



**MINISTERO DELLE POLITICHE AGRICOLE
ALIMENTARI E FORESTALI**



REPORT 2021



**DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL INSPECTORATE FOR
FRAUD REPRESSION AND QUALITY PROTECTION OF
THE AGRI-FOOD PRODUCTS AND FOODSTUFFS**



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Introduction

The 2021 Report on the activities carried out by the Inspectorate for fraud repression and quality protection of the agri-food products and foodstuffs (ICQRF), affirms the commitment of the Control Authority of the Italian Ministry of Agriculture in a year in which Italy, its economy and its citizens are emerging from the crisis generated by Covid19.

Some flagship sectors of our productions have had extraordinary results, despite the difficulties encountered by enterprises: the food segment continues to be one of the most important for Italy; exports have reached record levels, PDO Economy continues to grow on the domestic and international markets both in terms of value and in terms of the number of protected products. In fact, during 2021, our food products recognized at European level have increased, reaching the number of 876 agrifood products of excellence, confirming the Italian leadership in the food and wine sector.

PDO, PGI and TSG products are crucial components of our economy, representing our *Made in Italy* par excellence. Therefore, supporting these supply chains and protecting these products are crucial activities for enterprises, consumers and public institutions.

Hence, the publication of the results of the ICQRF activities is one of the key moments of the Ministry's annual action which summarizes the daily work of managers and inspectors aimed at ensuring the safety and quality of agri-food products and protecting the accomplishment of our business operators. The action, of the Inspectorate becomes increasingly extensive and complex, as the pitfalls and commercial channels in which it is possible to distribute fraudulent products differentiate: from fairs, to local markets, up to the web and social networks.

The action of the ICQRF is related to the domestic market and to the growing international activities in order to fight any frauds, usurpations, Italian sounding phenomena and counterfeiting, to the damage of Made in Italy quality and consumers, as well as the fight of serious agri-food crime, such as the activities related to actions in the so-called "Land of Fires".

Hence, the importance of combining the traditional actions to fight frauds on specific agri-food sectors (wine, oil, cheese, etc.) with checks on organic farming, seeds and fertilizers (also with a view to protecting sustainability in a common path with the new CAP), the repression of unfair trading practices, of which the ICQRF is the competent authority from 2021, and the deterrence activities with new agreements with the Ebay, Alibaba, Amazon and Rakuten platforms aimed at eradicating the risk of trade of fake non-Italian PDO and PGI products.

This Report does not only illustrate mere numbers (61,756 checks on 33,404 operators and 62,316 products with 5.5 million kg of goods seized) or activities linked to marginal areas of our economy. If we mention "protection of Prosecco" the diatribe on Prosek immediately comes to mind in these times, which affects areas of diplomatic and institutional relations, European integration, international jurisdictions and requires us to think on the development paths of the EU, on the role that Italy is willing to have on the competitive advantages and on the prospects of custom duties and protection of international trade quotas.

In summary, thus we are talking about numbers on food, but they are not just numbers and we are not just talking about food. There is no "universal One Diet" (I will not allow it to be imposed in our country). We, in Italy, our farmers and breeders, our food and wine operators, do not produce, transform and cook only food. We produce uniqueness, history, tradition, wisdom and culture. These production processes should certainly be innovated and made more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable, but we must in every way and with the contribution of all, starting from the essential work of the Inspectorate, defuse the pitfalls that may be hidden behind the attempt to transfer the entire chapter of food quality to the office for intellectual property. Nutrition is not alchemy or a pill, it is not engineering, nor a patent, but it is the care and practices passed on by older generations.

The Ministry of Agriculture
Stefano Patuanelli

Preface

In this 2021 Report, we are pleased to document, as usual, a significant summary of the total activities, accompanied by data and related findings, carried out by the ICQRF Department in the context of the agri-food supply chains of our Country.

The activity briefly described -it is worth stressing- was carried out, also for 2021, in a particularly complicated context, caused by the operational difficulties and restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this challenging situation, the Inspectorate organization managed to guarantee an excellent level of control in all sectors of the national agri-food chain. It has also contributed to ensuring an effective level of protection for our enterprises and to increasing consumer confidence from every perspective.

It is important to underline that the ICQRF's activity to protect the high quality of our products has increased at the EU and international level too. In fact, as it is clear from the results showed, the activities aimed at intensifying collaborative relationships with the other international Control Authorities have been strengthened. In particular, it should be emphasized the significant and productive collaboration with the most important electronic marketplace in defense of the national quality productions.

In addition to details on the protection of Made in Italy agri-food products in the world and on the web, the report describes the most significant actions for the protection of organic products, wine, fruit, vegetable and fertilizers sectors, that have allowed the blocking of illegal practices and the seizure of large quantities of irregular products. Furthermore, data and information are provided on the structure's organization and activities carried out in all areas of competence, as the authorization and supervision of Control Bodies and certification bodies, as well as the sanctioning activities.

In 2021, an intense and articulated groundwork and training activity for ICQRF staff in the field of fighting unfair trading practices has taken place. In fact, since December 2021 the ICQRF Department has been designated as the Competent Authority for the fight against unfair trading practices for the agri-food sector. This is a sensitive, significant and central task in the context of improving the functioning of the food chain and for which the ICQRF Department is called to play a leading role, thanks to its great competence and notable experience.

It is worth adding that behind the figures, data and calculations contained in this Report, there is a great and deep commitment carried out daily by inspectors, laboratories and structures of our highly skilled Department that operate with an extraordinary sense of responsibility.

This is an significant and central effort that must be seen from different perspectives, ranging from the defense and enhancement of our agri-food heritage, the protection of the supply chains and our farmers, the maintenance of the socio-economic tissues of our territories, the transparency of the markets and the consumers' confidence.

*The Head of the Inspectorate
Felice Assenza*

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1. Executive summary

In 2021, the agri-food sector, with more than 522 billion euro overall value, recorded a turn-over growth to the tune of 16.5%, confirming its strategic role in the Italian economy and its strong resilience to the pandemic emergency. An historical record has been hit by “made in Italy” exports with 52 billion euros and a relevant contribution to the general upward trend of the agrifood sector.

These results depend also on the quality of Italian agri-food products, guaranteed by business operators’ steady effort and by a well-designed national control system where ICQRF ensures a fair competition on the market, consumers protection and made in Italy safeguard through a tailored activity against crimes and frauds that threat quality and safety of products.

During 2021, ICQRF confirmed a high level control activity, despite the emergency situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to limitations on mobility and difficulties in accessing production and storage sites in many areas of the country, linked to sanitary measures, inspections on the spot were reduced to essential cases; whereas several web checks were carried out in order to monitor the increasing on-line sales of agri-food products, and remote controls were performed also using available databases and electronic registers, compulsory for olive oil and wine operators.

The Report shows in details the activity carried out by ICQRF against frauds, usurpations, Italian sounding phenomena and counterfeits to the detriment of made in Italy quality and consumers, as well as in the fight against agri-food crime.

Results of 2021 control activity confirm, once again, the efficiency of the Italian control system and the high ranking for ICQRF among the main anti-fraud authorities in the world: **61,756 anti-fraud checks**, of which **49,511 inspections** and **12,245 laboratory tests**, **33,404 business operators inspected**, **62,316 products checked**.

Irregularities concerned 15.9% of all operators inspected, 11.6% of products checked and 9.0% of samples analysed.

ICQRF, also in 2021, contributed with its technical expertise to the fight against unlawful acts and criminal behaviour in the agri-food sector:

- **186 crime reports**, **4,699 administrative penalties** and **4,954 warnings issued** to operators;
- about **5.522 million kg** of goods seized with an economic value over **9.1 million euros**;
- **955** interventions outside national borders and on the web to protect Geographical Indications.
- Controls regarded food products for more than 90% and agricultural inputs for 10% (feed, fertilizers, seeds, plant protection products).

Looking at **each agri-food sector**, 19,628 checks regarded wine and wine products, 9,324 olive oils, 6,137 dairy sector, 3,758 fruit and vegetables, 3,411 cereals and by-products, 3,167 meat, 2,626 preserved vegetables, 1,996 spirits, 1,589 honey, 532 eggs, 346 sugars, and 3,370 other sectors.

Inspections and laboratory tests on agriculture inputs were in total 5,872.

ICQRF is the public authority that carries out the most anti-fraud controls in the world on many agri-food sectors, especially wine and olive oil, helping to provide proper guarantees to consumers.

Furthermore, ICQRF is the sanctioning Authority for several kinds of violation in the agri-food sector, even notified by other control authorities. More in details, ICQRF is the competent authority to issue fines for administrative violations regarding: food labelling, products with designation of origin and protected geographical indication (PDO and PGI), wine and wine products, organic products, Genetically Modified Organisms, seeds and plant propagation material, feeds and raw materials for feeds. Recently, with the Legislative Decree 8 November 2021 n. 198, ICQRF has been designated as the national law enforcement and sanctioning body on unfair trading practices in the agri-food sector.

In 2021 ICQRF issued 1,497 orders for payment, for an amount of approximately 9 million euros.

Italy, through ICQRF, leads at the European level the protection of Geographical Indications operating internationally and on the web to protect made in Italy: as *ex officio* Authority for PDO / PGI products and as Liaison Body for the Italian wine sector, ICQRF implemented 955 actions in 2021.

Since 2015, there have been 5,373 actions to protect Italian products abroad and on the web, scoring the best result in Europe.

ICQRF carried out 804 actions on the web in 2021 to protect Italian food and wine products, with 99% success, particularly, thanks to the continuous collaborations with the biggest web marketplaces (Alibaba, Amazon, Ebay, and Rakuten).

As Food Fraud Contact Point (FFCP) between Italy and EU, ICQRF handled 150 actions in 2021, 75 of which were sent by other Member States and 75 on its own initiative. The 70% of alerts transmitted by ICQRF to other Member States regarded requests for protection of Italian geographical indications and other products labelled and advertised with names, indications and images evocating an Italian origin (Italian sounding).

ICQRF carries out supervision activity on public and private Control Bodies (CBs) of regulated quality agri-food products (organic products, agri-food products and wines with a PDO, PGI and TSG, meat with voluntary labelling). In 2021, ICQRF supervised 47 CBs: 17 regarding PDO, PGI and TSG agricultural and food products, 7 for PDO and PGI wines, 18 in the field of organic farming and 5 of meat labelling.

ICQRF also plays an important role in management of large agri-food databases, for example e-registers for the movements of wine and oil, which are a valuable traceability tool at national level for control purposes that allow an effective fight against frauds and infringements.

The ICQRF periodically publishes the reports "Cantina Italia" and "Frantoio Italia" on the MIPAAF website, thus making public data stocks of wine and olive oil in the Italian establishments.

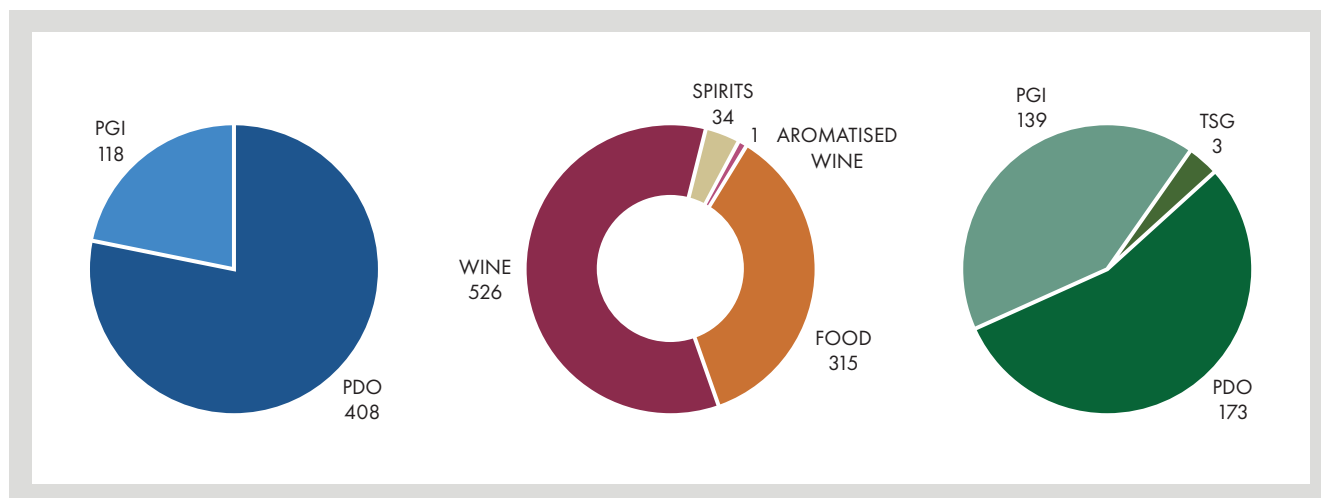
The Single Register of Inspection Controls "RUCI", which automatically includes also data from "Supervision Database", the information base shared among ICQRF, other competent Authorities (Regions and Autonomous Provinces) and private Control Bodies, allowed ICQRF to optimize the inspection activity avoiding overlapping of controls on agricultural operators. In 2021, RUCI recorded results of around 322,000 checks carried out by ICQRF, Regions, Control Bodies and Carabinieri.

The operating results achieved in 2021, despite the obvious difficulties caused by COVID-19 pandemic, confirm the quality of work done by ICQRF in the constant protection of Italian agri-food production. At the same time, the expertise of women and men of ICQRF aim to protect millions of operators' job that, despite the emergency, keep high our country's image.

The Report ICQRF 2021 is also available in Italian and Chinese on the Ministry website www.politicheagricole.it

2. Agri-food “made in Italy” protection in the world and on the web

Italy is leader in the field of agri-food products of excellence with **876 agri-food products recognized by EU¹**, distributed as shown in the following graph, with an increase of two PGIs (Olio di Roma and Pesca di Delia) and one PDO (Pistacchio di Raffadali) registered in 2021.



In Europe, ICQRF is the **Italian** ex officio **Enforcement Authority²** regarding the protection of PGIs and PDOs and the **Italian Liason Body³** for official control in **the wine sector**. ICQRF is the National Authority which takes measures to stop any unlawful use in Europe of the Italian Protected denominations of origin and protected geographical indications, both in the *Food* and the *Wine* sector.

On the **Web**, worldwide, ICQRF acts to protect the Italian PDO and PGI quality products, by means of cooperation with the main e-commerce player in the world. For several years, indeed, ICQRF has been operating on Ebay, Alibaba, Amazon and Rakuten websites, as Right Holder (owner) for protecting the “name” of the Italian Geographical Indications. Thanks to specific agreements, l’ICQRF speaks directly to agri-food Geographical Indications protection consortia and to the big world *players*, in order to quickly stop misleading or evocating advertisements referring to Italian excellence products.

ICQRF **operated so far 5,373 interventions abroad and on the web**, including actions on the main e-commerce marketplaces in the world: Alibaba, Ebay, Amazon e Rakuten. Only in 2021 ICQRF initiated **955** enforcement procedures against usurpations and evocations evocations that concerning not only Italian products (**931 cases**), but also non-Italian geographical indications (**24 cases**), thus giving its own contribution to the protection of European cultural heritage and to the protection of consumers from possible scams. cooperation procedures with e-commerce marketpalces were activated in **804 cases**, **151** of which were managed through international cooperation with other enforcement authorities both from EU member States and non-EU countries: 73 cases involved wine-products and 78 cases involved agri-food products marketed on websites or by foreign business operators.

The following graphs and tables show the cases in which the ICQRF took actions, and the countries or the web marketplaces involved.

¹ Updated at 24th January 2022 – Source: eAmbrosia – the EU geographical indications register.

² In accordance with article 13 (3), Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

³ In accordance with article 40, Regulation (EU) 2018/273.

Interventions on the web and abroad – 2015 | 2021

Protected product	Cases (no.)	Web cooperation	"Wine" authority	ex-officio
Prosecco	1.206	435	771	
Parmigiano Reggiano	538	372		166
Olio di Puglia	407	407		
Wine kit	283	33	250	
Toscana (olio EVO)	276	241		35
Prosciutto di Parma	225	73		152
Amarone della Valpolicella	178	16	162	
Olio di Calabria	163	163		
Aceto Balsamico di Modena	159	72		87
Salsiccia di Calabria	108	107		1
Sicilia (olio EVO)	103	103		
Umbria (olio EVO)	102	102		
Soppressata di Calabria	88	87		1
Pecorino Toscano	81	54		27
Asti	69	1	68	
Capocollo di Calabria	69	68		1
Grana Padano	55	20		35
Molise (olio EVO)	53	53		
Pecorino Siciliano	53	53		
Dauno (olio EVO)	52	52		
Pancetta di Calabria	46	46		
Asiago	46	42		4
Gorgonzola	45	41		4
Peperone di Senise	43	43		
Liquirizia di Calabria	42	42		
Salamini Italiani alla Cacciatora	41	36		5
Terra di Bari (olio EVO)	37	37		
Pecorino Romano	33	30		3
Pecorino Sardo	33	30		3
Mozzarella di bufala Campana	29	27		2
Cantucci Toscani	27	27		
Prosciutto di San Daniele	27	10		17
Finocchiona	24	20		4
Montepulciano d'Abruzzo	24	9	15	
Nocciola di Piemonte	24	24		
Lenticchia di Altamura	23	23		
Barolo	21	3	18	
Campi Flegrei	21	21		
Prosciutto Toscano	20	16		4
Other products	499	351	105	43
Total	5.373	3.390	1.389	594

Interventions on the web and abroad – 2021

ICQRF – Italian geographical indications

Protected product	Cases (no.)	Web cooperation	"Wine" authority	ex-officio
Olivo di Puglia	230	230		
Prosecco	121	69	52	
Umbria (EVO)	55	55		
Olivo di Calabria	46	46		
Toscana (EVO)	46	46		
Parmigiano Reggiano	45	35		10
Prosciutto di Parma	38	19		19
Salsiccia di Calabria	35	35		
Soppressata di Calabria	32	32		
Aceto Balsamico di Modena	31	7		24
Peperone di Senise	29	29		
Molise (EVO)	18	18		
Capocollo di Calabria	18	18		
Pecorino Toscano	16	16		
Prosciutto di San Daniele	15	5		10
Olivo Lucano	15	15		
Pecorino Romano	12	12		
Finocchiona	10	10		
Puglia	9	9		
Lenticchia di Altamura	8	8		
Cantucci Toscani	8	8		
Lenticchia di Castelluccio di Norcia	8	8		
Pancetta di Calabria	8	8		
<i>Other products</i>	78	63	5	10
Total	931	801	57	73

ICQRF – Non-Italian geographical indications

Protected product	Cases (no.)	Web cooperation	"Wine" authority	ex-officio
Champagne	15	3	12	
Cava	4		4	
Gouda Holland	1			1
West Country farmhouse Cheddar cheese	1			1
Queso Tetilla	1			1
Queso Manchego	1			1
Feta	1			1
Total	24	3	16	5

ICQRF – 2021 Interventions as Italian liason body in the wine sector

Protected products	Cases (no.)	Involved countries
Prosecco	52	Croatia, Austria, United Kingdom, Estonia, Germany, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland
Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo	4	Austria, Germany
Montepulciano d'Abruzzo	1	Switzerland
Champagne	12	France
Cava	4	Spain
Total	73	



ICQRF – 2021 interventions as “ex officio” authority

Protected product	Cases (no.)	Involved countries
Aceto balsamico di Modena	24	Germany, Greece, Portugal, France
Prosciutto di Parma	19	United Kingdom, The Netherlands, France, Germany, Ireland, Switzerland
Parmigiano Reggiano	10	Spain, Cyprus
Prosciutto di San Daniele	10	Germany, France, Romania, Greece, Spain, Sweden
Grana Padano	4	The Netherlands
Mortadella di Bologna	3	Spain
Pane di Altamura	1	Poland
Salamini Italiani alla Cacciatora	1	Austria
Terre di Siena (olio EVO)	1	Poland
Feta	1	Spain
Gouda Holland	1	Spain
Queso Manchego	1	Spain
Queso Tetilla	1	Spain
West Country farmhouse Cheddar cheese	1	Spain
Total	78	



Examples of *made in Italy* protection abroad and on the web

Enforcement activity against marketing of Prosecco evocative products in Croatia



Products marketed by German and Austrian operators on the web market with illegal references to PDO Montepulciano D'Abruzzo and PDO Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo



Commercial activities on the web marketplace with Prosecco evocative products



New Design Street Sale Beer Bar Ice Cream Truck Electric Piaggio Ape Car Food Cart Prosecco Van Cocktail Station

FOB Reference Price: [Get Latest Price](#)

\$3,985.00 - \$5,450.00 / Set 1 Set/Sets (Min. Order)

Model Number: BY-HP01 Cocktail Station

Machinery Capa... 200Units/Month Cocktail Station

Samples: Cocktail Station , 200Units/Month
\$5,500.00/Set | 1 Set (Min. Order) | [Buy Samples](#)

Lead Time☺:	Quantity(Sets)	1 - 1	2 - 3	>3
	Est. Time(days)	24	40	To be negotiated

Customization: Customized logo (Min. Order: 1 Sets)
Customized packaging (Min. Order: 1 Sets)
More ▾



Generic ham marketed on the web by a Swedish operator with illegal reference to PDO Prosciutto di San Daniele



HEM CHARKUTERI


San Daniele 24 mån 73 kr/hg

73.00kr

- 1 + **KÖP**

Kategorier: Charkuteri, Italienska produkter, Skinkor

Cheese and salami marketed on a web marketplace with illegal reference to PDO Parmigiano Reggiano and PGI Salame Felino



Wholesale Parmesan Cheese 2021

FOB Reference Price: [Get Latest Price](#)

>=10 Metric Tons

\$287.00

Lead Time: Quantity(Metric Tons)

Est. Time(days)

Shipping: [Shipping Inquiry](#) [Sea Freight](#) [Compare Rates](#)

Payments: [This supplier also supports A/C](#)

Salami Tipo Felino

Nobile Gentile ca. 450 gr.

Marke: [Casa Felino](#) 5 Sternebewertungen

Erhältlich bei diesen Anbietern.

Geschmacksrichtung Salami

Cuisine Italien

Marke [Casa Felino](#)

Info zu diesem Artikel

- Casa Felino
- Salami Tipo Felino Nobile Gentile ca. 450 gr.

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3. The activity in Italy

3.1 An overview of the control activity

In the year 2021, the ICQRF performed **61,756 controls** (49,511 inspections and 12,245 analytical controls). 33,404 operators and 62,316 products were checked.

The irregularities found concerned 15.9% of operators, 11.6% of the products and 9.0% of samples.

ICQRF reported to the Judicial Authority **186 individuals** and imposed **4,699 administrative penalties**.

During the inspection activities, irregular agri-food products were seized for an amount of about **5,5 million kg** with a commercial value of over 8,1 million euros, as well as more than one million euros of real estate and movable assets, as a total value of seizures of about **9,2 million euros**.

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	61.756
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	49.511
	Analytical controls (no.)	12.245
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	33.404
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	15,9
	Controlled products (no.)	62.316
	Irregular products (%)*	11,6
	Analytical controls (no.)	263.079
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	9,0
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	186
	Administrative penalties (no.)	4.699
	Seizures (no.)	378
	Economic value of seizures (€)	9.173.680
	Seized products (kg)	5.489.188
	Warnings (no.)	4.954

* including documentary and labelling irregularities

Type of seized products / assets	Quantity	Value (€)
Agri-food products (kg)	5.489.188	8.117.314
Real estate / movable assets (no.)	24	1.056.366

3.2 Controls on quality products

3.2.1 PDO, PGI, TSG products

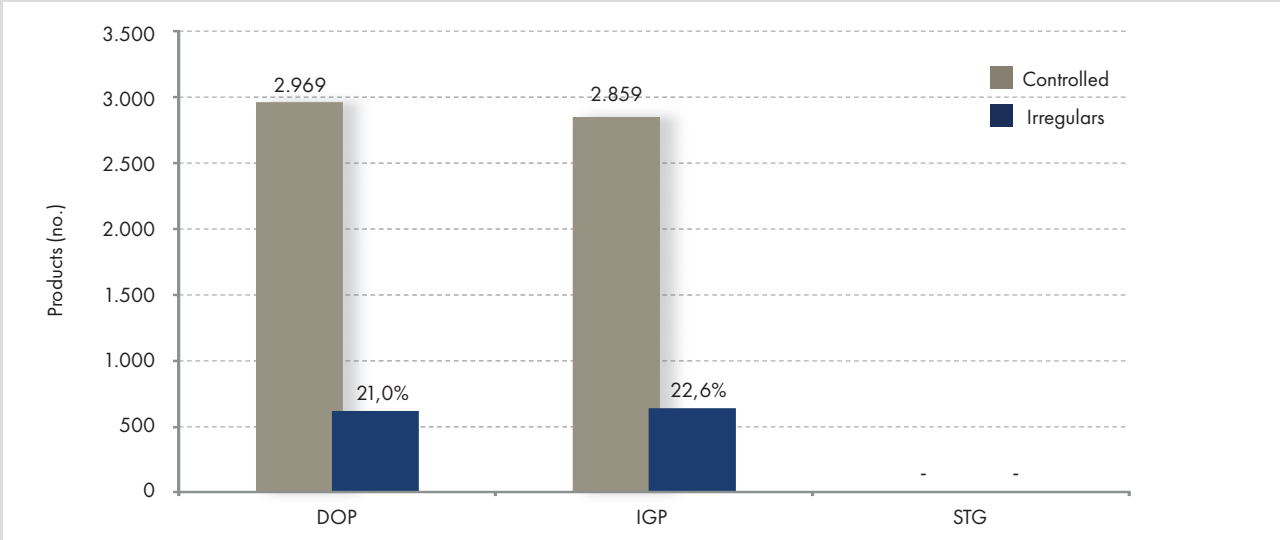
Data on control activity and results in 2021 are shown below, broken down by PDO / PGI / TSG productions. The ICQRF contributed to ensuring the protection of GI agri-food products in Italy and around the world by 5,499 controls (4,677 inspections and 822 analytical controls).

Please note that documentary irregularities (irregular record keeping, irregularities in accompanying and commercial documents) and labelling irregularities contribute to the high percentage of irregular products, as is also the case in the GI wines sector. Furthermore, the violations found also include more than 900 cases of evocation or usurpation of protected products, detected during checks aimed at protecting quality productions, concerning non-GI products. Those are generic products marketed with names that create a misleading association in the minds of consumers with renowned GI products.

ICQRF – Controls on PDO/PGI/TSG productions		
INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	5.499
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	4.677
	Analytical controls (no.)	822
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	2.955
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	19,4
	Controlled products (no.)	5.828
	Irregular products (%) *	21,8
	Analytical controls (no.)	6.155
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	6,7
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	26
	Administrative penalties (no.)	737
	Seizures (no.)	28
	Economic value of seizures (€)	25.993
	Seized products (kg)	11.407
	Warnings (no.)	1.055

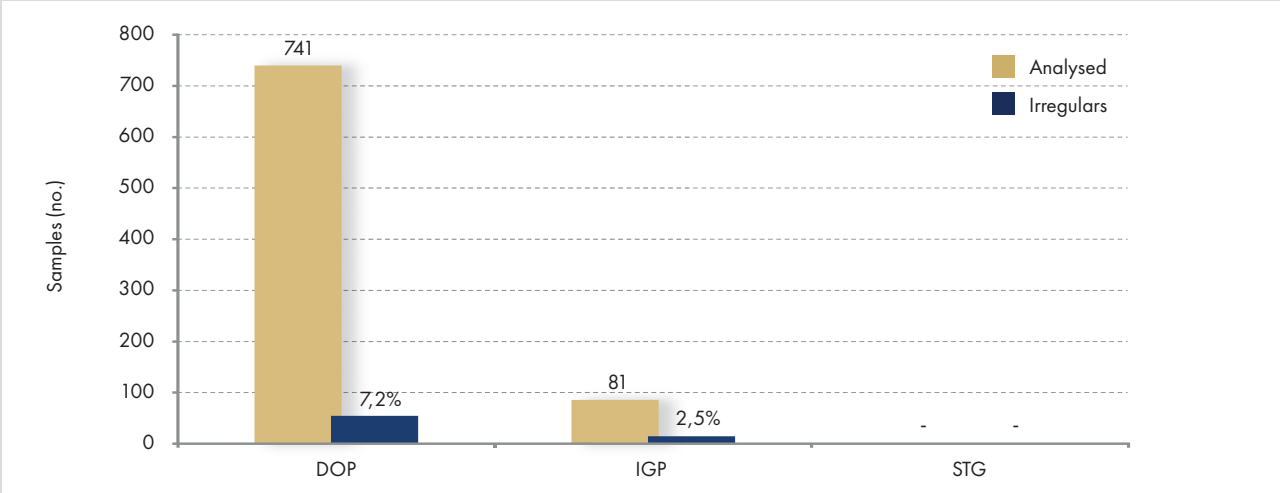
* including documentary and labelling irregularities

ICQRF – Controlled PDO/PGI/TSG products and irregularities % *



* including documentary and labelling irregularities

ICQRF – PDO/PGI/TSG samples analysed and irregularity %



3.2.2 GI wines (DOCG, DOC, IGT)

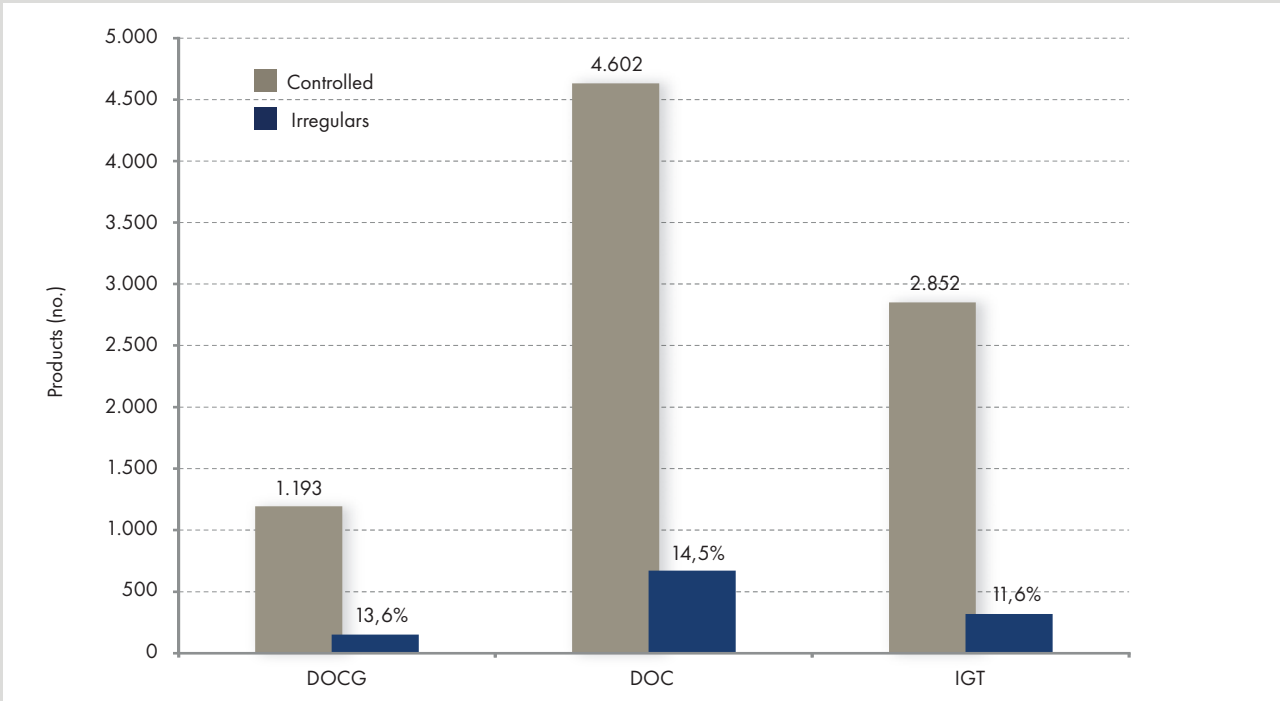
The ICQRF has contributed to the success of Italian wine, the most exported agri-food product, guaranteeing its quality in the world with 9,738 controls (7,056 inspections and 2,682 analytical controls) carried out in 2021 on quality wines.

Irregularities detected in operators and products take into account documentary ones (irregular keeping of records, irregularities in accompanying and commercial documents) and labelling. During the controls to protect GI wines, only 30 cases of violations were due to evocation or usurpation of protected names. These are generic products, marketed with misleading information, which lead the consumer to exchange them for renowned GI wines.

ICQRF – Controls on GI wines (DOCG/DOC/IGT)		
INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	9.738
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	7.056
	Analytical controls (no.)	2.682
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	9.085
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	9,7
	Controlled products (no.)	8.647
	Irregular products (%) *	13,4
	Analytical controls (no.)	58.195
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	3,9
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	20
	Administrative penalties (no.)	1.105
	Seizures (no.)	101
	Economic value of seizures (€)	4.529.288
	Seized products (kg)	2.748.525
	Warnings (no.)	754

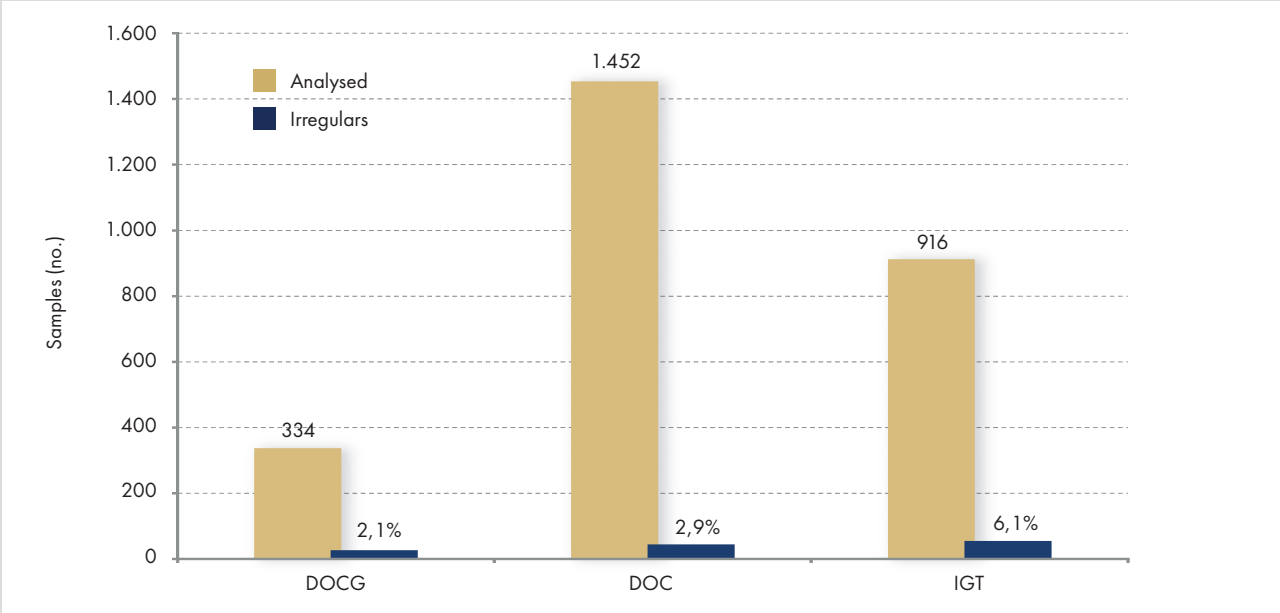
* including documentary and labelling irregularities

ICQRF – Controlled GI wines (DOCG, DOC, IGT) and irregularity % *



* including documentary and labelling irregularities

ICQRF – GI wines (DOCG, DOC, IGT) samples analysed and irregularity %



3.2.3 Organic productions

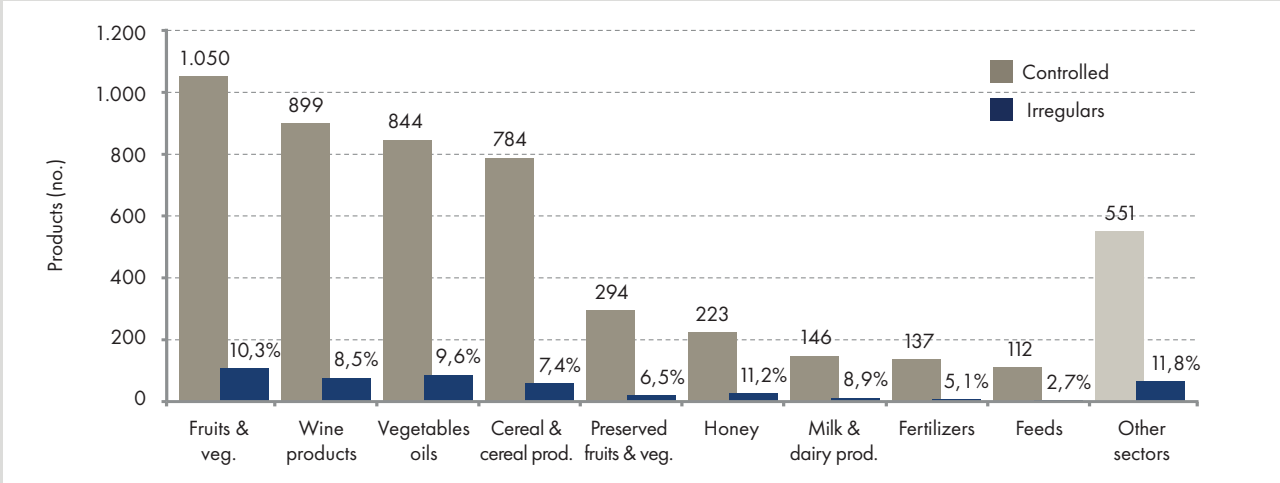
In 2021 the ICQRF carried out 6,097 controls (4,574 inspections and 1,523 analytical controls) within the organic agriculture, checking 3,355 operators and 5,040 products.

The ICQRF judicial police activity in the organic sector was particularly intense, with **22 reports of crime**.

ICQRF – Controls on organic productions		
INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	6.097
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	4.574
	Analytical controls (no.)	1.523
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	3.355
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	12,3
	Controlled products (no.)	5.040
	Irregular products (%) *	9,0
	Analytical controls (no.)	158.443
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	5,0
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	22
	Administrative penalties (no.)	311
	Seizures (no.)	22
	Economic value of seizures (€)	315.763
	Seized products (kg)	215.499
	Warnings (no.)	143

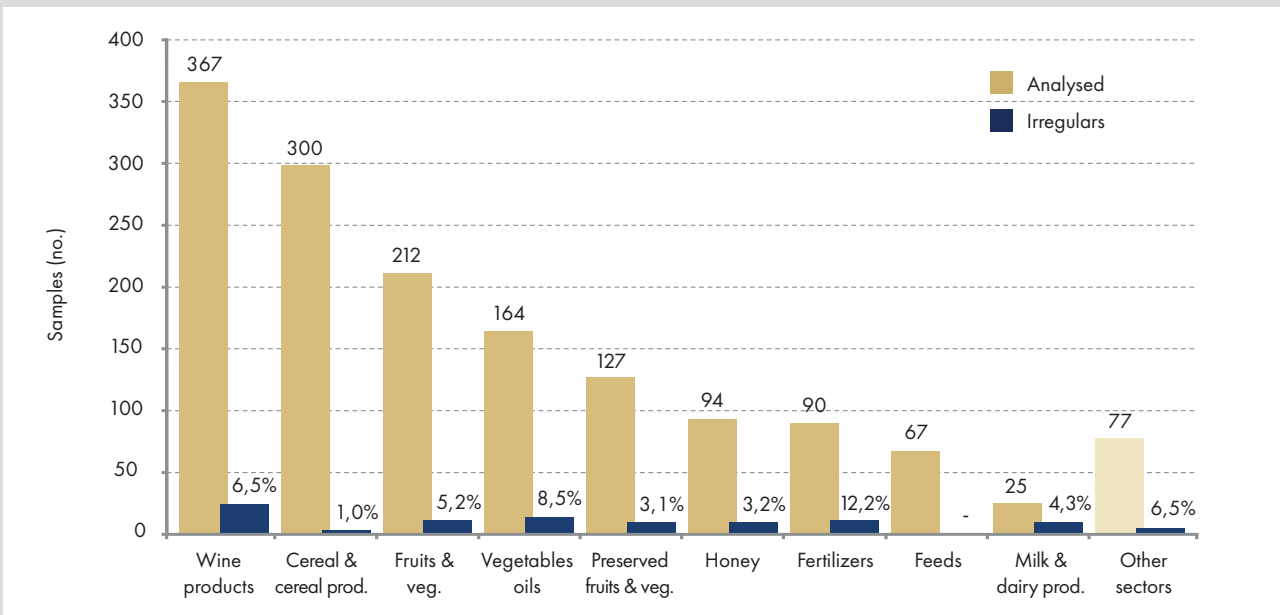
* including documentary and labelling irregularities

ICQRF – Organic Products controlled and % of irregulars* in the most relevant agri-food sectors



* including documentary and labelling irregularities

ICQRF – Samples of organic products analysed and % of irregulars in the most relevant agri-food sectors



3.3 ICQRF actions as EU Food Fraud Contact Point

At EU level, ICQRF, as *Food Fraud Contact Point (FFCP)*, handles in 2021 **150 reports**, 75 of which form ICQRF initiative and 75 reported by other Member States.

The **75 reports** filed by Italy, 71 35 of which in the *Administrative Assistance and Cooperation (AAC)* and 4 in the *Food Fraud (FF)* areas, concerned:

- 43 cases of geographical indications evocation both national (39 related to Prosecco, Prosciutto di Parma, Prosciutto di San Daniele, Parmigiano Reggiano, Aceto Balsamico di Modena, Montepulciano d'Abruzzo, Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo, Salamini Italiani alla Cacciatora, Terre di Siena, Pane di Altamura) and foreign (4 related to Champagne, Cava, Queso Manchego);
- 15 reports related to honey, extra virgin olive oils, plums, aromatised drinks, energy bars marketed in Italy with an irregular labelling;
- 10 reports related to various products (cheese, meat products, ready meals, coffee vegan products) labelled and advertised with names, indications and images that suggested an Italian origin of the product (Italian Sounding), and in 4 cases even evocative of geographical indications (Mortadella di Bologna, Parmigiano Reggiano);
- 3 reports issued against illegal practices on on-line marketing of food (food supplement and wine) with illegal references to the prevention and treatment of COVID-19;
- 2 exchanges of information in the context of cooperation between anti-fraud authorities of other Member States regarding checks on commercial documents for oils and wines;
- A case of false indication of origin in imported honey;
- A case of irregular presence of preservatives in a non-Italian PDO cheese.

The **75 reports**, of which 56 in the *Administrative Assistance and Cooperation (AAC)*, 17 *iFood Fraud (FF)* e 2 *Conversation*, issued by other EU member States concerned mainly requests for assistance relating to cases of suspected irregularities in the labelling of various agri-food products and non-compliance with the declared category in olive oils.

The ICQRF, through the *conversation*, provided support to authorities of other EU member States for controls abroad on Italian geographical indication products (Mortadella di Bologna, Parmigiano Reggiano and Grana Padano).

4. ICQRF against agri-food crime

In 2021, despite the limitations due to the ongoing pandemic, the ICQRF has provided its contribution to the fight against agri-food crime, often working in synergy with the other Police Forces.

Of particular importance are the specific anti-counterfeiting activities, carried out in the context of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Guardia di Finanza, which made it possible to dismantle an organized criminal group responsible for the counterfeiting of well-known brands of Champagne and alcoholic beverages (operation "Bad Drink").

This intervention has made it possible to enforce the intellectual property rights of the owners of registered trademarks, in order to guarantee fair competition between economic operators, seriously distorted due to fraudulent production, and to protect consumers from the purchase of food without any form of traceability and potentially harmful to health.

The high technical competence of the staff, together with the exchange of information between the Judicial Police Forces that made it possible to analyze and cross-reference the information present in different databases, have allowed the success of these important activities to combat agri-food crime.

Some of the most significant actions are reported below.

ANTI-COUNTERFEITING ACTIVITIES

Operation "BAD DRINK"

The investigation was directed by the Public Prosecutor's Office of Northern Naples and conducted by the Central Investigation Unit of the ICQRF in co-delegation with the Economic-Financial Police Unit of the Guardia di Finanza of Naples.

On July 20, 2021, following an articulated investigative activity, targeted searches were carried out delegated by the Magistracy against **13 targets**, of which 8 natural persons and 5 legal persons, located in the province of Naples and in the Agro Nocerino Sarnese and operating in the circuit of production and trade of counterfeit alcoholic beverages.

The subject of the investigations was the introduction into the national territory of large quantities of disinfectant and denatured alcohol of foreign origin that were used for the production of alcoholic beverages.

The illegal activity also made it possible to evade the payment of excise duties as the disinfectant product, which is not subject to the payment of the tax, at the time of introduction into Italy, was subsequently used for the production of alcoholic beverages.

The searches carried out made it possible to reconstruct even more in details the activities carried out by the criminal association, which was also found to be operational in the field of counterfeiting of state seals and basic food items.

Particularly, the judicial police forces involved in the operation seized about 2,800 liters of alcohol, a large quantity of champagne and wine packages, over 9,000 bottles of liqueurs and 900 bottles of extra virgin olive oil, cleverly counterfeited or of stolen origin.

In addition, the extension of the searches to printers and commercial warehouses has made it possible to find and seize 300,000 counterfeit state marks as well as numerous clichés for the printing of false labels that would have been affixed to products of illicit origin.

Finally, large sums of money and numerous checks were seized against the suspects, likely to be the proceeds of the criminal activity carried out.

All the seized products were analyzed at the ICQRF Laboratories which confirmed the use of denatured alcohol, in liqueurs, and seed oil, in extra virgin olive oil.



Operation “Ghost Wine”

ICQRF inspectors, in collaboration with NAS Carabinieri of Rome and local military forces, carried out, on behalf of Public Prosecutor of Tivoli (RM), an investigation on the production and marketing of sophisticated PDO/PGI wines ended with a local and personal search to “ghost” Wine Cellars, homes and appliances belonging to five subjects under investigation.

The activity derived from analytical tests, carried out by ICQRF laboratory of Perugia, on PDO/PGI wine samples found at a wine factory in the province of Rome, irregular for the presence of water and exogenous sugars in grapes. The investigation ended with a seizure of an unregistered wine factory.

The complex investigations made it possible to ascertain how for the fraudulent activity the subjects investigated used other accomplices wineries that sold common wines also “in black”. The quantities of wines and products found during the search operations, revealed inconsistency between the quantities of wine purchased and those held and resold and an illegal use of designations of origin PDO/PGI Lazio and other Italian regions. In total, more than 30,000 litres of wine were seized, about 60 litres of various synthetic aromas, caramel and other substances suitable for sophistication, for a total of 1000 litres, various equipment and wine tanks used to sophisticate wines.

The value of the seized products is more than 200,000 euros.

The holders of the illegal activities have been reported to the Judicial Authority because they were considered as responsible for having produced and placed on the market sophisticated wines, without traceability and with false designations of origin.

SEEDS sector - Fighting usurpation of industrial property rights

As part of an action to combat the undue reproduction and use of seeds of registered varieties, carried out following the ICQRF – CREA-DC – SICASOV Memorandum of Understanding, in the first months of the year, eight rice farms in the Province of Vercelli were subjected to verification. The results of the investigations carried out showed that the same companies used, in the absence of the required authorizations, the seed selection plants taken over by a seed company.

The three subjects responsible for the irregularities were reported to the Public Prosecutor's Office of Vercelli for having marketed goods with the title of property of others, in violation of art. 517-ter c.p. which punishes the manufacture and trade of goods made by usurping industrial property rights.

Actions to protect Wines with Geographical Indication

As part of the wine sector, the inspectors of the ICQRF Lombardy Office carried out an articulated judicial police activity at a large Lombard cooperative reality. The investigation activity was carried out on behalf of the Judicial Authority, starting from March 2021, in collaboration with the forestry Carabinieri of the P.G. section of the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Carabinieri of the Radiomobile Group Station

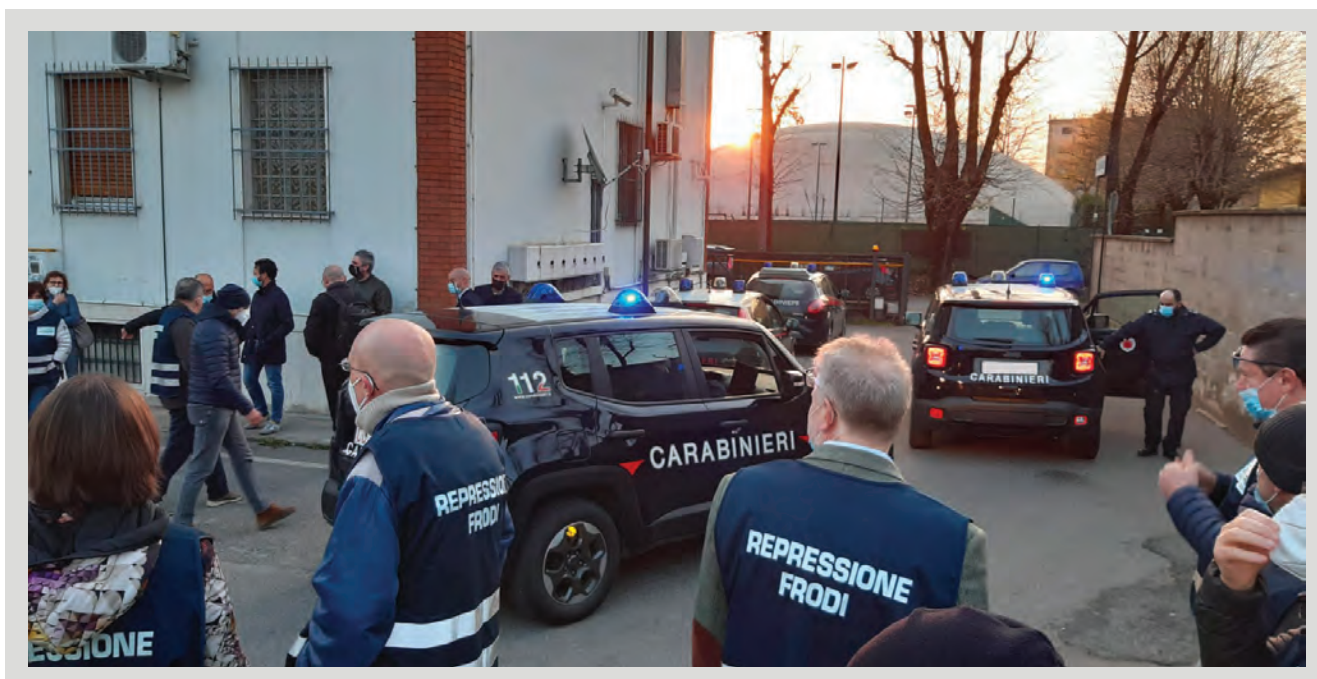
The six subjects investigated, in competition with each other, marketed wines with a Designation of Origin that did not meet the legal requirements and, in addition, sold to other companies wines containing synthetic glycerins, not allowed by current legislation.

During the investigation, other documentary evidence, considered fundamental to outline a *modus operandi* that provides for the systematic rectification of defective wines through unsuitable oenological practices, emerged.

The survey, extended to other companies operating in the regional territory and in neighbouring regions, highlighted a widespread system of illegal oenological practices.

Six subjects have been reported to the Judicial Authority, in complicity with each other, for having placed on the market non-genuine food substances as genuine and for counterfeiting geographical indications or designations of origin of agri-food products.

Seized 23,000 litres of bulk wine and 5,600 bottles of sparkling wine and some hectoliters of liquor syrup, as well as several cylinders of carbon dioxide, for a value of about 40,000 euros.



In February, in two different accesses made to a winery in the north of Bari, inspectors of the ICQRF Italia Sud Est Office detected the presence of about 1,000 liters of denatured ethyl alcohol.

Considering it plausible that alcohol could be used to increase the alcohol content of the wines present in the cellar, all the product in the cellar was seized, together with 3,700 hl of wines both common and IGP Puglia. The value of the seized goods amounts to over 350,000 euros.

Four subjects were reported to the Judicial Authority for trade in harmful food substances and for having placed non-genuine food substances on the market as genuine.

In March, during an anti-counterfeiting operation, inspectors of the ICQRF Italia Sud Est Office, staff of the Customs and Monopolies Agency of Bari and soldiers of the local Guardia di Finanza, seized in the Cerignola area over 600 bottles of different types of counterfeit spirit drinks (Grappa – Rum – Vodka – Gin – Rum – liqueur creams – Limoncello, etc.) accompanied by false State markings.

The chemical-physical analysis revealed that the alcoholic beverages were obtained through the use of denatured ethyl alcohol.

The person responsible for the offense has been reported to the Judicial Authority for the violation of the provisions on excise duties, adulteration or counterfeiting of food substances and for having placed on the market non-genuine food substances as genuine.

At the same time, 3,400 bottles of cocktails based on wine produced in Spain were subjected to administrative seizure as they were advertised by signs bearing the words "SPARKLING PROSECCO", in violation of the specific wine legislation.



In July, during a joint activity, ICQRF Italia Sud Est inspectors and soldiers of the Economic-Financial Police Unit of the Guardia di Finanza of Foggia carried out the criminal seizure of just under a million litres of common wines, falsely claimed as IGP Puglia and varietal, stored at some wine establishments in Foggia and Brindisi.

The value of the seized product amounts to almost one million euros.

Eight subjects have been reported to the Judicial Authority for the crimes of falsity in registers and documents, including electronic ones, participation of persons in the crime, fraud in the exercise of trade, counterfeiting of geographical indications or designations of origin of agri-food products.

FISH CHAIN

During a series of administrative verification and control activities on the traceability of agri-food products, carried out as part of the Memorandum of Understanding between the ICQRF and the General Command of the Port Authorities, over 5,000 kilograms of fish products in the Viterbo area were found and seized.

Of these, 2,887 kg were lacking of any traceability and 2,178 kg had expiry dates dating back to January 2019 and in unsuitable conditions to be marketed or used in food preparations. Furthermore, among the seized products, 600 kg of by-products from previous processes were in a poor state of conservation.

The value of the seized goods was quantified at € 300,000 and the violations found also involved the payment of a total administrative sanction of € 45,000 as well as the destruction of the goods.



Seizure of fertilizers

In December, during control carried out by inspectors of the North West ICQRF Office at a large cooperative company for the distribution of fertilizers located in Piedmont region, several batches of organic and organo-mineral fertilizers for a total of 93,000 kg, were found and seized.

The fertilizers, stored and ready for sale, reported misleading indications in the labelling system.

The control activity was then also extended to the manufacturer's plant, located in Tuscany, where the inspectors of the ICQRF Tuscany and Umbria Office found and seized other 151,500 kg of organic mineral fertilizers also with irregular labelling.



EXTRAORDINARY CONTROL PROGRAMS

Diverse sono state le specifiche azioni a tutela delle produzioni nazionali condotte nel corso del 2021.

- **Organic rice control program**

In relation to some critical issues found in the rice sector, a targeted and specific control plan has been set up. The activity was characterized by a preliminary intense brainstorming and meeting between the staff of the Investigation Unit and the local offices interested in the issue, in order to define and accurately select the objectives to be targeted following an in-depth risk analysis.

About twenty organic and mixed organic/conventional farms considered most at risk, were selected in Piedmont and Lombardy regions. The operations focused on the sampling of rice plants and the acquisition of company documents.

A number of 23 operators were checked and, 19 samples of rice plants were taken, directly in the paddy field.

The controls carried out revealed several critical issues:

- evident traces of a recent fertilization carried out with a ternary fertilizer not allowed on 3 biological plots were found at an operator site. Specifically, fertilizer granules of 3 different colours (red, light blue, white) were found and the operator himself admitted the use of a ternary fertilizer;
- presence of pesticides and/or fertilizers not justified by the purchase documents;
- presence of empty containers of pesticides, bearing recent production dates, which cannot be used in an exclusively organic farming.

Consequently, 3 seizures were carried out, two of pesticides and one of urea together with high administrative sanctions.

- **“Verum et Oleum” control program”**

As part of the collaboration provided for by the ICQRF - Guardia di Finanza Memorandum of Understanding, a specific targeted control activity was promoted in order to protect the oil supply chain and made in Italy.

The launch of the program was preceded by an in-depth market study and an accurate fraud risk analysis; this preparatory work made it possible to select a sample of 15 companies to be monitored, located in 7 Regions.

A total of 184 inspections were carried out on olive oil sector operators throughout the country as well as controls at the main ports of entry for foreign raw materials.

102 samples were taken and subjected to analysis at the ICQRF laboratories, and 25 of these were found to be irregular in terms of quality lower than declared, being virgin olive oil instead of extra virgin olive oil. The irregularities interested a total of 2,300,000 liters of EVO.

As a result, 10 people were reported to the competent public prosecutors and subjected to preliminary investigations for the alleged crime of commercial fraud.

Furthermore, during the inspections 33 administrative violations were issued for a total amount of over 10,000,000 euros, relating to the keeping of records, the compilation of mandatory documentation and the maintenance of the traceability requirements; 5 warnings were also issued to comply with the provisions of the authority for regularization and 5 administrative seizures were carried out, for a total value of over 170,000 euros.

- **Extraordinary control program “Fondo ristorazione/Catering fund”**

Art. 58 of the Law 13 October 2020, n. 126, (conversion into law, with amendments, of the Decree-Law 14 August 2020, n. 104), containing urgent measures to support and relaunch the economy, established a non-repayable grant to companies operating in the catering sector (so-called “catering fund”) for the purchase of products from the agricultural and agri-food chains, including the PDO and PGI.

The same law ruled the procedures for requesting and distributing the grants, as well as the controls to be carried out on the funds distributed and the related administrative sanctions applicable in the event of violations.

The ICQRF (pursuant to the aforementioned Law, in paragraph 7 of art. 58) was commissioned to carry out the control activity, for a minimum of 5% of the grant applications.

In this context, in 2021, 2,421 controls were carried out on an amount of money paid out equal to approximately € 15 million, which involved 1,873 operators.

Control activities are still ongoing and are expected to be completed within 2022.

- **Terra dei Fuochi – ICQRF Activity**

The ICQRF has carried out control operations at the supply chain of livestock, food and dairy farms, located in the areas of Caserta and Naples, as part of the activity coordinated by the “Terra dei fuochi” unit, operating at the Prefecture of Naples.

The inspectors of the ICQRF controlled companies of frozen food products and processed bakery products where flour samples were taken to verify their traceability. The joint control activity with other enforcement authorities on livestock farms was intense and aimed at fighting the phenomenon of clandestine slaughter, as well as the control activity of dairies.

Anonymous dairy products were found on sales and seized because of lacking of any indication and traceability.

Finally, some food business operators were warned for misleading information provided to consumers regarding the type and labelling of food. For example, general mozzarella products were sold evocating the PDO “Mozzarella di bufala Campana”.

In the olive oil sector, a batch of “extra virgin olive oil with 99.6% pure gold flakes”, named “NOBIL OLIO GOLD 24K”, was seized due to the presence of additives not allowed in food products.

Overall, about 120 operators were inspected and 22 warnings, 37 sanctions and 11 seizures of products were carried out.



5. Focus on inspected agri-food sectors: activity...

The following table shows the activity carried out in **2021** per each agri-food sector.

ICQRF – Control activity per each agri-food sector

Sector	Controls (no.)	Of which, inspection (no.)	Of which, analytical (no.)	Controlled operators/premises (no.)	Irregular operators/premises (%)	Controlled products (no.)	Irregular products* (%)	Analytical essays (no.)	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)
Wine products	19.628	15.967	3.661	9.563	18,0	20.509	11,7	72.752	4,9
Vegetable oils	9.324	8.025	1.299	5.243	13,8	9.909	11,7	47.854	20,2
Milk and dairy products	6.137	4.635	1.502	3.462	12,8	5.769	10,6	5.723	7,1
Fruits and vegetables	3.758	3.477	281	2.608	17,9	5.381	12,8	30.658	4,3
Meats	3.167	2.990	177	2.100	20,1	3.743	16,7	774	22,6
Cereals and cereal products	3.411	2.723	688	1.955	12,5	3.088	9,3	38.404	2,0
Eggs	532	532	0	449	20,7	595	16,8	0	0
Preserved fruits and vegetables	2.626	1.799	827	1.460	12,5	2.259	10,3	23.293	4,5
Honey	1.589	1.087	502	881	12,5	1.458	9,9	10.029	11,8
Sugars	346	332	14	268	3,0	450	2,4	825	0
Spirit drinks	1.996	1.704	292	450	15,1	725	11,3	2.217	19,5
Feeds	2.491	1.313	1.178	1.137	14,2	1.824	3,8	12.437	14,7
Fertilizers	1.969	1.041	928	920	12,1	1.359	4,3	6.268	12,3
Seeds	904	651	253	390	13,3	1.172	4,1	2.424	8,3
Plant protection products	508	338	170	309	5,8	400	5,3	529	0,6
Other sectors (*)	3.370	2.897	473	2.209	22,0	3.675	18,1	8.892	5,3
Total	61.756	49.511	12.245	33.404	15,9	77.080	11,6	263.079	9,0

* including documentary and labelling irregularities

(*) Confectionery products, fish products, beers, vinegars, spices, nervine beverages, additives, mineral water and soft drink.

... and results

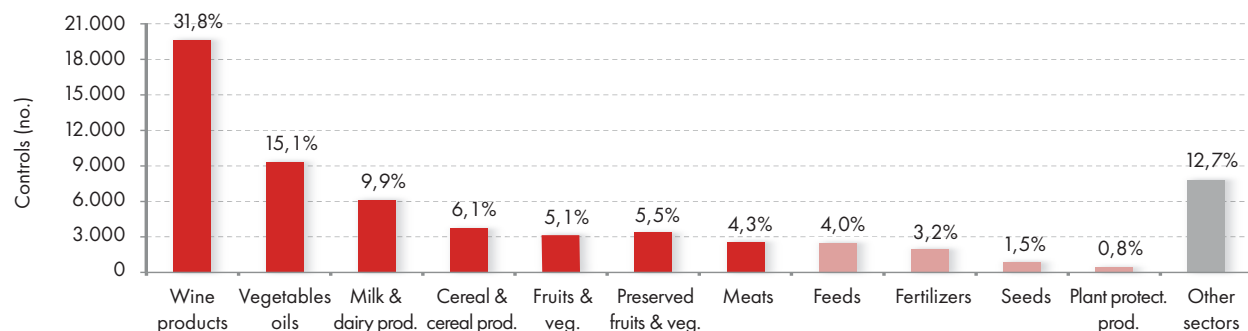
The following table shows the results achieved in **2021** per each agri-food sector.

ICQRF – Controls' results per each agri-food sector						
Sector	Crime reports (no.)	Administrative penalties (no.)	Seizures (no.)	Value of seizures (€)	Seized amounts (kg)	Warnings (no.)
Wine products	34	2.183	148	7.386.870	4.476.861	1.849
Vegetable oils	31	914	48	454.301	121.926	1.258
Milk and dairy products	48	196	30	14.051	2.125	388
Fruits and vegetables	8	293	32	47.910	185.090	315
Meats	4	247	9	14.681	863	310
Cereals and cereal products	8	151	6	22.031	70.759	120
Eggs	0	70	8	14.946	7.027	27
Preserved fruits and vegetables	0	49	7	51.332	9.977	141
Honey	8	59	11	36.615	4.719	59
Sugars	0	5	4	2.074	1.264	3
Spirit drinks	16	34	8	74.817	4.657	37
Feeds	5	217	6	8.540	22.285	28
Fertilizers	6	112	25	178.939	380.776	14
Seeds	12	52	7	509.731	191.341	8
Plant protection products	0	23	5	15.215	566	1
Other sectors (*)	6	94	24	341.627	8.952	396
Total	186	4.699	378	9.173.680	5.489.188	4.954

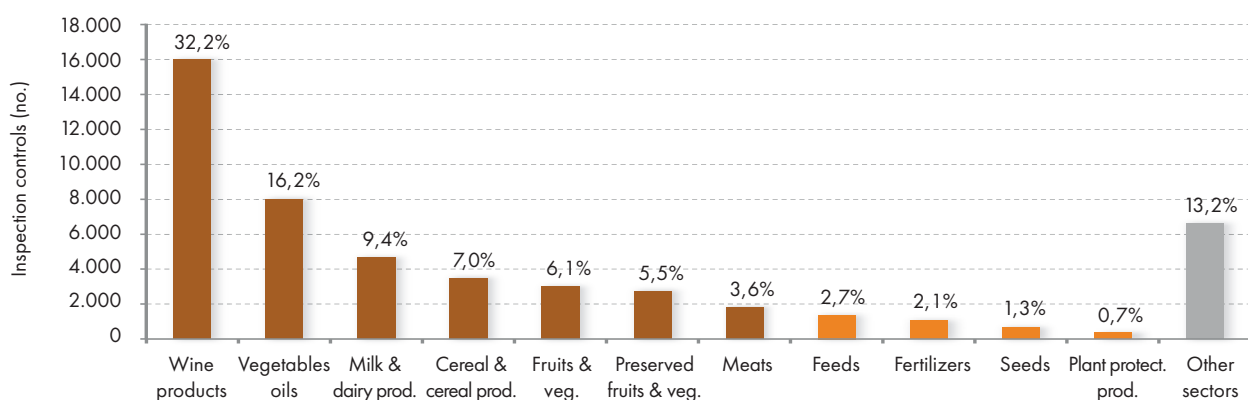
(*) Confectionery products, fish products, beers, vinegars, spices, nervine beverages, additives, mineral water and soft drink.

ICQRF – Control activity per each agri-food sector

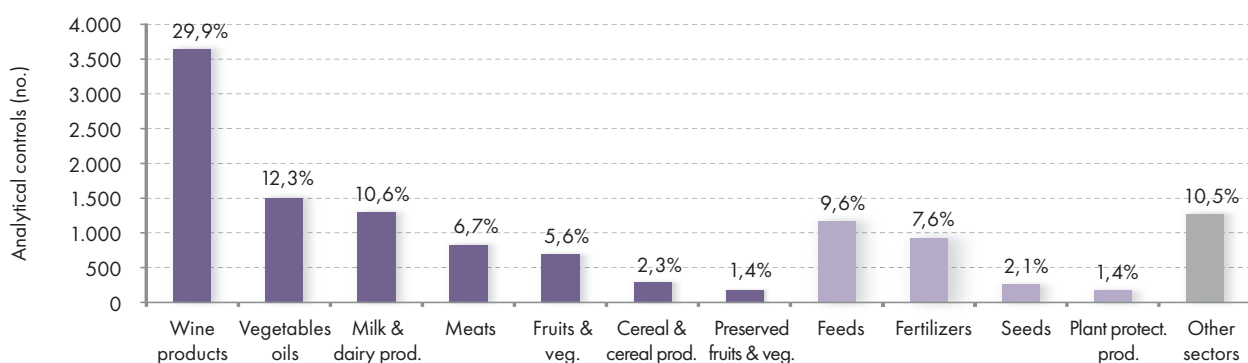
CONTROLS



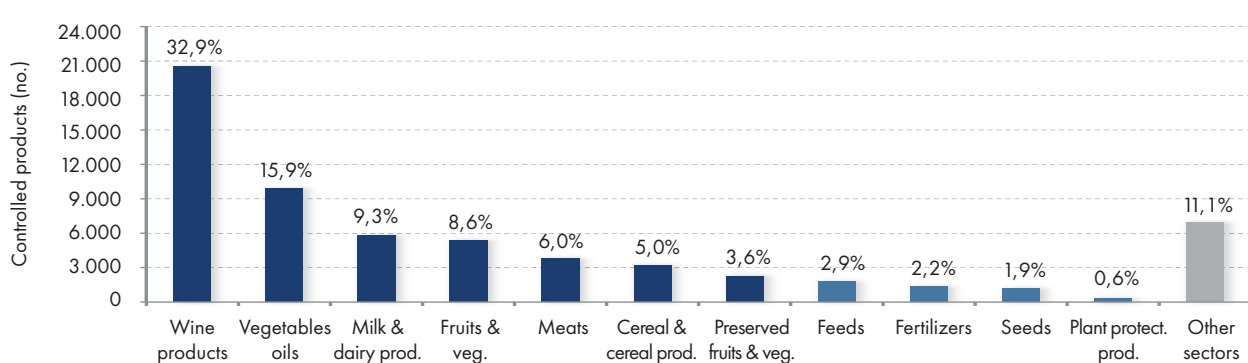
INSPECTION CONTROLS



ANALYTICAL CONTROLS



CONTROLLED PRODUCTS



5.1 Wine products

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	19.628
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	15.967
	Analytical controls (no.)	3.661
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	9.563
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	18,0
	Controlled products (no.)	20.509
	Irregular products (%) *	11,7
	Analytical controls (no.)	72.752
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	4,9
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	34
	Administrative penalties (no.)	2.183
	Seizures (no.)	148
	Economic value of seizures (€)	7.386.870
	Seized products (kg)	4.476.861
	Warnings (no.)	1.849

Main infringements

- Irregular bottling and labelling of generic wines using misleading information (DOC and IGT, also with variety and vintage particulars)
- Fraud on the market for PDO and PGI wines which do not meet the requirements established by the product specifications
- Sophistication of wine products by water dilution and / or by sugar addition
- Wines and musts with alcoholic strength that does not comply with the declared or legal limits
- PGI wine products declared organic with the presence of residues of additives not admitted in wines (exogenous glycerine)
- Missed or irregular holding of the winery registers and irregularities in the accompanying documents
- Wine products declared organic with the presence of residues of plant protection products (phosphonic acid, ethylphosphonic acid, metalaxyl and myclobutanil) not admitted or at concentration levels higher than legal limits
- Illegal keeping of grape marc and / or aqueous products extracted from grape marc
- Unlawful oenological practices used with the aim of eliminating of defects from wines
- Illegal detention in wineries of sugar substances different from grape sugar

5.2 Vegetable oils

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	9.324
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	8.025
	Analytical controls (no.)	1.299
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	5.243
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	13,8
	Controlled products (no.)	9.909
	Irregular products (%) *	11,7
	Analytical controls (no.)	47.854
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	20,2
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	31
	Administrative penalties (no.)	914
	Seizures (no.)	48
	Economic value of seizures (€)	454.301
	Seized products (kg)	121.926
	Warnings (no.)	1.258

Main infringements

- Oils labelled as extra virgin olive oils which were found to belong to a lower category by means of chemical and / or organoleptic analysis
- Counterfeiting of renown commercial brands for extra virgin olive oil
- Missing or irregular indication of geographical origin in extra virgin olive oils
- Infringements of labelling and presentation provisions for olive oils due to omissions of mandatory particulars, irregular use of voluntary particulars, misleading use of designation of origin
- Missing or irregular keeping of the electronic records of olive oils
- Usurpation, imitation or evocation of PDO and PGI products
- Sophistication of extra virgin olive oil by blending seed oil with "verdone" (oil obtained by second extraction of olive pomace)

5.3 Milk and dairy products

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	6.137
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	4.635
	Analytical controls (no.)	1.502
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	3.462
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	12,8
	Controlled products (no.)	5.769
	Irregular products (%) *	10,6
	Analytical controls (no.)	5.723
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	7,1
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	48
	Administrative penalties (no.)	196
	Seizures (no.)	30
	Economic value of seizures (€)	14.051
	Seized products (kg)	2.125
	Warnings (no.)	388

Main infringements

- Cheese, in some cases also PDO, with prohibited or undeclared preservatives
- Buffalo, sheep and goat cheeses produced with the illicit addition of cow milk
- Mozzarella or fior di latte cheese with the presence of exogenous fat substances
- Infringements of the labelling provisions by the omission of mandatory particulars, including indication of the geographical origin of milk, irregular use of voluntary information, misleading use of the designation of origin
- Failure to adopt suitable traceability systems for dairy products, in particular for buffalo milk
- PDO cheeses non-compliant to the product specifications (cheese produced with milk that had undergone thermic treatments while the product specifications foresee the use of raw milk)
- Elaboration of PDO cheese in facilities producing also similar cheese without respecting the mandatory distinction between the production lines

5.4 Fruits and vegetables

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	3.758
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	3.477
	Analytical controls (no.)	281
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	2.608
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	17,9
	Controlled products (no.)	5.381
	Irregular products (%) *	12,8
	Analytical controls (no.)	30.658
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	4,3
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	8
	Administrative penalties (no.)	293
	Seizures (no.)	32
	Economic value of seizures (€)	47.910
	Seized products (kg)	185.090
	Warnings (no.)	315

Main infringements

- Infringement of marketing standards for fresh fruits and vegetables
- Evocation or usurpation of PDO and PGI products
- Fruit and vegetables without traceability records
- Presence of residues of not admitted plant protection products in fruits and vegetables declared organic

5.5 Meats

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	3.167
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	2.990
	Analytical controls (no.)	177
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	2.100
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	20,1
	Controlled products (no.)	3.743
	Irregular products (%) *	16,7
	Analytical controls (no.)	774
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	22,6
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	4
	Administrative penalties (no.)	247
	Seizures (no.)	9
	Economic value of seizures (€)	14.681
	Seized products (kg)	863
	Warnings (no.)	310

Main infringements

- Pig and bovine meat products with composition different than declared and with the presence of substances not declared
- German piglets irregularly put on GDO market as piglets born in Sardinia/Italy
- Frozen chicken meat with a water content above the permitted limit
- Meats and meat products irregularly labelled
- Failure of compliance with the meat traceability requirements
- Usurpation or evocation of PDO and PGI products

5.6 Cereals and cereal products

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	3.411
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	2.723
	Analytical controls (no.)	688
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	1.955
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	12,5
	Controlled products (no.)	3.088
	Irregular products (%) *	9,3
	Analytical controls (no.)	38.404
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	2,0
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	8
	Administrative penalties (no.)	151
	Seizures (no.)	6
	Economic value of seizures (€)	22.031
	Seized products (kg)	70.759
	Warnings (no.)	120

Main infringements

- Marketing of rice declared as Italian high quality rice variety but obtained from paddy rice characterized by inferior quality
- Marketing of flour, pasta and bread with product characteristics that do not meet regulatory requirements
- Rice with flaws exceeding the legal tolerances
- Bread partially cooked and frozen, sold with no mention of such process on the label
- Usurpation or evocation of PDO and PGI products
- Organic cereals and flours containing not allowed chemicals residues
- Irregular labelling of rice and pasta, especially in relation to mandatory particulars, characteristics of the food, list of ingredients and information of the Food Business Operator (F.B.O.)
- Failure to adopt adequate traceability systems for cereals, flours and pasta

5.7 Eggs

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	532
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	532
	Analytical controls (no.)	0
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	449
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	20,7
	Controlled products (no.)	595
	Irregular products (%) *	16,8
	Analytical controls (no.)	0
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	0
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	0
	Administrative penalties (no.)	70
	Seizures (no.)	8
	Economic value of seizures (€)	14.946
	Seized products (kg)	7.027
	Warnings (no.)	27

Main infringements

- Selling eggs loose without mandatory information
- Labelling and packaging with non-compliant particulars, even related to voluntary information
- Failure to respect time limits for grading, stamping and packing eggs

5.8 Preserved fruits and vegetables

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	2.626
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	1.799
	Analytical controls (no.)	827
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	1.460
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	12,5
	Controlled products (no.)	2.259
	Irregular products (%) *	10,3
	Analytical controls (no.)	23.293
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	4,5
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	0
	Administrative penalties (no.)	49
	Seizures (no.)	7
	Economic value of seizures (€)	51.332
	Seized products (kg)	9.977
	Warnings (no.)	141

Main infringements

- Jams with sugar content non-compliant to the legal or declared values
- Infringements on the labelling of preserved vegetables
- Usurpation and evocation of PDO and PGI products
- Fraudulent use of aromatic substances instead of truffle in the preparation of preserved food

5.9 Honey

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	1.589
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	1.087
	Analytical controls (no.)	502
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	881
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	12,5
	Controlled products (no.)	1.458
	Irregular products (%) *	9,9
	Analytical controls (no.)	10.029
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	11,8
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	8
	Administrative penalties (no.)	59
	Seizures (no.)	11
	Economic value of seizures (€)	36.615
	Seized products (kg)	4.719
	Warnings (no.)	59

Main infringements

- Monofloral honey, often from the European Union, whose botanical or geographical origin does not meet the category declared
- Honey with abnormal chemical or organoleptic features
- Irregular labelling of honey due to the use of misleading terms or to the omission of mandatory particulars or to the illegal use of geographical designations
- Failure to adopt an adequate system of honey traceability
- Marketing of fake organic honey

5.10 Sugars

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	346
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	332
	Analytical controls (no.)	14
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	268
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	3,0
	Controlled products (no.)	450
	Irregular products (%) *	2,4
	Analytical controls (no.)	825
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	0
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	0
	Administrative penalties (no.)	5
	Seizures (no.)	4
	Economic value of seizures (€)	2.074
	Seized products (kg)	1.264
	Warnings (no.)	3

Main infringements

- Illegal detention in wineries and in cellars of sugary substances suitable for sophistication of musts and wines
- Irregular labelling information

5.11 Spirit drinks

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	1.996
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	1.704
	Analytical controls (no.)	292
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	450
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	15,1
	Controlled products (no.)	725
	Irregular products (%) *	11,3
	Analytical controls (no.)	2.217
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	19,5
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	16
	Administrative penalties (no.)	34
	Seizures (no.)	8
	Economic value of seizures (€)	74.817
	Seized products (kg)	4.657
	Warnings (no.)	37

Main infringements

- Counterfeiting of liquors, also by using denatured ethyl alcohol
- Counterfeiting of state-marks and compulsory labels
- Spirit drinks with alcoholometric content different than declared
- Spirit drinks with composition non-compliant to legal or declared values
- Irregularities on labelling
- Illegitimate use of a geographical indication in composite, processed or elaborated products

5.12 Feeds

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	2.491
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	1.313
	Analytical controls (no.)	1.178
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	1.137
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	14,2
	Controlled products (no.)	1.824
	Irregular products (%)*	3,8
	Analytical controls (no.)	12.437
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	14,7
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	5
	Administrative penalties (no.)	217
	Seizures (no.)	6
	Economic value of seizures (€)	8.540
	Seized products (kg)	22.285
	Warnings (no.)	28

Main infringements

- Feeds for farm animals and pet, with composition non-compliant to legal limit or to declared values on the label
- Failure to communicate to the competent authority of facilities operating in any of the production, transformation, storage, transportation or distribution of feeds
- Feeds infringing the labelling and packaging provisions

5.13 Fertilizers

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	1.969
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	1.041
	Analytical controls (no.)	928
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	920
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	12,1
	Controlled products (no.)	1.359
	Irregular products (%) *	4,3
	Analytical controls (no.)	6.268
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	12,3
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	6
	Administrative penalties (no.)	112
	Seizures (no.)	25
	Economic value of seizures (€)	178.939
	Seized products (kg)	380.776
	Warnings (no.)	14

Main infringements

- Irregular fertilizers for the nutritional content non-compliant with the legal limit or with the declared values on the label
- Seizure of fertilizers unlawfully held and partially used in organic facilities
- Irregular labelling of fertilizers for lack or non-compliant mandatory indications
- Failure of inscription in the register of fertilizer producers and in the register of fertilizers prior to marketing

5.14 Seeds

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	904
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	651
	Analytical controls (no.)	253
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	390
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	13,3
	Controlled products (no.)	1.172
	Irregular products (%)*	4,1
	Analytical controls (no.)	2.424
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	8,3
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	12
	Administrative penalties (no.)	52
	Seizures (no.)	7
	Economic value of seizures (€)	509.731
	Seized products (kg)	191.341
	Warnings (no.)	8

Main infringements

- Illegal reproduction and consequent marketing of seeds of patented durum wheat varieties, also tanned without relevant regional authorisation
- Simple feeds passed off as seeds
- Illegal reproduction and consequent use of seeds of patented rice varieties in facilities lacking the relevant authorisation
- Seeds with germination or purity not-compliant with legal limits
- Failure to indicate the active ingredients used in seed tanning on the label or in commercial documents
- Marketing of unlawfully labelled and packaged seeds
- Corn and soy seeds containing GMOs

5.15 Plant protection products

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	508
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	338
	Analytical controls (no.)	170
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	309
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	5,8
	Controlled products (no.)	400
	Irregular products (%) *	5,3
	Analytical controls (no.)	529
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	0,6
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	0
	Administrative penalties (no.)	23
	Seizures (no.)	5
	Economic value of seizures (€)	15.215
	Seized products (kg)	566
	Warnings (no.)	1

Main infringements

- Placing on the market or use of not authorized plant protection products
- Failure of compliance with the treatments records requirements to be performed by the buyer or the user

5.16 Other sectors

(Confectionery products, fish products, beers, vinegars, spices, nervine beverages, additives, mineral waters and soft drinks)

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	3.370
	Of which, inspection controls (no.)	2.897
	Analytical controls (no.)	473
	Controlled operators / premises (no.)	2.209
	Irregular operators / premises (%)	22,0
	Controlled products (no.)	3.675
	Irregular products (%)*	18,1
	Analytical controls (no.)	8.892
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	5,3
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	6
	Administrative penalties (no.)	94
	Seizures (no.)	24
	Economic value of seizures (€)	341.627
	Seized products (kg)	8.952
	Warnings (no.)	396

Main infringements

- Usurpation or evocation of GI or DO baked confectionery products
- Irregular marketing of beer due to alcoholic strength by volume or acidity non-compliant to the legal limits
- Non-compliant information in labelling and presentation of the product
- Fish products in poor state of preservation

6. The management of the big controls' database

ICQRF plays an important role in the management of agri-food databases: these are relevant tools for the purposes of controls, which place Italy at the forefront of risk management and dynamic knowledge of the markets.

6.1 Electronic wine register

Since 2017 in Italy, the only country in the world, the **Electronic Wine Register (Registro telematico del vino – RTV)** is fully operational: wine chain operators must register online wine products' movements and processing operations. In addition to allowing the official control authorities to monitor and verify on-line the individual operations and movements carried out by all the operators present on the national territory, the register provides important data for knowledge of the wine market.

As of December 31, 2021, there are over **17 thousand** operators registered on the RTV, of which about 10% produces one thousand or more hectoliters a year, for a total of about **21,500 active registers**.

Since 2018, the ICQRF has made public, in aggregate form and on a periodic basis varying from weekly to monthly depending on economic needs, the data of the Register in a Report called "**Cantina Italia**", available on the website www.politicheagricole.it in the **Controls / Documents section**.

From 15 September 2019, in addition to the data and with the same frequency, the reports with graphs relating to the data provided by the RTV are published and, starting from 15 December, **the report is also published in English**.

6.2 Electronic olive oil register

The electronic oil register – RTO is a system, unique in the world, of punctual traceability of the olive oil supply chain at national level; it allows the official Control Bodies to monitor online the individual movements of olives, olive oil, pomace oil and pomace of each plant/warehouse as well as to know the operators, national and foreign, who carry out the movements.

They are obliged to keep the electronic register for each establishment/deposit: olive traders, oil mills, packaging companies, bulk oil traders, refineries and pomace traders. Operators who hold oil exclusively for self-consumption, for non-food uses, for use in certain foodstuffs, as well as operators who hold only pre-packaged and labelled oils, shall be exempted from the obligation to keep the RTO.

As of December 31, 2021, there are about **23 thousand** active electronic registers.

Since September 2018, the ICQRF has made public, in aggregate form and on a periodic basis varying from weekly to monthly depending on economic needs, the data of the Register in a Report called "**Frantoio Italia**", available on the website www.politicheagricole.it in the **Controls / Documents section**.

From 15 September 2019, in addition to the data and with the same frequency, the reports with graphs relating to the data provided by the RTV are published and, starting from 15 December, **the report is also published in English**.

6.3 The Single Registry of Controls on Agricultural Enterprises (RUCI)

The Single Register of Inspection Controls (RUCI) is a tool introduced to limit the overlapping of controls on agri-food companies, implemented by decree of the Ministers of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies and of the Interior of 22 July 2015.

The RUCI contains the identification and salient data of the inspections carried out on agricultural and agri-food enterprises by each authority responsible for controls.

The RUCI also includes the data of the activity carried out by the Control and certification bodies on regulated quality productions.

In 2021, the results of **about 145 thousand checks** were recorded in the RUCI.

Control authority	Total controls (no.)
CFS General Inspectorate - Office SIA	41
Comando Carabinieri Politiche Agricole – Rome	316
ICQRF	22.345
Control Bodies	122.462
Total	145.164

7. Recognition and authorization of Control Bodies of quality products

The ICQRF has the task of authorizing the Control Bodies (CBs), private or public, that certify PDO, PGI, TSG products (including wines), organic productions and spirit drinks, as well as approving the control plans and tariffs, relating to the costs borne by operators, provided for each PDO and PGI/TSG production registered.

The authorized control structures operating in the field of regulated productions are a total of **59** (34 private and 25 public), divided as follows:

- **47** (24 private and 23 public) for PDO/PGI/TSG food products;
- **12** (7 private and 5 public) for DO and GI wines;
- **19** (all private) for organic products;
- **1** (public) for spirit drinks at GI.

To standardize the level of controls on operators and the behavior of the CBs, an intense coordination action is carried out: in 2021, **41** notes of clarifications or answers to questions were prepared, mostly relating to the application of the control plans of PDO/PGI products and wines with denominations.

As part of the harmonization of the control plans, **the guidelines** for the preparation of the control plans of the pig supply chain were updated (August 2021) and the guidelines for the dairy sector were revised and definitively adopted. The two guidelines have been published on the Ministry's website.

In 2021, **137** authorization decrees were issued, of which: **119** in the field of PDO, PGI, TSG productions, both for new denominations and for existing denominations, **16** in the wine sector, **1** in the organic farming sector and **1** in the GI spirit drinks sector.

During the year, **1,171** control and tariff plans were also approved for products that, in addition to having an important economic impact on the national agri-food system, represent the excellence of *Made in Italy* also recognized abroad.

All the authorization decrees and the control and tariff plans have been published on the Ministry's website, for a total of **1308** documents.

8. Supervision on Control Bodies of quality products

The ICQRF carries out the supervision of the Control and certification bodies through the Audit Office, at the headquarters of the Control Bodies, the examination of a sample of company files and the execution of review audits and witness audits at a representative sample of system operators.

The supervisory activity in 2021 involved **47** Control Bodies/regulated areas, of which, **17** operating in the field of agricultural and food products with PDO, PGI and TSG, **7** of PDO and PGI wines, **1** of organic farming and **5** of meat labelling.

An Audit Office was carried out at each of these structures to assess the maintenance of the organizational, managerial and administrative requirements useful to be able to operate in the field of certification and control of regulated productions. The checks at the operators, which consist of a critical examination of the activity carried out by the Body, were a total of **448**.

ICQRF – Supervisory activity on CBs operating in the quality regulated area

Regulated production	Office audits (no.)	Review witness audits (no.)
PDO, PGI AND TSG (agro-food)	17	76
PDO, PGI (wines and varietals wines)	7	50
Organic farming sector	18	314
Meat labelling	5	8
Total	47	448

9. ICQRF Laboratories: quality protection and research

With **6 analytical laboratories⁴** and **over 100 laboratory technicians**, the ICQRF holds an in house capability to perform the analytical verification of agri-food products that has few equals at international level.

All laboratories operate in compliance with **UNI CEI EN ISO / IEC 17025: 2018** "General criteria on the competence of testing and calibration laboratories", and routinely check the conformity of various commodities according performing analytical determinations accredited by the national accreditation body ACCREDIA.

Accreditation concerns a total of **275 tests⁵**, of which 12 managed with a "flexible scope". This method allows the laboratory to extend accreditation to new analysis in shorter times than the ordinary procedure, and in any case limited to activities that require the same expertise and resources already included within the the accreditation field.

ICQRF has tasting committees, responsible for the official evaluation and control of the organoleptic characteristics of virgin and extra virgin olive oils, using the method defined at EU level. The tasting committees operate in accordance with the Ministerial Decree of 7 October 2021, amending former Decree 18 June 2014, and hold the international recognition by the I.O.C. (International Olive Oil Council).

The ICQRF laboratory in Modena is the national reference laboratory for the control of the water content in poultry meat, identified by Ministerial Decree of 18 March 2002 pursuant to EEC Reg. 1538/91.

All laboratories routinely participate in **proficiency tests**, interlaboratory test circuits (ring tests) organized by providers, preferably accredited according to the UNI CEI EN ISO / IEC 17043 standard, to assess their analytical performance, also for the purpose of maintaining of the accreditation.

The harmonization of the ICQRF Quality System, a priority objective for the uniform application of the specific standards for each commodity and to guarantee the quality of the analytical data produced by the individual laboratories, is coordinated by the PREF IV Unit and by a working group that involves all the Quality Managers of the six Laboratories.

ICQRF laboratories, as an institutional task, also carry out **research activities**, as an essential tool to improve the action to combat fraud in the agri-food sector, as well as to enhance the quality characteristics of food.

ICQRF is involved in the development of new methods of analysis on various agri-food matrices in order to discover possible fraudulent activities in the production practices, or to identify new analytical markers for the qualitative characterization of food.

This study and research activity also aims to update obsolete analytical methods as they are no longer consistent with the evolution of production technologies or, in any case, that can be implemented with the use of more modern techniques.

In the field of research and development, thanks also to the funds from the government program "Industria 4.0" that allowed ICQRF to enhance its own laboratories with new instrumentation, such as ORBITRAP (ion trap mass analysers), new analytical methods have been developed and aimed at the detection of new and emerging frauds in the agri-food sector.

Below, a report of research activities is reported, as well as the collaborations of the ICQRF laboratories with government bodies, which are going to support other pre-existing ones.

⁴ The activities of the Central Laboratory in Rome and Salerno are temporarily suspended due to relocation.

⁵ The updated list of accredited tests refers to 5 ICQRF Laboratories, with the relevant regulatory reference (where applicable) and is available on the ACCREDIA on-line database.

https://services.accredia.it/accredia_labsearch.jsp?ID_LINK=1734&area=310&dipartimento=L,S&desc=Laborator

• ICQRF Laboratory of Perugia

Development and implementation of new methods for the determination of pesticide residues to enhance the control action in the "organic farming" sector, in particular:

- Determination of polar pesticides (glyphosate, AMPA, glufosinate, phosphorous acid and ethylphosphonic acid) in cereals and legumes by ionic chromatography coupled to the high resolution detector Mass Spectrometry (IC-HRMS ORBITRAP), in agreement with QUPPE Version 12 - 22 July 2021;
- Determination of herbicides and insecticides widely used for the treatment of rice using HPLC coupled with a triple quadrupole mass detector (in accordance with the UNI EN 15662: 2018 standard) and high resolution detector Mass Spectrometry (IC-HRMS ORBITRAP). The validated methods, together with the applied routine methods of the laboratory, were used in the context of an urgent action of controls over the production and import of biological rice, that involved the analysis of both refined rice samples, and plants of rice taken in the field.

Collaborations:

- ICQRF Laboratory of Perugia and the experimental zooprophyllactic institute of the Venezie (Istituto zooprofilattico sperimentale delle Venezie), with the aim of developing NIR calibration models for the qualitative parameters of olive oil. The same collaboration was started at the Laboratory of Salerno.

Scientific collaborations:

- ICQRF Laboratory of Perugia and University of Bologna DISTAL Department, for the validation of an instrumental and sensory model of classification of virgin olive oils;
- ICQRF Laboratory of Perugia and University of Milan VESPA Department, for the evaluation and distribution of metabolites in food matrices with the purpose of food safety, and the geographical traceability of branded food;
- ICQRF Laboratory of Perugia and the University of Padua MAPS Department, for the development of rapid and non-destructive methods for determining the chemical-nutritional composition and the conformity of label in feed and food for human consumption;
- ICQRF Laboratory of Perugia and University of Perugia DSA3 Department, for the definition of analytical markers of the geographical origin of olive virgin oils based on the evaluation of minor constituents, with particular reference to volatile substances;
- ICQRF Laboratory of Perugia and University of Perugia DSA3 Department, for the development of an analytical screening method to identify the compositional differences between "Mozzarella di bufala campana" PDO and conventional buffalo mozzarella.

• ICQRF Laboratory of Catania

Development of analytical methods:

- Determination of Fosetyl (sum of fosetyl, phosphonic acid and their salts, expressed in fosetyl) in wines;
- The method was validated using the Ion Chromatography system coupled to the High Resolution Mass Spectrometry detector (IC-HRMS ORBITRAP), according to the QUPPE Version 12 - 22 July 2021.

Determination of natamycin additive (E235) in wines:

- The method for determining natamycin additive (E235) in wines was validated by using the High Performance Liquid Chromatography system coupled to the High Resolution Mass Spectrometry detector (HPLC-HRMS ORBITRAP), according to the OIV method Oeno Resolution 461 /2012;

Determination of the hexavalent chromium (Cr VI) in fertilizers:

- A preliminary study aimed at a secondary validation has been conducted, i.e. verification of the analytical method for the determination of the element Cr VI, item under the attention of the European Commission, and it will become the official standard for the control of the presence of hexavalent chromium as a contaminant in Fertilizers of new inclusion in Regulation (EU) 2019/1009.

Collaborations:

- ICQRF Laboratory of Catania and the Polytechnic of the University of Bari, for an experimental project aimed at characterizing the geographical origin of lentils and durum wheat;
- ICQRF Laboratory of Catania has entered into an agreement with the Consortium DOC Sicily for the analysis of leaf samples, grapes, must, wine from organic farming, and from conventional farming, aimed at identifying the evolution of phosphonic acid in the vinification processes, and the potential contamination caused by production processes.

• **ICQRF Laboratory of Modena**

Research activity:

- Implementation of a molecular biology laboratory for DNA analysis aimed at checking the authenticity of agri-food products;
- Validation of a method of analysis for the verification of antibiotics in chicken meat, guaranteeing animal health and proper labeling for the consumer;
- The method was developed using ORBITRAP, used at the laboratory also for the determination of residues of active ingredients, such as glyphosate in agri-food matrices;
- Specialist activity for the control of vitamins, as feed additives, allowing the refinement of some aspects of the methods in use concerning their analytical performance.

Collaborations:

- Agreement with the Joint Research Center - European Union Reference Laboratory (JRC EURL) for an interlaboratory study regarding the analysis of carotenoids in feed.

• **ICQRF Laboratory of Conegliano**

Collaborations:

- Scientific collaboration with CREA (Council for Agricultural Research And Economics) for the development of new methods of analysis for the detection of fraud in the wine sector.

The research activities carried out in 2021 have been the subject matters of experimental thesis, publications and presentations in national and international frameworks.

1. Sabatino L., Scordino M., Scarangella M., Gambino G.L., Lazzaro F., Borzì M.A., Caruso R., Fiorillo M., Traulo P., Gagliano G. 2021. *Fraud in the fruit juice sector: a case study*. Poster XXVII Congresso Nazionale della Società Chimica Italiana;
2. Caruso R., Chiappara E., Gambino G.L., Pantò V., Romano G.A.M., Sabatino L., Scarangella M., Scordino M., Traulo P., Gagliano G. 2021. Razionalizzazione dei tempi in Laboratorio. Contributo orale al Convegno della Società Chimica Italiana - Sezione Sicilia su Piattaforma Microsoft Teams.

10. Results of the control activities: reports of infringement, penalties, reports of warning, orders for payments

After the ascertainties of violations by the Control Bodies, ICQRF proceeds to impose administrative fines. Penalties of up to € 50,000 are provided by the territorial offices of the ICQRF; above this amount, penalties are provided by the Central Administration (DG VICO). Regardless of the amount, DG VICO also provides the imposition of sanctions in specific sectors such as the geographical indications of food and wine (PDO, PGI), organic farming, GMOs, and olive oil commerce.

The imposition of sanctions takes place at the end of a specific procedure ruled by Law no. 689 of 24/11/1981. Of the **4,699 administrative charges** directly raised by the ICQRF in 2021, **1,981** were immediately voluntarily paid by the offender, taking advantage of the reduced payment provided by the law, for a **benefit to the Treasury of over 2,4 million euro**. The product sectors most affected were wine, olive oil and regulated quality products (PDO, PGI and BIO), which account for about 64% of the revenue collected following the payment of fines by offenders.

Also relevant are the proceeds collected from the payment of penalties on the subject of labelling, mainly deriving from the application of Legislative Decree 231 of 2017, sanctioning Regulation (EU) 1169 of 2011, which represent more than 13% of the amounts collected.

ICQRF – Reduced payments for penalties imposed considering the checked sectors

Sectors Fields	Reduced payments (no.)	Amount of payments (€)
Wine products	922	592.322
Vegetable oils	237	137.418
Quality products	200	843.808
Labelling	151	325.874
Feeds	144	192.577
Fertilizers	94	157.307
Eggs	46	16.594
Traceability	34	35.795
Cereals and cereal products	33	18.325
Fruits and vegetables	31	22.964
Honey	31	35.447
Seeds	17	23.445
Plant protection products	13	14.343
Preserved fruits and vegetables	10	21.104
Meats	9	18.716
Milk and dairy products	5	507
Other sectors	4	1.162
Total	1.981	2.457.709

ICQRF – Reduced payments on penalties imposed for each of the provision infringed

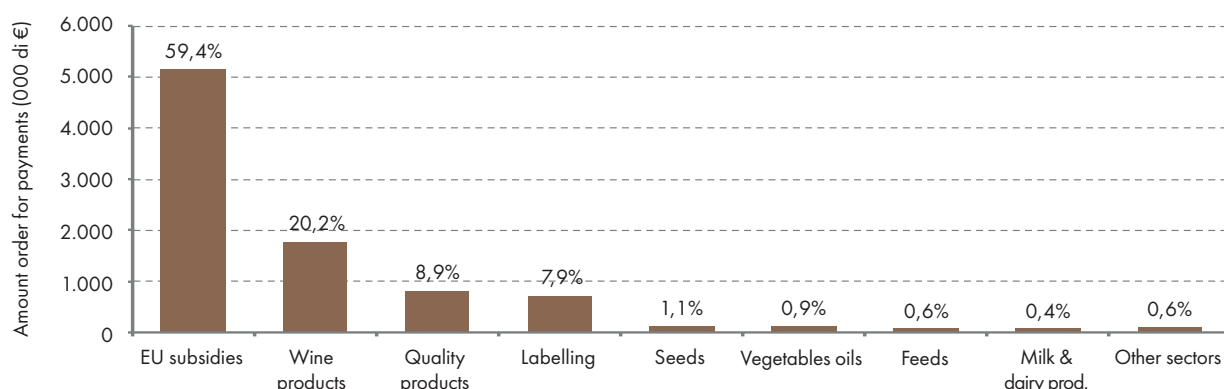
Sectors Fields	Provision infringed	Payments (no.)	Amount (€)
Wine products	D.lgs. n. 61 del 8/4/2010	2	5.317
	Legge n. 238 del 12/12/2016	920	587.005
Vegetable oils	D.lgs. n. 103 del 23/5/2016	224	106.401
	Legge n. 1407 del 13/11/1960	9	27.217
	Legge n. 9 del 14/1/2013	4	3.800
Milk and dairy products	Legge n. 138/74 del 11/04/1974	5	507
Fruits and vegetables	D.lgs. n. 306 del 10/12/2002	31	22.964
Meats	D.lgs. n. 58 del 29/1/2004	6	18.500
	Legge n. 343 del 4/7/1985	3	216
Cereals and cereal products	D.lgs. n. 131 del 4/8/2017	8	12.617
	Legge n. 580 del 4/7/1967	25	5.708
Eggs	Legge n. 88 del 07/07/2009	46	16.594
Preserved fruits and vegetables	D. lgs n. 50 del 20/2/2004	9	16.826
	Legge n.154 del 28/7/2016	1	4.278
Honey	D.lgs. n. 179 del 21/5/2004	31	35.447
Feeds	D.lgs. n. 26 del 3/2/2017	129	156.887
	Legge n. 281 del 15/2/1963	15	35.690
Fertilizers	D.lgs. n. 75 del 29/4/2010	94	157.307
Seeds	D.lgs. n. 20 del 02/02/2021	7	8.867
	Legge n. 1096 del 25/11/1971	10	14.579
Plant protection products	D.lgs. n. 150 del 14/8/2012	7	4.433
	D.lgs. n. 194 del 17/03/1995	3	4.200
	D.lgs. n. 69 del 17/4/2014	3	5.710
Quality products	D.lgs. n. 20 del 23/2/2018	73	309.600
	D.lgs. n. 297 del 19/11/2004	127	534.208
Labelling	D.lgs. n. 231 del 15/12/2017	149	322.061
	D.lgs. n. 70 del 9/4/2003	1	206
	Legge n. 350 del 24/12/2003	1	3.607
Traceability	D.lgs. n. 190/2006 del 05/04/2006	34	35.795
Other sectors	D.lgs. n. 193 del 6/11/2007	1	700
	Legge n. 1354 del 16/8/1962	3	462
Total		1.981	2.457.709

The ICQRF also **issued 4,954 warnings** to operators in implementation of the so-called 'Campolibero' decree and subsequent regulatory interventions (Simplification Decree and Law 21st May 2021, n.71).

In 2021, the ICQRF issued **1,947 orders for payment**, amounting to approximately **EUR 8,7 million**. Once again, the sectors in which the ICQRF's sanctions action was most concentrated were, concerning the number of orders for payment, the wine sector, labelling of food products, and the sector of regulated quality products (about 79% of the total).

Nevertheless, taking into account the total amount of the applied sanctions, the sanctions related to the undue withdrawal of EU aids are prevalent (over 59% of the total amount), since the amount of the sanction to be imposed is commensurate by the law to the value of the contribution unduly perceived.

ICQRF – Orders for payments for each field of activity



Sectors Fields	Orders for payments (no.)	Amount of payments (€)
Wine products	847	1.765.926
Labelling	381	687.042
Quality products	309	777.417
EU financial supports	190	5.183.275
Vegetable oils	102	82.800
Milk and dairy products	42	33.500
Feeds	26	56.790
Seeds	15	96.080
Eggs	14	6.500
Cereals and cereal products	9	3.842
Preserved fruits and vegetables	4	17.010
Honey	3	2.400
Fertilizers	3	8.500
Meats	1	10.329
Beers	1	154
Total	1.947	8.731.565

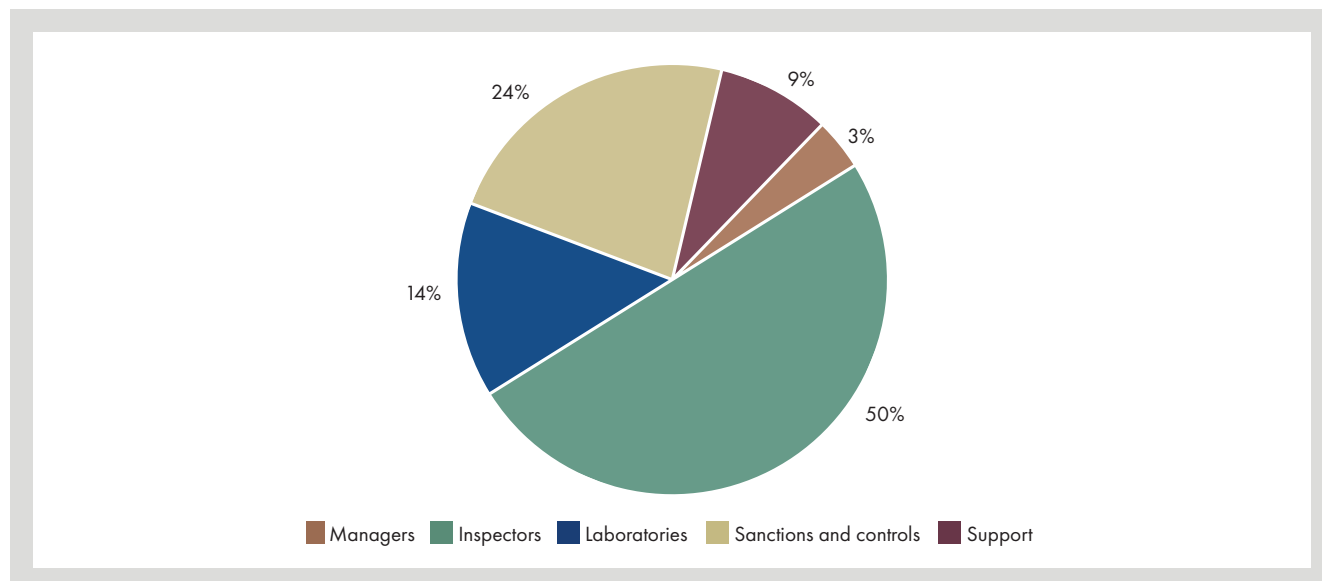
ICQRF – Orders for payments for each of the provisions infringed

Sectors Fields	Provision infringed	Orders for payments issued (no.)	Amount (€)
Wine products	D.lgs. n. 260 del 10/8/2000	7	11.715
	D.lgs. n. 61 del 8/4/2010	198	485.761
	Legge n. 238 del 12/12/2016	635	772.672
	Legge n. 82 del 20/2/2006	7	495.778
Vegetable oils	D.lgs. n. 103 del 23/5/2016	54	45.700
	Legge n. 1407 del 13/11/1960	37	28.100
	Legge n. 9 del 14/1/2013	11	9.000
Milk and dairy products	D. L. n.91 del 24/06/2014	42	33.500
Meats	Legge n. 26 del 13/2/1990	1	10.329
Cereals and cereal products	D.lgs. n. 131 del 4/8/2017	1	2.000
	Legge n. 325 del 18/03/1958	2	153
	Legge n. 580 del 4/7/1967	6	1.689
Eggs	Legge n. 88 del 07/07/2009	14	6.500
Preserved fruits and vegetables	D.lgs. n. 50 del 20/2/2004	3	8.010
	Legge n. 154 del 28/7/2016	1	9.000
Honey	D.lgs. n. 179 del 21/5/2004	3	2.400
Feeds	D.lgs. n. 26 del 3/2/2017	16	39.250
	Legge n. 281 del 15/2/1963	10	17.540
Fertilizers	D.lgs. n. 75 del 29/4/2010	3	8.500
Seeds	Legge n. 1096 del 25/11/1971	15	96.080
Beers	Legge n. 1354 del 16/8/1962	1	154
Quality products	D.lgs. n. 297 del 19/11/2004	309	777.417
EU financial supports	Legge n. 898 del 23/12/1986	190	5.183.275
Labelling	D.lgs. n. 231 del 15/12/2017	380	685.042
	D.lgs. n. 145 del 15/9/2017	1	2.000
Total		1.947	8.731.565

11. The staff of the ICQRF, their professionalism and the structure on the Territory

ICQRF staff consist of **816** (including **25 managers**), but the staff actually in service, at the end of 2021, amounted to **685** (of which 22 managers), with a **managers/officers ratio of just 3,2%**.

The staff on duty is distributed among the different functions/activities of the ICQRF as indicated in the following chart.



ICQRF is divided, at a central level, into **two Directorates General** (Directorate General for the recognition of control and certification bodies and consumer protection - **VICO**; Directorate General for the prevention and fight against agri-food fraud - **PREF**) and at a territorial level in **29 Offices** (**10** non-general management level and **19** Area offices) and 6 Laboratories that carry out analytical activities. **Over 84%** of ICQRF staff is located in the local offices and laboratories.

The **VICO Directorate General** carries out recognition activities of the control structures of PDO, PGI, TSG productions and organic productions, imposes administrative sanctions relating to infringements in the preparation and trade of agri-food products and substances for agricultural or forestry use, manages the budget of the Department, plans the needs for instrumental and logistical resources of the structure, takes care of the ancillary economic treatment of the staff, manages the specific professional training and staff mobility.

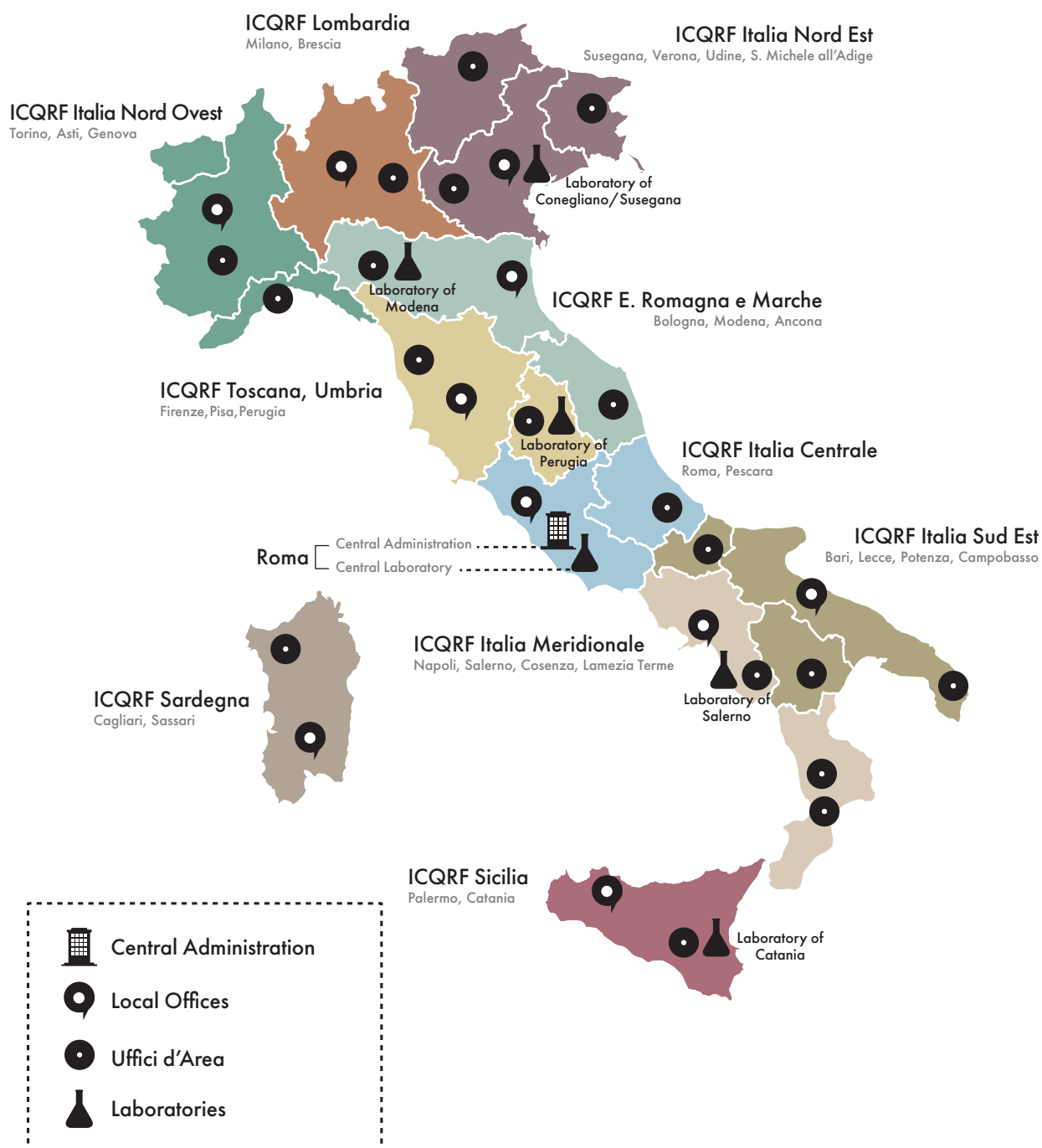
The **PREF Directorate General** carries out functions of planning, monitoring, coordination of inspection activities, promotion and coordination of extraordinary control programs and actions of particular importance carried out, also in collaboration with other Control Bodies, through the Investigation Unit Central (UIC). Furthermore, it coordinates the supervisory activity on the Control Bodies, coordinates the laboratories and, through the central laboratory in Rome, carries out the revision analysis, the unrepeatable analysis, also at the request of the judicial Authority, as well as the coordination of research activities for the identification of new analytical methods to be applied in the fight against fraud.

At the central level, **six special units** are active:

- 1. Central Investigation Unit - U.I.C.:** for specific Judicial Police activities of national and international importance;
- 2. Ex officio Protection Unit:** for the protection of food and wine geographical indications, on the Web and in the world, against any form of illegal use or misleading practice;
- 3. Labelling Unit:** to support the ICQRF Offices for the solution of problems related to the legislation on labelling;
- 4. ICQRF newsletter drafting unit:** promote internal study and rapid dissemination to all staff of documentation and information in support of institutional activities;

- 5. Communication unit of the ICQRF:** to coordinate and carry out institutional communication activities at national and international level;
- 6. Unit to combat unfair commercial practices - UPS:** to ensure the fairness of commercial relations between operators in the agricultural and food supply chain.

Locations of the ICQRF Offices and Laboratories



ICQRF – Distribution of personnel by workplace

Management Offices Laboratories	Local offices	Area offices	Employees in service (no.)
Central Administration	Rome		91
ICQRF Italia Nord Ovest	Turin	Asti	45
		Genoa	
ICQRF Lombardia	Milan	Brescia	33
ICQRF Italia Nord Est	Susegana	Verona	49
		Udine	
		S. Michele all'Adige	
ICQRF E. Romagna e Marche	Bologna	Modena	54
		Ancona	
ICQRF Toscana e Umbria	Florence	Pisa	49
		Perugia	
ICQRF Italia Centrale	Rome	Pescara	40
ICQRF Italia Meridionale	Naples	Salerno	64
		Cosenza	
		Lamezia Terme	
ICQRF Italia Sud Est	Bari	Lecce	69
		Potenza	
		Campobasso	
ICQRF Sicilia	Palermo	Catania	44
ICQRF Sardegna	Cagliari	Sassari	29
Laboratory of Catania			34
Laboratory of Conegliano			12
Laboratory of Modena			17
Laboratory of Perugia			19
Laboratory of Salerno			20
Laboratory of ROME			16
Total			685

11.1 ICQRF internal audits

In 2021, 2 internal audits were carried out at the local offices “ICQRF Central Italy” based in Rome and “ICQRF North West” based in Turin.

The checks also concerned the inspection documents of the area offices, which are dependent on the aforementioned territorial offices (Pescara, Asti and Genoa).

The area of competence of the aforementioned Offices includes the Regions of Piemonte, Valle d’Aosta and Liguria (for the ICQRF North West), Lazio and Abruzzo (for the Central Italy ICQRF).

The audits of the local offices concerned:

- The methods of organization, planning and monitoring and the inspection activity through interviews with the manager of the structure;
- The conduct of inspection activities, the application of European Union and national provisions and inspection procedures during these activities and the drafting of related documents by examining inspection files.

The checks also concerned the “quality” of the data entered in the ICQRF database, comparing them with those acquired during the checks and reported in the minutes.

In consideration of the delicate task carried out by the Inspection Offices, the ICQRF pays great attention to measures to prevent corruption and, precisely in relation to the anti-corruption obligations (three-year plan for the prevention of corruption), the following aspects have been verified:

- Rotation of teams;
- Training of inspection staff in matters falling within the competence of the ICQRF;
- Any declarations of incompatibility.

For a more in-depth examination of the *modus operandi* of the inspection teams, for the year 2021 the following was carried out:

- For both territorial offices, a support visit to an economic operator during the inspection activity carried out by the staff in charge of official control;
- For the “ICQRF North West” office, also a support activity during the performance of an e-commerce check.

Overall from the Audits it emerged that the territorial offices:

- Comply with the procedures and provisions relating to inspection activities in the areas of competence;
- Demonstrate a good organization and management of the planning and execution of the inspection activity, which takes into account the risk analysis and general guidelines provided by the central Administration;
- Implement the rotation of the teams, with reference to the members of the inspection team and / or to the product sector and / or to the territorial district assigned to carry out the inspection assignment.

The final reports were published in the section specifically dedicated to the ICQRF of the MIPAAF Intranet portal.

11.2 Staff training

ICQRF pays great attention to the specific training of its staff, aiming at the development of professional skills and the evolution of techniques to combat agri-food fraud, both in Italy and worldwide and on the web.

In 2021, the ICQRF involved 500 staff units in the training activity, equal to 72.99% of present staff.

Individual participations in the various activities totaled 2.043, considering that during the year each employee was able to participate in more than one training and refresher activity.

It should be noted that due to the epidemiological emergency from "COVID 19" in the course of the year 2021 a specific training program was created which took place primarily at a distance.

The following are the main training events on specialist topics carried out during the year:

Residential activities (training and in-depth courses)

- Sensory analysis of honey - I level (duration 3 days - 11 participants);
- Panel leaders for the organoleptic evaluation of olive oils (duration 5 days - n. 18 participants);
- Internal audit of the competent Authorities (duration 1 day - 6 participants).

Distance learning activity (webinar, web meeting, e-learning)

- Hyperdoc protocol - new users (duration 1 day - 67 participants);
- Hyperdoc protocol - advanced level (duration 1 day - 65 participants);
- Company law - accounting and tax documents - financial statements (duration 7 days):
 - 1^ day n. 85 participants;
 - 2^ day n. 83 participants;
 - 3^ day n. 77 participants;
 - 4^ day n. 73 participants;
 - 5^ day n. 68 participants;
 - 6^ day (Company contracts. Documents having the nature of a contract) n. 75 participants;
 - 7^ day (Contribution Catering Fund) n. 64 participants.
- Regulation (EC) no. 1907/2006 (REACH) and Regulation (EC) No. 1272/2008 (CLP) (duration 32 hours - 4 participants);
- Organic sector - Biological Information System (SIB) (duration 1 day - 143 participants);
- Organic sector - Traces information system (duration 1 day - 133 participants);
- Filing orders (duration 1 day - 71 participants);
- Methods for the statistical analysis of experimental data - basic course (duration 10 days - 19 participating units);
- Unfair commercial practices in the agri-food chain - Part I (duration 7 days - 108 participants):
 1. Directive 2019/633, contents and innovations with respect to the national legislation in force pursuant to art. 62 DL 1/2012;
 2. National legislation on unfair commercial practices - article 62 of Legislative Decree 1/2012 and amendments and additions; D.M. 19 October 2012, n. 189; art. 7 law n. 53/2021. The use of unfair terms as an unfair commercial practice;
 3. Unfair commercial practices in the agricultural market economy. Distribution of added value in the food chain. Case studies;
 4. The food chain and the actors. The position of the farmer in the food chain and supply chains. Case studies and focus on different production sectors;

5. Contracts for the supply of agricultural and agri-food products. Typology, case studies, in particular focus on the dairy, fruit and vegetable and cereals sectors;
 6. The fight against unfair practices in Spain with the Agency of Información y Control Alimentarios AICA. Operation and activities;
 7. The cases of unfair commercial practices in Directive 2019/633 in Italy and in other EU countries. Unfair commercial practices in other EU countries, comparative case studies.
- Unfair commercial practices of the agri-food chain - Part II (duration 5 days - 70 participants):
 1. Il costo di produzione ISMEA. Metodologia e determinazione. La tutela penale e le pratiche commerciali sleali nell'esperienza dei Carabinieri per la Tutela Agroalimentare;
 2. Attività di polizia economico-finanziaria della Guardia di Finanza a tutela del comparto agroalimentare. Pratiche commerciali sleali connesse alla cessione dei prodotti agricoli - analisi di casi pratici;
 3. Analisi della disciplina nazionale di attuazione della Direttiva n. 2019//633 recata dal decreto legislativo in corso di approvazione;
 4. Direttiva n. 2019/633 Pratiche sleali. La cooperazione tra Stati membri e i rapporti con la Commissione UE;
 5. Procedure istruttorie, verifica e valutazione di casi studio ai sensi della normativa nazionale art. 62 DL 1/2012.
 - Problems encountered by the Laboratories in the activity of ascertaining and contesting the offenses following the analyzes carried out (duration 1 day - 35 participants);
 - Newly hired agricultural officers course (duration 9 days n. 18 participants);
 - ISO 17025/2018 standard update (first part - workshops) (duration 1 day - 15 participants);
 - Update to ISO 17025/2018 standard (second part) (duration 1 day - 69 participants);
 - Innovation ISO 19011/2018 standard (duration 1 day - 75 participants);
 - Cross-cutting issues ICQRF sanctioning activity (duration 1 day - 55 participants);
 - Oil Register (duration 1 day - 71 participants);
 - EU Reg. 787/2019, the new provisions on spirit drinks (duration 1 day - 91 participants);
 - EU Reg. 2019/1009 the new regulation on fertilizers (duration 1 day - 68 participants);
 - EU Reg. 2018/775 - information on food for consumers (duration 1 day - 53 participants);
 - Web control - procedures, news and perspectives (duration 1 day - 51 participants);
 - Application of the warning, rules and analysis of practical cases also in light of the changes introduced by Legislative Decree 42/2021 (duration 1 day - 78 participants)
 - Marketing of plant protection products (duration 1 day - 46 participants);
 - Legislative Decree 231/2017 - national sanctioning framework in the labelling sector, case studies (duration 1 day - 55 participants);
 - Specialized English course in agri-food for staff (duration h 18 - 15 participants divided into 4 classes), for second level Managers (duration 30 h - n. 7 participants) and for Top Management (duration h 55 - 1 participant);
 - Specialized French course in agri-food for Top Management (duration 55 hours - 1 participant).

It should be noted that, due to the ongoing health emergency, individual courses for *Top Management* and individual courses for *II level managers* will end within the first half of the year 2022.

- SNA - Code of public contracts - basic course (duration 25 hours - 23 participants);

- SNA - Code of public contracts - advanced course (duration 30 hours - 12 participants);
- INPS - Value Project PA 2021 - Planning, measurement and evaluation of performance in the Public Administration (duration 40 hours - 1 participant);
- INPS - Progetto Valore PA 2021 - Management and conservation of digital documents. Organization and development of databases of national interest (duration 50 hours - 2 participants).

11.3 Transfer of skills and training of external personnel

In 2021, the ICQRF further expanded its network of contacts at an international level, extending collaborations with new supervisory authorities and consolidating the relationships already established in the past. This certainly contributes to the diffusion of the concept of intrinsic quality of geographical indications and more, as well as communicating the importance of an adequate control system for the protection of local consumers against fraud related to the presence on the market of counterfeit products or products evoking renowned geographical indications.

In detail, the ICQRF has actively participated in the following initiatives:

- WINET Crossborder online Conference - Traceability and wine authentication - of 16 September, promoted by the Moldovan government;
- Drafting of "Agreement on cooperation in the field of agriculture between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies of the Republic of Italy";
- Participation in the inter-ministerial coordination meeting "1st meeting of the Italy-Albania Joint Commission at technical level" on November 4th;
- TAIEX "Partnership Instrument Workshop on Geographical Indications with Mongolia" on 10 and 11 November;
- Video conference meeting with representatives of the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry on 25 November;
- Examination and approval of the CREA project for EXPO Dubai;
- CODEX Committee on food import and export inspection and certification systems of May 31-June 8;
- Codex Alimentarius Committee for Food Labeling. Coordination meeting of 14 September;
- Presentation of the ICQRF experience on notice & take-down procedures on the main world marketplaces, as part of the **Consumer Protection Cooperation Network (CPC)** meeting on 30 September 2021;
- Meeting on December 3 with the anti-counterfeiting experts of Champagne PDO producers for the exchange of information useful for the recognition of fake products;
- Presentation of ICQRF activities to ambassadors and agricultural workers of numerous international embassies as part of the OSCAR meeting on 12 December.

In 2021 the administrative twinning Twinning GE 16 ENI EC 03 18 "Establishing efficient protection and control System of Geographical Indications (GIs) in Georgia" was successfully completed, which saw the secondment as Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA) of a current ICQRF manager and the participation of numerous MIPAAF / ICQRF experts. At the end of the project, 100% of the planned objectives were achieved.

11.4 ICQRF and the European Commission

ICQRF participated in the following events:

- Progress of the notifications received in relation to the olive oil compliance checks carried out in 2020, with presentation of a report on the sampling of olive oils - 27 January;
- Presentation of the ICQRF anti-fraud system in the context of the *Fact-finding study -fraud in the agri-food chain meeting* - 24 March;
- Meeting of the “European Reference Center for Control in the Wine Sector” of the DG Joint Research Center of the European Commission - 25 June;
- Meeting of the *Food Fraud Network* of the European Commission - 29 January, 23 April, 15 September and 25 November;
- Meeting of the Fertilizer Working Group and the Regulatory Committee for Fertilizers of the European Commission - 25-25 June and 22-23 November;
- *E-commerce network* of 10 June;
- *Honey action* - Meeting with the EU Agri-Food Fraud Network of 15 June and 15 September;
- Working Group meeting on Alert and Cooperation Network (ACN) on 1 December;
- *1st meeting of Commission’s expert group on general food law and sustainability of food systems* of 30 November.



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General Directorate for the accreditation of Control Bodies, certification and consumer protection (VICO)

www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/15163

General Directorate for prevention and enforcement of agri-food frauds (PREF)

www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/15164

Local Offices and Local Units

www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/15165

Laboratories

www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/15166