be read about in Assomedmarkets' declaration of incorporation, the wholesale markets have developed an important function of public interest, thanks to the complexity of the services that they offer, which allow, on one side, the safeguard of the consumer's

health and purchasing power whilst favouring, on the other side, the valorisation of typical quality productions of the territory.

The market is the place in which commercial activities make reference to perishable food products and, therefore, those activities must be carried out in full compliance with precise standards of quality, hygiene and health, as well as environmental safety. The Wholesale Market Directors have the task of making the structures function better and to propose every initiative and innovation aiming to improve and modernise the structures and the services to the managing agencies. They carry out their functions by being neutral to all of the parties involved, with equity and expertise, and they must possess a permanently up-to-date technical preparation.

In an economy based on globalisation of commerce and free competition - it can still be read in the association's declaration of incorporation - the role of the markets is better protected and developed if they are part of a network: if they are joined together in a well organised network, operating on the same wavelength.

Assomedmarkets is a non-profit association. It will favour the exchange of expertise and information between the market managers and directors, promoting support services. The association will produce several initiatives in the common interest of its members.

The membership of associations, agencies, national and international institutions will make Assomedmarkets' action more penetrating and representative.

The full operational work is scheduled to start in 2010, straight after the associates' first assembly, which has been scheduled for the spring of next year.

Rome has been chosen as headquarters, also because of its centrality in the Mediterranean basin.

**ASSOMEDMARKETS**

**THE MEDITERRANEAN NETWORKING**

*at ANDMI office: via Tenuta del Cavaliere 1 00012 - Guidonia, Roma (ITALY)*

*Tel. +39 06 60501201*