

ITALY

THANK YOU FOR SMOKING



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parallel o z e r o



Fresh tobacco flowers.



Francesco, a young tobacco farmer in the Caserta area, checks the tobacco during the "massa" phase; the tobacco absorbs a lot of humidity and must be checked constantly to prevent it from rotting. The colour and the correct level of drying are fundamental as, together with the integrity of the leaf, they constitute important parameters that determine the price.

Thanks to a multinational, Europe's leading tobacco producer can breathe once more

- ▶ Over the next five years Philip Morris will invest 500 million euros in the Italian tobacco industry.
- ▶ The tobacco multinational will buy half of the tobacco produced in Italy.
- ▶ Italy is Europe's leading producer of tobacco, but in recent years the sector has experienced a substantial decline.
- ▶ Among the causes of this decline are the EU's suspension of aid to the sector and the relocation of tobacco cultivation to countries where labour costs are lower.
- ▶ The plan also involves social and environmental sustainability programmes in collaboration with growers' associations.

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Types of tobacco seed selected and conserved at the Research Centre for Cereals and Industrial cultivation in Caserta. The collection of Nicoziane (a type of plant that belongs to the tobacco family) is the fourth most important collection in the world.



Flamur's family work in the fields. Flamur, an Albanian picker, has lived in the province of Caserta for many years. Over time he has managed to bring all his family members over to Italy and they too work on the harvest.



This tobacco has completed the first drying phase and so the second phase, which is known as the “massa”, begins.

Italy is Europe's number one tobacco producer, responsible for around a third of the continent's total production. Nevertheless, at least on paper, this is an industry in decline: globalization has shifted tobacco cultivations to countries like China – today the globe's leading producer – and to Africa and countries like Zimbabwe and Malawi, where labour costs are lower and environmental protections less stringent.

This has meant that in the last 20 years Italian annual production has fallen from 120 thousand tonnes to 53 thousand. Furthermore, in line with the European Union's health policies, direct aid to the sector has been suspended.

Nevertheless, at the end of 2020 an announcement by Philip Morris brought a ray of hope to a sector that seemed headed for a profound crisis. The tobacco multinational, in fact, presented a 500 million euro investment plan for the five years from 2021-2025 that includes a commitment to purchase half of the tobacco grown in Italy and to work with the farming associations to draft a set of good practices in agriculture with the goal of preventing forms of labour exploitation and improving the sustainability of the production chain.

So, in spite of the fact that Italy is one of the European countries with the strictest regulations concerning smoking, its tobacco industry can now breathe again.



A pack of tobacco seeds in "pill" form. Each individual tobacco seed is covered with a protective layer to make the sowing process more effective.



Straight after the harvest, or the morning after depending whether the harvest takes place at sunrise or in mid-afternoon, the still moist leaves are pierced and threaded using a special machine. This phase is called "infilzatura" and it enables the leaves to be hung up for drying.



The meeting room of one of Italy's last remaining tobacco manufacturers. It contains antique tools for analysing tobacco donated by CREA (Council for Research in Agriculture and Analysis in Agrarian Economics) in Caserta.



Tobacco plants in a field.



Pickers remove the dried tobacco to take it to the hangars for the "massa" phase.



A detail of a dried tobacco leaf.



The analysis laboratory at the manufacturer's premises.



A detail from a remaining tobacco sample, dated 1908, at the Leonardo Angeloni Library at CREA in Caserta. The Angeloni library stores all the remaining archive material from the Regio Experimental Institute for the Cultivation of Tobacco, founded in 1895. Angeloni was the Institute's first director.



Flamur picks the tobacco leaves. An Albanian picker, Flamur as lived in the province of Caserta for many years. Over time he has managed to bring all his family members over to Italy and they too work on the harvest.



This tobacco has completed the first drying phase and so the second phase, which is known as the “massa”, begins.



Dr Luigi Morra of the Research Centre for Cereals and Industrial Crops at the CREA (Council for Research in Agriculture and Analysis in Agrarian Economics) in Caserta. Dr Morra is in charge of the Leonardo Angeloni library that stores all the remaining archive material from the Regio Experimental Institute for the Cultivation of Tobacco, founded in 1895. Angeloni was the Institute's first director.



A picker's hand is covered in tobacco resin and dust from the fields.



A greenhouse for drying the leaves.



At Tabaccheria Stefanelli in Naples, owner Giuseppe has created a smoking room where he holds cigar and pipe tobacco tastings with friends and customers. For some time this was also the meeting place for the Naples Cigar club.



The tobacco harvest. The pickers use pieces of old irrigation tubes to tie the bunches of leaves.

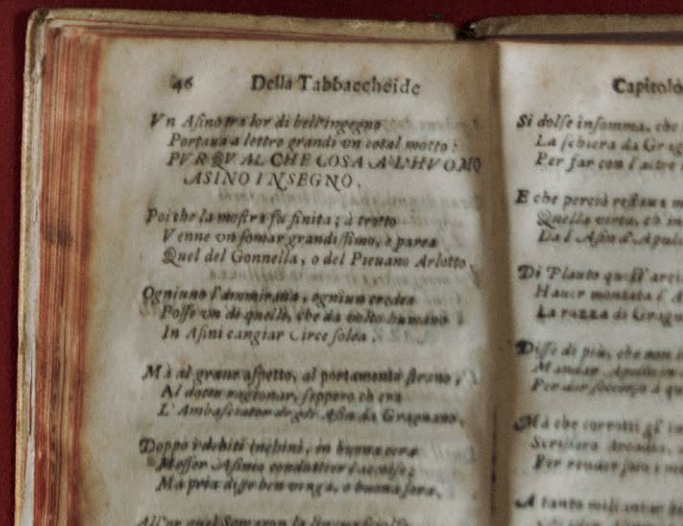


A machine at the manufacturer's premises. In this area physical analyses are carried out on samples to assess the quality parameters, such as the percentage humidity, presence of foreign bodies and colouring.

PRAGMATICÆ
EDICTA·DECRETA·
REGIÆQVE SANCTIONES
REGNI NEAPOLITANI
IN MATERIA TABACCI.



IN NAPOLI 1685.



The archive materials stored at the Leonardo Angeloni Library at CREA in Caserta include a decree from the Papal state, dated 1685, regulating the cultivation and trade in tobacco. The Angeloni library stores all the remaining archive material from the Regio Experimental Institute for the Cultivation of Tobacco, founded in 1895. Angeloni was the Institute's first director.



Tobacco leaves are hand sorted by workers during the production process.



Dried tobacco flowers. The flowers contain seeds.

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