



**MINISTERO DELLE POLITICHE AGRICOLE
ALIMENTARI E FORESTALI**



REPORT 2020



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



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Introduction

Italy is characterized by the strong identity and the high standards of its agri-food productions. A country, with 870 registered Geographical Indications, that preserves an actual cultural heritage, which is indeed unique at European level.

Valorisation and protection of “made in Italy” agri-food, by the means of contrasting fraudulent practices undermining correct market relations, are among the strategic priorities at national level.

At the same time, it is ever more necessary to ensure an adequate level of protection to the consumers, in order to allow them to make informed and safe buying decisions, through the implementation of a highly specialized control system in every part of the food and agriculture sector.

This report on the activities carried out throughout the year 2020 by the Inspectorate for fraud repression and quality protection of the agrifood products and foodstuffs (ICQRF), control Authority of the Italian Ministry of the Agriculture, shows the commitment and the results achieved during the year that has just ended.

A period that, it should be pointed out, due to the spread of the pandemics, was the theatre of an unprecedented crisis with severe socio-economic implications, which consequently increased the necessity of protecting the consumers.

On this regard, it will suffice to consider the numerous actions that ICQRF has carried out at international level, as well as the protection activities undertaken against on-line sales and advertising with unlawful claims about prevention and treatment of COVID-19.

ICQRF made an important contribution to the protection of the agri-food sector, as demonstrated by the results obtained.

It is my intention to work to further strengthen the Italian control system, in order to ensure even higher standards of legality, contributing in this way to the protection of quality and to the safety of the products sold in our markets, in line with the demands of the consumers and of our companies.

The Ministry of Agriculture
Stefano Patuanelli

Preface

This report shows the main data and results concerning the activities of ICQRF throughout the year 2020 in all the different sectors of agri-food.

It is also worth stressing that the activity has been carried out in the particularly complicated context of the COVID-19 pandemics, characterised by restrictions and operational difficulties.

Despite that, this department succeeded in ensuring a high level of protection, ready to step up its efforts in contexts such as on-line sales (which have seen a sudden expansion in the view of the recent circumstances), also thanks to solid relationships with other national and international control authorities, as well as with several important players of the electronic commerce.

This document describes in detail the protection activities of the “made in Italy” agri-food in the world and on the web, as well as the most notable actions carried out for the protection of organic farming and the sectors of wine, fertilizers and fruit and vegetables, which allowed to stop unlawful production practices, seizing impressive amounts of irregular products.

Further data and information are shown, concerning the organization of the structure of this control authority, as well as other areas of responsibility such as sanctioning, authorization and supervision of control bodies and certification bodies.

I take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation for the incisive action carried out, as well as the important results achieved with dedication and generous commitment, by all the staff of ICQRF which, in a difficult situation such the one we are unfortunately still facing, was able to show once more a great sense of responsibility and a high level of professionalism in carrying out an important and sensitive task at the service of the country.

The Head of the Inspectorate
Felice Assenza

Indice

1. Summary	6
2. Agri-food “made in Italy” protection in the world and on the web	8
3. The activity in Italy	17
3.1 An overview of the control activity	17
3.2 The controls on quality products	18
3.2.1 GI food	18
3.2.2 GI wines	20
3.2.3 Organic productions	22
3.3 ICQRF actions as EU Food Fraud Contact Point	24
4. ICQRF against agri-food crime	25
5. Focus on inspected agri-food sectors	30
5.1 Wine products	33
5.2 Vegetables oils	34
5.3 Milk and dairy products	35
5.4 Fruits and vegetables	36
5.5 Meats	37
5.6 Cereal and cereal products	38
5.7 Eggs	39
5.8 Preserved fruits and vegetables	40
5.9 Honey	41
5.10 Sugars	42
5.11 Spirits drinks	43
5.12 Feeds	44
5.13 Fertilizers	45
5.14 Seeds	46
5.15 Plant protection products	47
5.16 Other sectors	48
6. The management of the big controls’ database	49
6.1 Electronic wine register	49
6.2 Electronic olive oil register	49
6.3 RUCI - Single Registry of Controls on Agricultural Enterprises	49
7. Recognition, authorisation and supervision of Control Bodies of quality products	50
8. ICQRF laboratories: quality protection and research	52
9. Results of the control activities: reports of infringement, penalties, reports of warning, orders for payments	54
10. ICQRF staff, their proficiency and the regional organization	58
10.1 ICQRF internal audits	61
10.2 Staff training	61
10.3 Transfer of skills and training of external personnel	62
Contacts	64

1. Summary

In 2020, the agri-food sector proved to be strategic for the Italian economy, as it was the only economic sector that withstood the Coronavirus emergency, unlike the other “made in Italy” sectors.

With a value of more than 500 billion euro, the agri-food chain is one of the sectors that contributes most to the national GDP and has recorded a continuous growth in exports, even though it is still suffering from the effects of the pandemic.

By fighting unlawful activities and crimes that threaten the quality and safety of food products, the ICQRF contributes to the protection of consumers and made in Italy, and ensures the fair competition at the market. During 2020, the Inspectorate confirmed a high level of activity to protect consumers and fair competition, 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, numerous remote controls were carried out, also using available databases and electronic registers.

The Report contains the detail of the activity carried out by the ICQRF against fraud, 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.

With **70,992 anti-fraud checks** (58,824 inspections and 12,168 analytical), **37,508 operators inspected and 77,080 products inspected**, also in 2020 the quality of the Italian control system and the positioning of the ICQRF among the main anti-fraud authorities in the food sector in the world is confirmed.

The irregularities concerned 11.0% products while 7.4% samples analyzed were found to be irregular. The ICQRF, also during 2020, contributed with its technical expertise to the fight against unlawful acts and criminal behaviour in the agri-food sector:

- **159 reports of crime, 4,119 administrative penalties and 4,762 warnings** issued to operators;
- about **22 million kg of goods seized** for a value of seizures of over **21 million euros**;
- **1,142 interventions** outside national borders and on the web to protect the Geographical Indications.

The controls concerned food products for more than

90% and technical means for agriculture (feed, fertilizers, seeds, plant protection products) for the remaining 10%.

Relating to **each agri-food sectors**, 26,332 controls involved the wine sector, 10,646 olive oil, 6,856 dairy, 3,445 cereals and cereal products, 3,191 fruit and vegetables, 3,166 preserved vegetables, 3,016 the meat sector, 1,794 spirit drinks, 1,556 honey, 467 eggs, 382 sugary substances and 4,099 other sectors.

Inspections and analytical controls on **technical means in agriculture** totaled 6,042.

ICQRF is among the public authorities that carry out the most anti-fraud controls in the world on many agri-food sectors, in particular, wine and olive oil, helping to provide adequate guarantees to consumers.

ICQRF is the **sanctioning Authority** for a high number of violations in the agri-food sector, also notified by other control authorities. In particular, ICQRF is **the competent authority to issue fines** for administrative violations regarding: food labeling, productions 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.

In 2020 ICQRF issued **1,899 orders for payment**, for an amount of over **17 million euros**.

Italy, through ICQRF, leads at European level the protection of Geographical Indications intervening **internationally and on the web** for the protection of made in Italy: as the **ex officio Authority** for PDO / PGI products and as the **Liaison-Body** in the EU for Italy in the wine sector, ICQRF activated **1,142 actions** in 2020.

In the last 5 years, ICQRF interventions to protect Italian products outside national borders and on the web have been **4,418**, a result that no other European country can boast.

On the web, in particular, thanks to the continuous collaboration with the web marketplaces Alibaba, Amazon, Ebay, and Rakuten, ICQRF activated **1,079 actions** in 2020 to protect Italian food and wine products, **with 99% successes**.

As a Food Fraud Contact Point (FFCP) between Italy and the EU, ICQRF managed **127 actions** in 2020, 88 of which were reported by other Member States and 39 by Italian initiative. In **11 cases** the alert was made as part of the coordinated EU control

plan activated to counteract the **illegal sale and advertising on the web of products with illicit references to COVID-19**.

ICQRF has also took part in **Operation OPSON IX of INTERPOL, EUROPOL and OLAF** and contributed to the fight against fraud, particularly in the alcohol and spirits sector.

Nevertheless the epidemiologic emergency, the **Twinning GE 16 ENI EC 03 18** "Establishing efficient protection and control System of Geographical Indications (GIs) in Georgia", which sees the ICQRF at the head of the project: together with colleagues from French INAO, was never interrupted. In the project ICQRF is providing technical and practical assistance to establish an efficient protection system for Geographical Indications in Georgia.

ICQRF carries out **supervision in Italy over public and private control bodies** (CBs) of regulated quality agri-food products (productions from organic agriculture, PDO, PGI and TSG agricultural and food products, wines with designation of origin and geographical indication, meats with voluntary labelling). In 2020 ICQRF **supervised 50 CBs**, of which, **13** in the field of PDO, PGI and TSG agricultural and food products, **19** in the field of PDO and PGI wines, **16** in the field of organic products, and **2** in the field of meat labelling.

ICQRF also plays an important role in the management of **large agri-food databases**: Italy remains the only country in the world to have electronic registers for the movement of wine and oil. The electronic registers, together with the Single Register of Inspections - RUCI, constitute valuable tools for the purposes of controls and place Italy at the forefront of risk management and dynamic knowledge of the markets.

The electronic wine register, which entered into force on 1 January 2017, records data related to around **17 thousand operators, almost 615 thousand** wine vessels and over **30 million** oenological operations per year.

The **electronic register of olive oil** allows a precise **traceability** of the supply chain at national level and allows to effectively counter fraud and irregularities.

The ICQRF periodically publishes the reports "**Cantina Italia**" and "**Frantoio Italia**" on the MiPAAF website, making public the data of wine and olive oil in stock in the Italian oenological and olive oil

establishments.

The **Single Register of Inspection Controls "RUCI"**, in which the data of the "Supervision Database", the information base shared between ICQRF and other competent Authorities (Regions and autonomous Provinces), also automatically flows, allowed ICQRF to optimize the activity inspection avoiding the overlap of controls on agricultural enterprises. In 2020, the RUCI recorded **the results of around 322,000 checks** carried out by the ICQRF, Regions, Control Bodies and the Carabinieri.

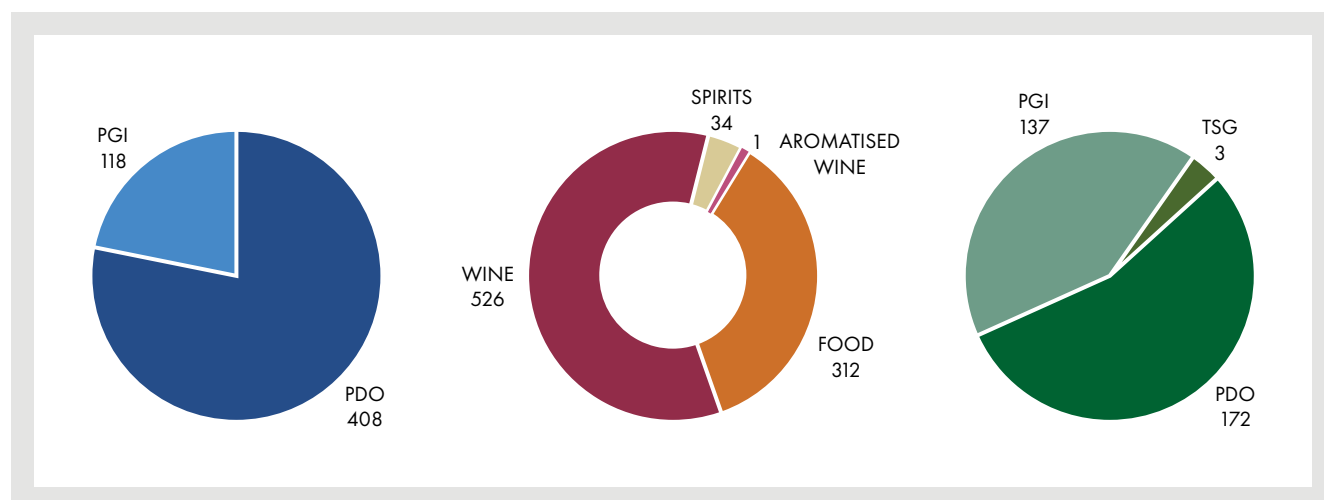
The results achieved in 2020, despite the obvious difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, confirm the efficiency, quality of work and passion with which the men and women of the ICQRF constantly protect Italian agri-food production. At the same time, they enhance the work of millions of Italian producers who, even in emergency situations, have been able to make a fundamental contribution to the growth and image of our country.

The operating results achieved in 2020, despite the obvious difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, confirm the efficiency, quality of work and passion with which the men and women of the ICQRF constantly protect Italian agri-food production. At the same time, they highlight the work of millions of Italian producers who, even in emergency situations, have been able to make a fundamental contribution to the growth and image of our country.

The Report ICQRF 2020 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 **873 agri-food products recognized by EU¹** as shown in the following graph.



In Europe, ICQRF is the **Italian ex officio Enforcement Authority²** regarding the protection of PGIs and PDOs products and the **Italian Liaison Body³ in 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, in the *Food and Wine* sector.

On the **Web**, worldwide, ICQRF acts to protect the Italian PDO's and PGI's 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 and Amazon websites and, since October 2020, on Rakuten as well, as Right Holder (owner) for protecting the “name” of the Italian Geographical Indications. Thanks to specific agreements for the protection of the agri-food and wine names, ICQRF speaks directly to the e-commerce players in order to stop, in few times, illegal listings concerning unlawful use of the Italian PDO's and PGI's names. ICQRF **sent 4,418 reports abroad and on the web**, including actions on the three main marketplaces in the world: Alibaba, Ebay, Amazon, and Rakuten. In 2020, ICQRF tackled down **1,142** cases of misuses and evocations.

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

¹ Updates at 2nd January 2021 – Source: eAmbrosia – the EU geographical indications register.

² In accordance with the art. 13, par. 3, Reg. EU No. 1151 / 2012.

³ In accordance with the art. 40, Reg. EU No. 2018 / 273.

Total reports of the ICQRF on the web and abroad - 2015 | 2020

Product	Total reports (no.)	Web cooperation	Wine sector	ex-officio
Prosecco	1,085	366	719	
Parmigiano Reggiano	493	337		156
Wine kit	283	33	250	
Toscano (EVOO)	230	195		35
Prosciutto di Parma	187	54		133
Amarone della Valpolicella	178	16	162	
Olio di Puglia	177	177		
Aceto Balsamico di Modena	128	65		63
Olio di Calabria	117	117		
Sicilia (EVOO)	103	103		
Salsiccia di Calabria	73	72		1
Asti	69	1	68	
Pecorino Toscano	65	38		27
Soppressata di Calabria	56	55		1
Pecorino Siciliano	53	53		
Dauno (EVOO)	52	52		
Capocollo di Calabria	51	50		1
Grana Padano	50	19		31
Umbria (EVOO)	47	47		
Gorgonzola	42	38		4
Asiago	41	37		4
Liquirizia di Calabria	41	41		
Pancetta di Calabria	38	38		
Salamini Italiani alla Cacciatora	36	32		4
Molise (EVOO)	35	35		
Terra di Bari (EVOO)	34	34		
Pecorino Sardo	33	30		3
Mozzarella di bufala Campana	28	26		2
Montepulciano d'Abruzzo	23	9	14	
Nocciola di Piemonte	21	21		
Campi Flegrei	21	21		
Barolo	21	3	18	
Pecorino Romano	21	18		3
Nero d'Avola	20		20	
Cantucci Toscani	19	19		
Pecorino Crotonese	18	18		
Prosciutto Toscano	17	13		4
Cipolla Rossa di Tropea Calabria	16	16		
Lenticchia di Altamura	15	15		
Other products	381	272	65	44
Total	4,418	2,586	1,316	516

Total reports on the web and abroad – 2020

Product	Total reports (no.)	Web cooperation	Wine sector	ex-officio
Olio di Puglia	177	177		
Olio di Calabria	117	117		
Prosecco	96	73	23	
Toscana (EVOO)	91	91		
Parmigiano Reggiano	56	56		
Salsiccia di Calabria	46	45		1
Umbria (EVOO)	45	45		
Soppressata di Calabria	43	42		1
Liquirizia di Calabria	41	41		
Capocollo di Calabria	31	30		1
Pecorino Sardo	28	28		
Aceto Balsamico di Modena	25	15		10
Sicilia (EVOO)	25	25		
Mozzarella di bufala Campana	23	23		
Nocciola di Piemonte	21	21		
Pancetta di Calabria	21	21		
Cantucci Toscani	19	19		
Gorgonzola	17	17		
Pecorino Crotonese	15	15		
Cipolla Rossa di Tropea Calabria	14	14		
Pecorino Toscano	14	14		
Prosciutto Toscano	13	11		2
Finocchiona	13	9		4
Peperone di Senise	11	11		
Patata della Sila	11	11		
Salamini Italiani alla Cacciatora	9	8		1
Melanzana Rossa di Rotonda	7	7		
Salame Felino	6	3		3
Grana Padano	6	6		
Prosciutto di San Daniele	5	5		
Pomodoro S.Marzano dell'agro sarnese-nocerino	5	5		
Prosciutto di Norcia	5	5		
Barolo	5	2	3	
Acqui	5	1	4	
Castagna Cuneo	5	5		
Other products	71	61	2	8
Total	1,142	1,079	32	31

Listings taken down on the marketplaces – Per product in 2020

Product	Reports (no.)	ebay	Amazon	Alibaba	Rakuten
Olio di Puglia	177	163	11	3	
Olio di Calabria	117	117			
Toscana (EVOO)	91	88	1	2	
Prosecco	73	25	43	5	
Parmigiano Reggiano	56	47	7	2	
Umbria (EVOO)	45	43	2		
Salsiccia di Calabria	45	45			
Soppressata di Calabria	42	42			
Liquirizia di Calabria	41	41			
Capocollo di Calabria	30	30			
Pecorino Sardo	28	27	1		
Sicilia (EVOO)	25	25			
Mozzarella di bufala Campana	23	23			
Nocciola di Piemonte	21	21			
Pancetta di Calabria	21	21			
Cantucci Toscani	19	14	5		
Gorgonzola	17	14		3	
Aceto Balsamico di Modena	15		3		12
Pecorino Crotonese	15	15			
Pecorino Toscano	14	13		1	
Cipolla Rossa di Tropea Calabria	14	14			
Patata della Sila	11	11			
Prosciutto Toscano	11	11			
Peperone di Senise	11	11			
Finocchiona	9	8	1		
Salamini Italiani alla Cacciatora	8	6	2		
Melanzana Rossa di Rotonda	7	7			
Grana Padano	6	4		2	
Pomodoro S.Marzano dell'agro sarnese-nocerino	5	5			
Prosciutto di Norcia	5	4	1		
Castagna Cuneo	5	5			
Prosciutto di San Daniele	5	5			
Nebbiolo d'Alba	4	4			
Clementine di Calabria	4	4			
Molise (EVOO)	4	4			
Pecorino Romano	3	3			
Lenticchia di Castelluccio di Norcia	3	2		1	
Asiago	3	3			
Salame Felino	3	2	1		
Other products	43	28	10	5	-
Total	1,079	955	88	24	12

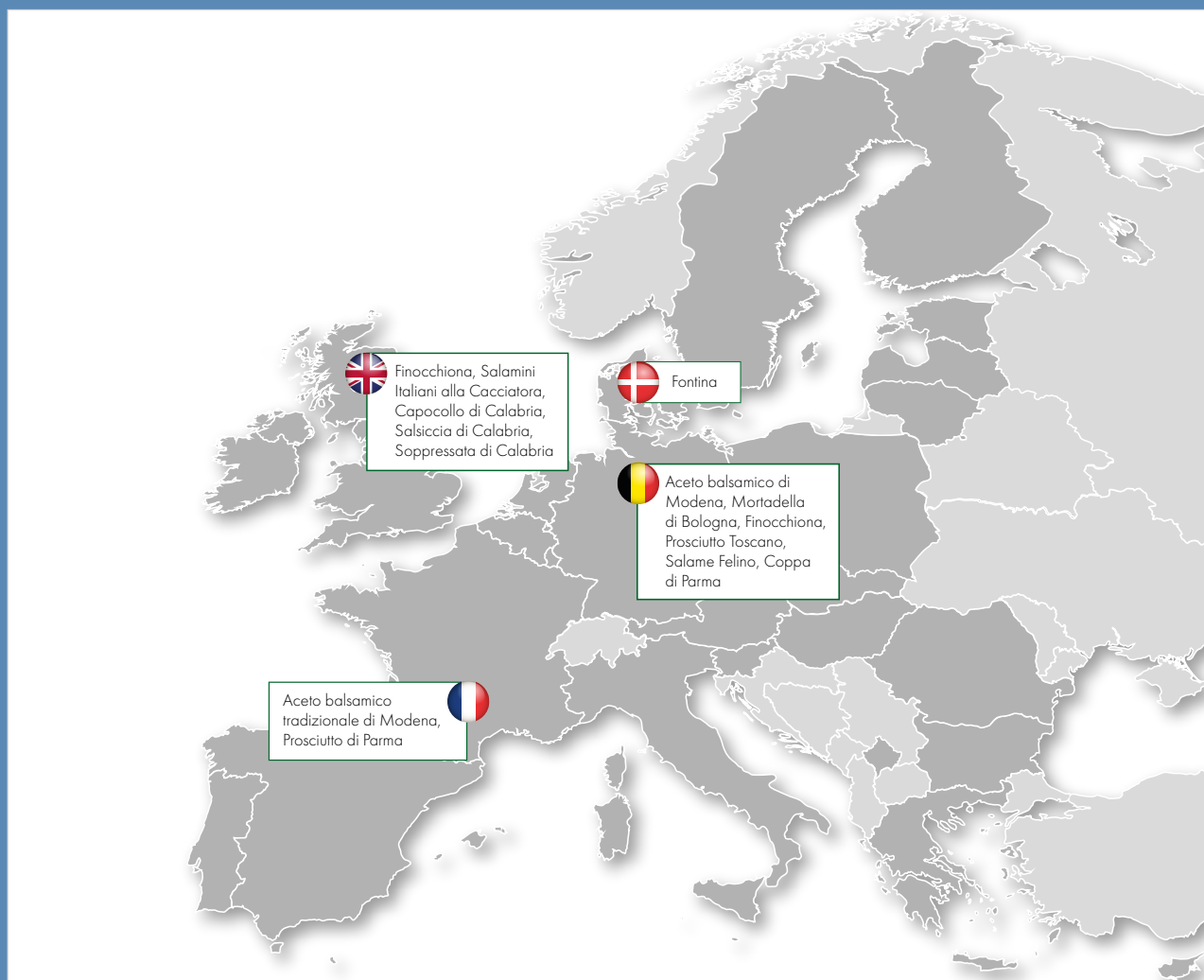
Reports 2020 as wine sector liaison body

Product	Reports (no.)	Involved countries
Prosecco	23	Germany, Austria, United Kingdom, Spain, Romania, Sweden
Acqui	4	United Kingdom, Finland
Barolo	3	United Kingdom
Trento	1	Netherlands
Brunello di Montalcino	1	Canada
Total	32	



Reports in 2020 as "ex officio" Authority

Product	Reports (no.)	Involved countries
Aceto balsamico di Modena	10	Germany
Finocchiona	4	Germany, United Kingdom
Aceto balsamico tradizionale di Modena	4	France
Salame Felino	3	Germany
Prosciutto Toscano	2	Germany
Fontina	1	Denmark
Mortadella di Bologna	1	Germany
Salamini Italiani alla Cacciatora	1	United Kingdom
Coppa di Parma	1	Germany
Prosciutto di Parma	1	France
Capocollo di Calabria	1	United Kingdom
Salsiccia di Calabria	1	United Kingdom
Soppressata di Calabria	1	United Kingdom
Total	31	



Examples of GI protection in the world and on the web

Evocation Dolcetto D'Acqui (in France) and Prosecco (in Spain)



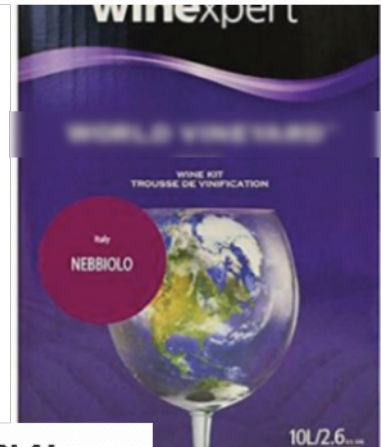
Evocation of Finocchiona PGI, marketed on the web by a German operator



Evocation of PDO wine on marketplaces



Vineyard ITALIANO Nebbiolo World italiano Barolo stile)
KIT - mostra il titolo originale



Abruzzan Rest in 6 Literflaschen Insieme Montepulciano D' Abruzzo

Cheese products misusing Parmigiano Reggiano PDO on marketplace



White vinegar and fruit vinegar misusing Aceto Balsamico di Modena PGI on marketplace



Evocation of many meat products Calabria PDO on marketplace



3. The activity in Italy

3.1 An overview of the control activity

In the year 2020, the ICQRF performed **70,992 controls** (58,824 inspection and 12,168 analytical), while 37,508 operators and 77,080 products were checked.

The irregularities found concerned 15.8% of operators, 11.0% of the products and 7.4% of samples.

ICQRF reported to the Judicial Authority **159 individuals** and imposed **4,119 administrative penalties**.

During the inspection activities, inspectors seized irregular agri-food products for an amount of about **22 million kg** with a commercial value of over 21.3 million euros, as well as 6 million euros of real estate and movable assets, as a total value of seizures of over **27 million euros**.

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	70.992
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	58.824
	analytical controls (no.)	12.168
	Controlled operators / Premises (no.)	37.508
	Irregular operators / Premises (%)	15,8
	Products controlled (no.)	77.080
	Irregular products (%) *	11,0
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	7,4
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	159
	Administrative penalties (no.)	4.119
	Seizures (no.)	345
	Economic value of seizures(€)	27.389.511
	Amount of seized products (kg)	21.884.913
	Warnings (no.)	4.762

* including documentary and labelling irregularities

Kind of seized property	Amount	Value(€)
Seized agri-food products (kg)	21.884.913	21.343.451
Real estate (no.)	28	4.515.300
Mobile assets (no.)	16	1.530.760

3.2 Controls on quality products

3.2.1 GI food

Hereinafter are reported the main results of control activities achieved in 2020 in PDO, PGI and TSG products. With 5,923 controls (5,212 inspections and 711 analytical), the ICQRF has contributed to ensuring the protection of GI agri-food products in Italy and around the world.

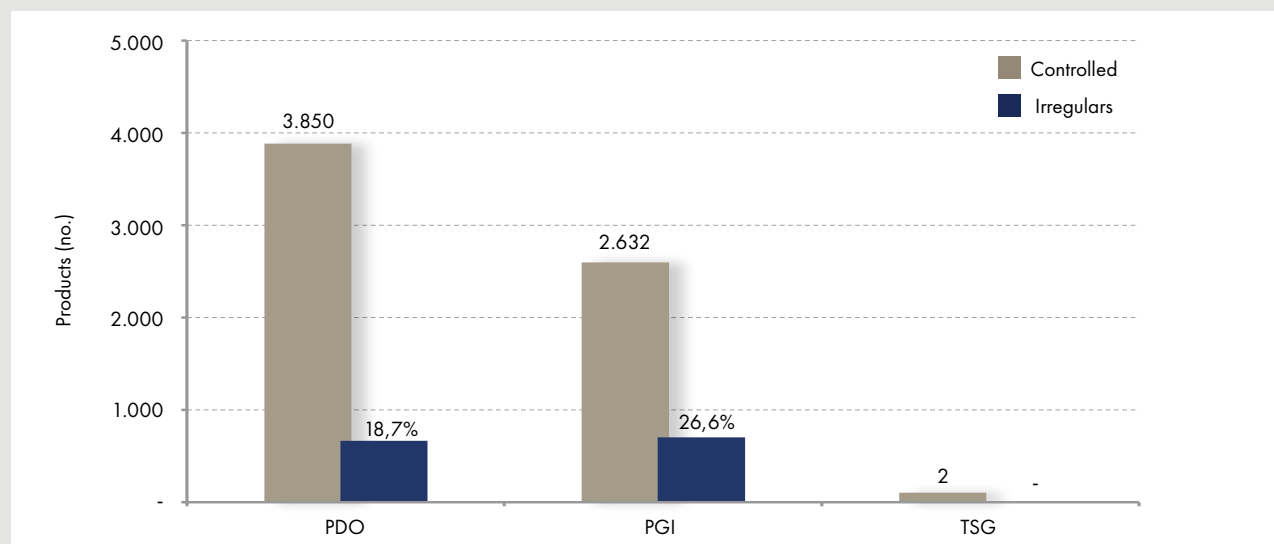
It should be noted that documentary irregularities (irregular record keeping, irregularities in accompanying and commercial documents) and labeling irregularities contribute significantly to the high percentage of irregular products, as is also the case in the GI wines sector.

ICQRF – Controls on GI food

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	5.923
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	5.212
	analytical controls (no.)	711
	Controlled operators / Premises (no.)	3.026
	Irregular operators / Premises (%)	13,0
	Products controlled (no.)	6.484
	Irregular products (%) *	21,9
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	2,5
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	13
	Administrative penalties (no.)	439
	Seizures (no.)	6
	Economic value of seizures(€)	31.712
	Amount of seized products (kg)	871
	Warnings (no.)	757

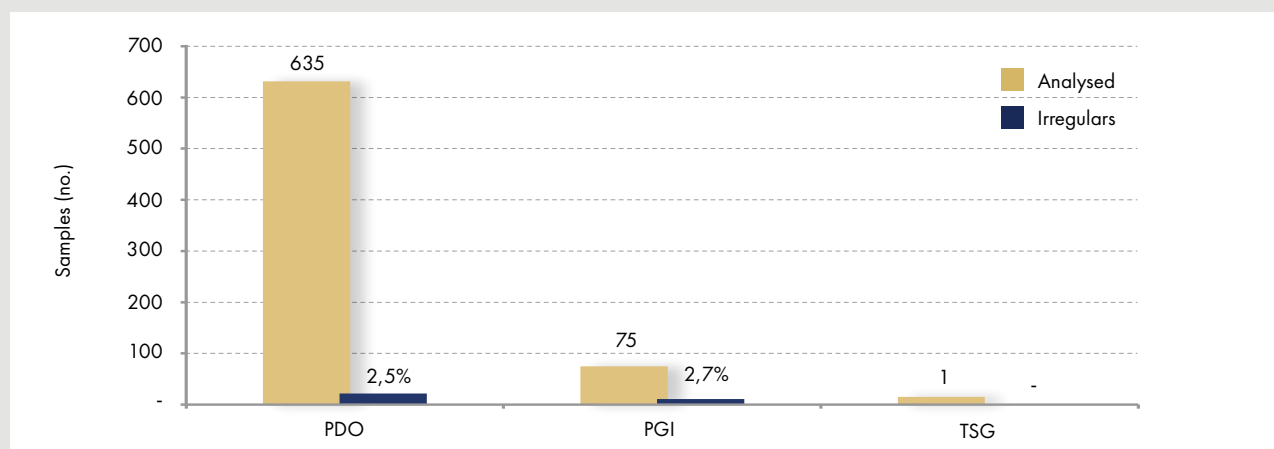
* including documentary and labelling irregularities

ICQRF – Controlled GI food and % of irregulars*



* including documentary and labelling irregularities

ICQRF – Samples of GI food analysed and % of irregulars



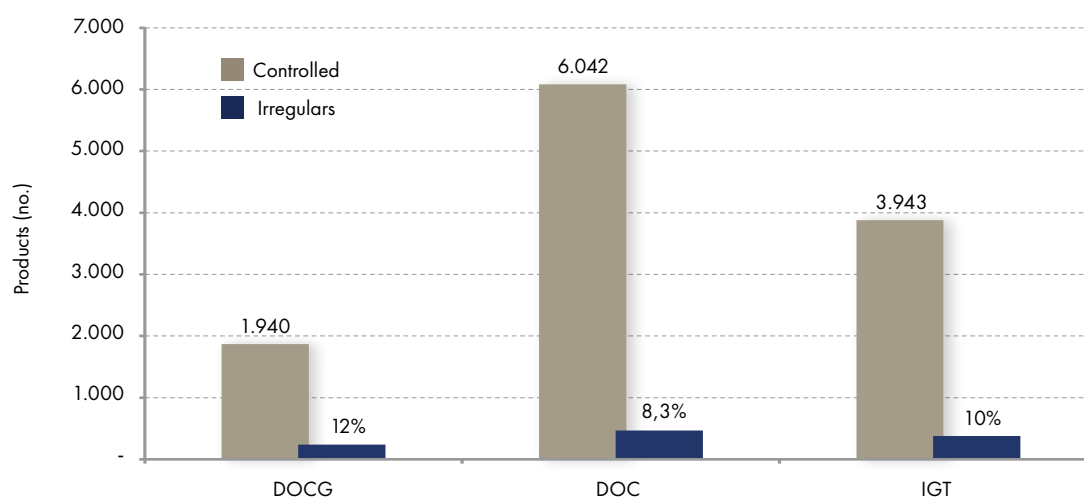
3.2.2 GI wines

With 11,595 controls (8,860 inspections and 2,735 analytical) carried out in 2020 on quality wines, the IC-QRF has contributed to the success of Italian wine, the most exported agri-food product, ensuring its quality in the world.

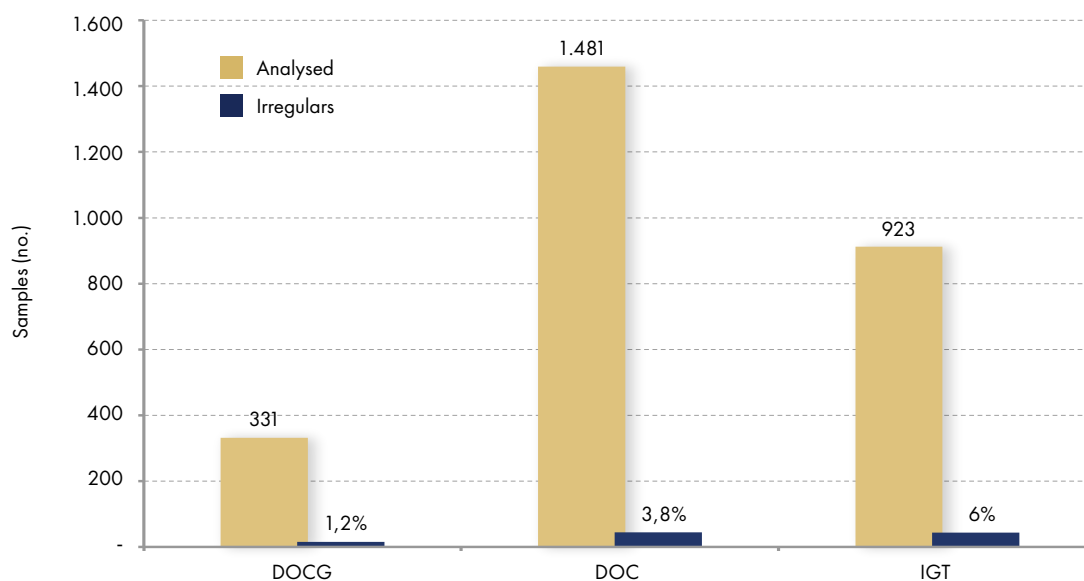
ICQRF – Controls on GI wines

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	11.595
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	8.860
	analytical controls (no.)	2.735
	Controlled operators / Premises (no.)	5.700
	Irregular operators / Premises (%)	15,5
	Products controlled (no.)	11.925
	Irregular products (%)*	10,4
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	4,2
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	22
	Administrative penalties (no.)	2.533
	Seizures (no.)	83
	Economic value of seizures(€)	5.695.837
	Amount of seized products (kg)	2.304.507
	Warnings (no.)	754

* including documentary and labelling irregularities

ICQRF – Controlled GI wine and % irregulars*

* including documentary and labelling irregularities

ICQRF – Samples of GI wine analysed and % irregulars

3.2.3 Organic productions

In consideration of the continuous growth of the sector and the constant increase in sales of organic products, in 2020 the ICQRF carried out 7,420 controls (5,878 inspections and 1,542 analytical, overall **+ 11% compared to 2019**) and 4,475 operators and 6,945 products were controlled.

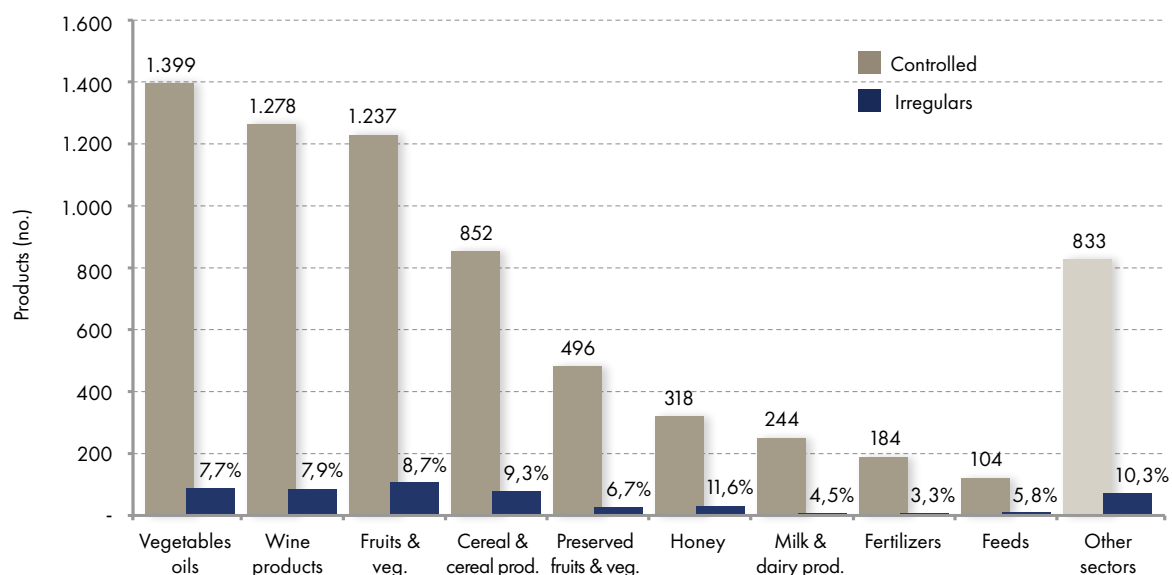
The ICQRF judicial police activity in the organic sector was particularly intense, with **33 reports of crime**.

ICQRF – Controls on organic productions

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	7.420
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	5.878
	analytical controls (no.)	1.542
	Controlled operators / Premises (no.)	4.475
	Irregular operators / Premises (%)	11,4
	Products controlled (no.)	6.945
	Irregular products (%)*	8,3
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	6,5
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	33
	Administrative penalties (no.)	302
	Seizures (no.)	25
	Economic value of seizures(€)	1.455.414
	Amount of seized products (kg)	399.323
	Warnings (no.)	211

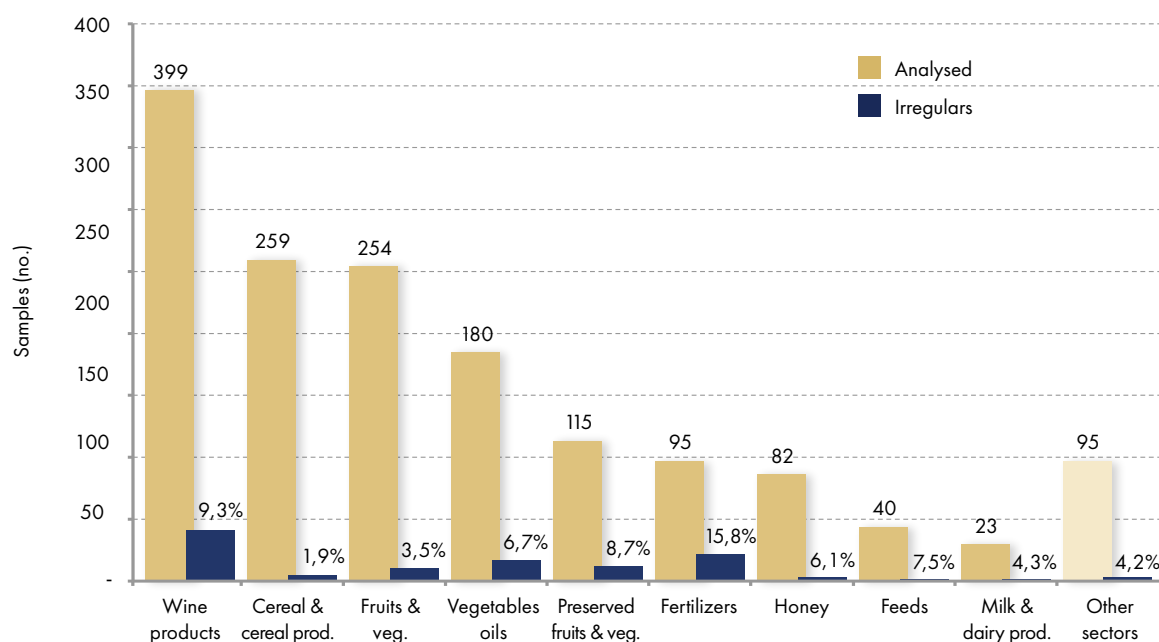
* including documentary and labelling irregularities

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 as Food Fraud Contact Point (FFCP), ICQRF handled **127 reports**, 39 of which from the ICQRF initiative and 88 reported by other Member States.

The **39 reports** filed by Italy, 35 of which in the Administrative Assistance and Cooperation (AAC) and 4 in the Food Fraud (FF) areas, concerned:

- 11 reports relating to the coordinated control plan promoted by the European Commission, to combat illegal practices on the “online” sales and advertising of food products with illegal references to the prevention and treatment of COVID-19;
- 8 reports relating to various products (cheeses, cured meats, oil and gastronomic products) labelled and advertised with names, indications and images that suggested an Italian origin of the product (Italian Sounding);
- 5 requests for assistance in verifying the bottling and labelling of the Venezie PDO wine;
- 4 reports of evocation of products with geographical indication (Fontina, Dolcetto D’Acqui, Prosecco and Italian salami alla cacciatora);
- 3 reports relating to beers, hazelnuts, eggs marketed in Italy with an irregular labelling system;
- 2 reports for illegal references to the organic production method in products marketed on the web or wholesale;
- a report relating to extra virgin olive oil not compliant to the declared category;
- a report for dyes in saffron;
- a report relating to frozen chicken with a water content higher than the limit allowed by the law;
- a report of cooked ham with meat content that does not comply with the declaration and the presence of added water not reported on the label;
- a report of honey, which was found to be irregular in the analyzes due to diastatic activity that does not comply with the limits allowed by the European standard;
- a request for assistance relating to wine transport documents.

The **88 reports**, 62 of which in the Administrative Assistance and Cooperation (AAC) and 26 Food Fraud (FF) areas, reported by other EU Member States mainly concerned requests for assistance relating to cases of suspected irregularities in the labelling systems adopted and non-compliance with the declared category in olive oils.

The ICQRF also handled cases relating to analytical irregularities ascertained by foreign authorities in wine products, honey, vinegars, fruit and spirits.

4. ICQRF against agri-food crime

In 2020, with the obvious limitations due to the pandemic, the ICQRF contributed to fight the agri-food crime, often operating in synergy with other Law Enforcement Agencies. Thanks to these operations, several Organized Crime Groups have been dismantled. These OCGs were used to unfair competition toward the fair food business operators by entering the market with very low prices, thanks to irregular productions.

In this way, consumers protections and fair competition between economic operators was restored.

For the success of these activities, the high technical competence of the staff, the cross-referencing of many databases and the use of sophisticated technical tools were extremely important.

Some of the most significant actions are reported below.

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

In 2020, a criminal file was opened at the Public Prosecutor's Office of Pisa. To secure evidences, **443 hl of organic Chianti DOP wine** and **50 hl of packaged organic Tuscan IGT wine** were seized.

In addition, a crime report was forwarded to the Public Prosecutor's Office of Lucca against a producer who continued to sell **Organic Eggs** despite being excluded from the organic production system. During the investigation, searches and seizures of eggs and documentation were carried out.

"BAD JUICE" Operation (follow up¹)

By order of the Public Prosecutor's Office of Pisa, the ICQRF and the Guardia di Finanza of Pisa have enforced the **preventive seizure decrees on bank accounts, real estate, and mobile assets** of two Trentino companies **for a value of 2.9 million euros**.

The two companies, engaged in the production of semi-finished products for fruit juices and *baby food*, are accused of having issued false invoices aimed at masking poor quality, added with chemical substances, and of Serbian origin products, as organic and of European origin.



¹ The description of the "Bad Juice" operation is available in the ICQRF 2019 Report.

WINE

“LYSIOS” Operation

On behalf of the Public Prosecutor of Palermo, in cooperation with the Guardia di Finanza Provincial Command of Palermo, search and **seizure orders for a clandestine laboratory and an oenological plant**, both based in Partinico (PA) were executed. During the operation, **25 tons of solid sugar, 300 hectolitres of sugar already dissolved in water as well as over 37,000 hectolitres of wines and musts**, sophisticated with sugar and water, bearing counterfeit geographical indications and designations of origin, were seized **for a total value of over 2,650,000 euros**.

Furthermore, searches and seizures were carried out throughout the national territory in order to block the batches of counterfeit and adulterated product distributed by the 5 people responsible for crimes of counterfeiting of geographical indications or denominations of origin of the products, food fraud in the exercise of trade and sale of non-genuine food products as genuine.

Thanks to the **video recordings** at the clandestine laboratory and the parallel activity of documentary analysis, it was possible to ascertain that, between 2018 and 2020, over 90 thousand hectolitres of wine products were sold, by the 4 wineries involved, to wineries and vinegar factories located on the whole national territory, but unrelated to agro-food fraud.

Seizure of a ghost cellar

In-depth investigations, carried out also with specific techniques of the judicial police, led to discovery of a **ghost cellar in Lazio** with a capacity of over 3,000 hl. The premise was used for illicit production of sophisticated wines, made from solutions of water and sugar. The premise was seized, as well as the equipment found there.

In addition, more than **10,000 hl of wine products and oenological products suitable for sophistication**, including enocyanine and different types of aromas (Barolo, Prosecco and raisins), **with a total value of about 2,000,000 euros**, were seized from the associated official cellar, with a capacity of 13,000 hl.

During the operations, the homes, and places available to the **four suspects** were searched.

CEREALS, FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

In 2020, ICQRF, in collaboration with the Sicilian Region Forestry Corps - Regional Operational Nucleus for Agri-food Safety (NORAS), carried out a particularly intense control activity on the correct traceability and prevention of speculation on food and fruit prices. Controls were carried out along the entire supply chain, from production to retail, as well as at ports, in particular with regard to imported cereals.

This activity brought excellent results, including the seizure of 20,500 kg of Meyer lemons of Turkish origin, which were not suitable for sale, and the seized product was sent for destruction.

Furthermore, during checks carried out at the fruit and vegetable market in Messina, 5,500 kg of ware potatoes were seized, with a commercial value of approximately 6,000 euros. The seizure was necessary because these potatoes, packaged in 4 kg nets, lacked labelling and traceability systems, and were not accompanied by any documentation providing their origin and provenance.

In addition, ICQRF together with the Carabinieri of the Agri-food Protection Department (RAC) of Messina, **seized 97.7 tons of organic almonds**, marketed by a company in Ragusa that deals with dried fruit.

The value of the goods, without documents proving their traceability, amounts to over **750 thousand euros**.

Several checks were aimed at verifying the traceability and labelling of certified quality fruit and vegetables. In this context, during an inspection carried out at the Maddaloni Municipal Fruit and Vegetable Market, inspectors ICQRF and NIPAAF Carabinieri found 80 plastic packaging for fruit and vegetables containing apples evoking the PGI product. On each fruit, in fact, a sticker was applied with the words “Melannurca Campana IGP Rossa del Sud”, while 40 packages of the same features and consistency had already been sold. The inspectors seized about 230 kg of apples bearing the protected name, being the packaging in

which the fruit was stored not compliant with the production specifications of the “Melannurca Campana” PGI. The retailer, a man originally from Maddaloni, was reported to the Judicial Authority of Santa Maria Capua Vetere for having sold, in the exercise of a commercial activity, a counterfeit PGI product, without any of the mandatory information required by law on the labels of the related packaging.

FERTILIZERS

In 2020, as regards the fertilizer sector, the ICQRF in judicial police operations carried out also in collaboration with other Bodies, such as the Forestry Carabinieri and Arpat, detected several problems connected to the production and use of soil improvers from solid urban waste (SUW).

In particular, on behalf of the Public Prosecutor of Florence, a monitoring activity was carried out at the waste composting plants of the Metropolitan City of Florence, on self-controlled sampling operations with related assessment of the analytical procedures followed, concerning samples of soil improver produced by SWU. Furthermore, by delegation of the Public Prosecutor of Ferrara, a joint control operation was carried out with the Unit Command for Forestry, Environmental and Agri-food Protection (CUTFAA) of Arezzo in the plant of a fertilizer manufacturer to verify the content of plastics in “soil improvers” and in “Cultivation substrates”, probably originating from the accidental presence in the raw materials (waste).



ANTI-COUNTERFEITING ACTIVITIES

In San Giuseppe Vesuviano (Naples), officers from the Guardia di Finanza of Naples, together with inspectors from the ICQRF, seized a clandestine factory used for packaging drinks. The specialists of the Group for the Protection of the Goods and Services Market discovered a factory perfectly set up for the labelling of bottles of fake champagne under the brand name "MOET & CHANDON" in the basement of a residential building.

Almost 1400 litres of counterfeit champagne, oil and ethyl alcohol were found, and therefore without traceability.

774 bottles of champagne, 804 of "SAPIO" oil and ethyl alcohol from the "LA SORGENTE" and "FIUME" distilleries were seized, as well as 129,400 packaging accessories, including corks, labels, cardboard containers, aluminium caps, with logos and false "MOET & CHANDON", "OLIO SAPIO", "OLIO SAN COLOMBANO" and "MADE IN ITALY" trademarks.

They also seized 1,100 state-marks for alcoholic beverages with the counterfeit logo of the Italian Republic and reported the owners, a 55-year-old woman and a 48-year-old man from Sarno (Salerno), for counterfeiting and receiving stolen goods.

If placed on the market, the products would have allowed a profit of over 120 thousand euros.

The operation is part of the collaboration recently formalized with a memorandum of understanding between the General Command of the Guardia di Finanza and the ICQRF Department, aimed at strengthening the operational relations already in place between the two Institutions to fight fraud, also of an economic-financial nature, in the specific sector.

SPECIAL INSPECTIONS ACTIVITIES

Several specific actions to protect national productions were carried out during 2020.

- **EU Coordinated Control Plan - COVID-19**

The ICQRF participated in the EU coordinated control plan promoted by the European Commission, to counter illegal practices on the online sales and advertising of food products with references to the prevention and treatment of COVID-19. A total of **200 irregular cases** were reported to the EU Commission services, mainly involving food supplements and plant extracts.

- **Unfair practice controls**

In the first half of the year, there were numerous reports of changes in contractual conditions by milk collection centres and dairies, both as regards prices and agreed quantities, as a consequence of the decrease in consumption due to the prolonged closure of the HO-RE.CA sector. In particular, the dairies and collection centres asked farmers to reduce the quantities of cow and buffalo milk produced and to bear the costs of storage and freezing, not foreseen in the original supply contracts.

From the checks performed, including inspections at production plants and breeders, evidence emerged that led to the **reporting of two operators to the Competition and Market Authority (AGCOM)** for unfair commercial practices.

In addition, with regard to the sheep and goat dairy sector, following the serious crisis that occurred in 2019 and the commitments made in this regard by the Government to relaunch the sector, the ICQRF has maintained a high level of attention in this sector. **In Sardinia, some possible cases of unfair commercial practices have been reported to AGCOM**, for the ascertainment of violations and the possible adoption of the related sanctions. In particular, the irregularities reported refer to cases of **absence of written contracts**, failure to define the price and indication of the duration of the contract.

- **Spirit and alcohol control program**

In consideration of the specific control activities carried out in recent years in the spirit drinks and alcohol sector, which have brought to light important fraudulent phenomena, particularly dangerous due to their commercial impact and, at times, to the concrete danger to the detriment of health public, a

specific control program has been prepared.

During the program, about 300 samples of spirits and alcohol were taken, with an irregularity rate of around 12%. Irregularities related to composition not complying with legal or declared value or due to deficiencies in traceability and labelling systems.

The activity also allowed the identification of useful investigative elements which are still being examined by the inspectors.

COVID-19: irregular products by country of origin

Product Country	Reports (no.)
Food supplements	124
Italy	43
USA	6
Austria	5
United Kingdom	5
France	3
Germany	2
Others / uncertain	60
Plant extracts and parts	27
China	6
Italy	6
China	2
Balkans	1
France	1
Others / uncertain	11
Essential oils	9
Italy	6
France	1
Others / uncertain	2
Various foods	8
Italy	4
China	2
Others / uncertain	2
Tea, spices, infusions	6
China	4
Hungary	1
France	1
Hydroalcoholic solution	1
Italy	1
Internet advertising web-pages	25
Total	200

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

The following table shows the activity carried out in **2020** 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* (%)	Irregular analytical outcomes
Wine products	26.332	22.679	3.653	12.062	18,7	30.752	10,4	4,1
Vegetables oils	10.646	9.318	1.328	6.243	12,8	12.307	11,2	14,6
Milk & dairy prod	6.856	5.415	1.441	3.867	13,4	6.607	11,6	5,0
Fruits & veg	3.191	2.807	384	1.875	18,2	3.490	14,6	2,3
Meats	3.016	2.881	135	1.699	16,8	3.409	15,7	26,7
Cereal & cereal pr.	3.445	2.648	797	2186	12,0	3.353	9,2	1,5
Eggs	467	467	-	398	14,6	517	12,4	-
Preserv. fru. & veg.	3.166	2412	754	1776	15,7	3.163	12,1	3,6
Honey	1.556	1200	356	867	14,5	1.484	10,8	9,3
Sugars	382	366	16	337	3,0	427	2,8	-
Spirits drinks	1.794	1.383	411	641	21,1	1.220	10,9	12,2
Feeds	2.450	1.417	1.033	1.180	13,9	1.996	3,9	15,8
Fertilizers	2.125	1.222	903	957	11,9	1.660	4,8	12,4
Seeds	991	769	222	509	7,5	1.538	3,6	1,8
Plant protect. prod.	476	307	169	258	5,0	376	5,9	5,3
Other sectors (*)	4.099	3.533	566	2.653	19,9	4.781	16,8	5,8
Total	70.992	58.824	12.168	37.508	15,8	77.080	11,0	7,4

* 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 **2020** per each agri-food sector.

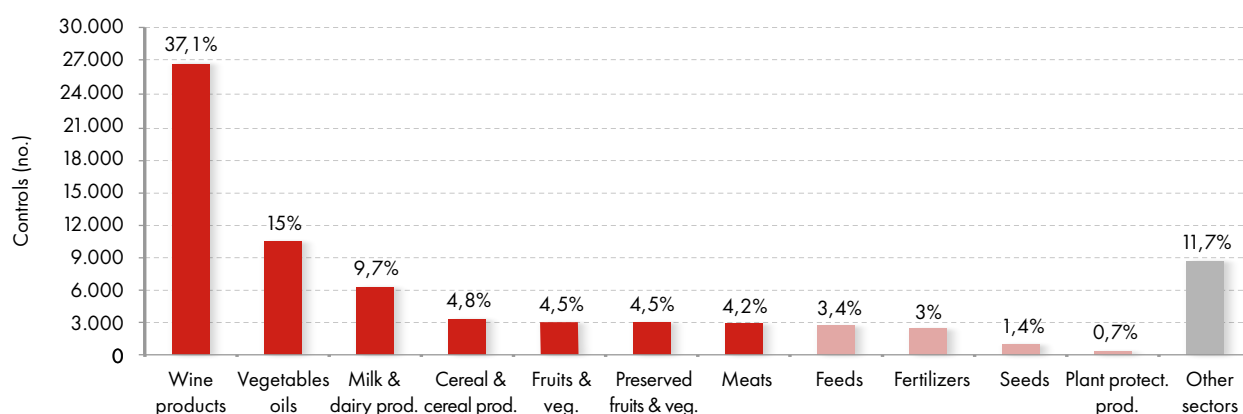
ICQRF – Controls' results per each agri-food sector

Sector	Crime reports (no.)	Administrative penalties (no.)	Seizures (no.)	Value of seizures (€)	Seized amounts (kg)	Warnings
Wine products	30	2.283	178	21.198.874	19.597.531	1.946
Vegetables oils	18	481	18	95.672	12.644	844
Milk & dairy prod	33	200	7	10.676	4.414	444
Fruits & veg	35	254	11	793.319	154.870	155
Meats	3	198	-	-	-	217
Cereal & cereal pr.	2	132	13	399.146	1.175.723	155
Eggs	2	46	8	2.350	362	20
Preserv. fru. & veg.	3	69	27	3.009.123	5.912	235
Honey	4	40	1	335	75	95
Sugars	-	6	3	88.280	169.350	4
Spirits drinks	2	41	11	71.773	3.373	88
Feeds	-	126	6	23.002	74.480	36
Fertilizers	6	96	29	94.116	186.038	32
Seeds	18	35	11	348.548	191.760	10
Plant protect. prod.	-	6	5	1.960	1.408	7
Other sectors (*)	3	106	17	1.252.337	306.973	474
Total	159	4.119	345	27.389.511	21.884.913	4.762

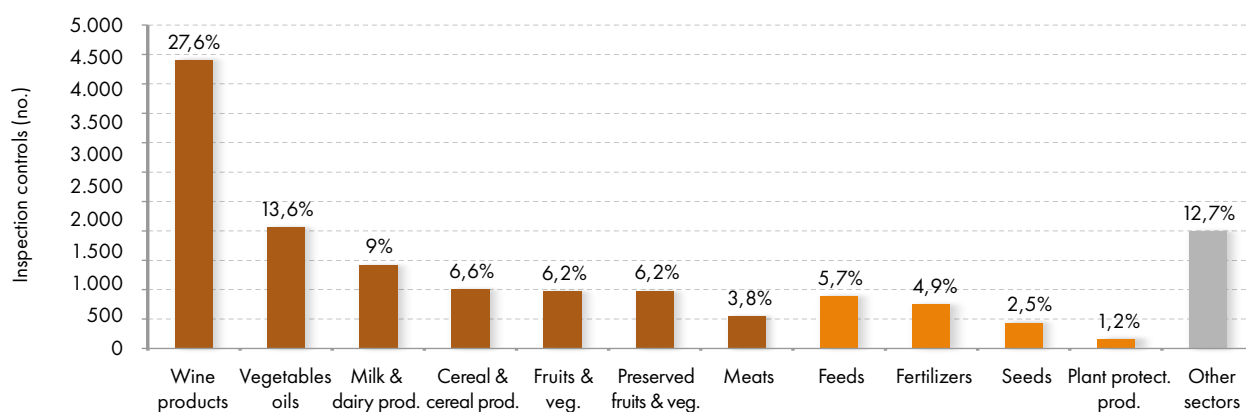
(*) Confectionery products, fish products, beers, vinegars, spices, nervine beverages, additives, mineral water and soft drink.

ICQRF - Control activity per each agri-food sector

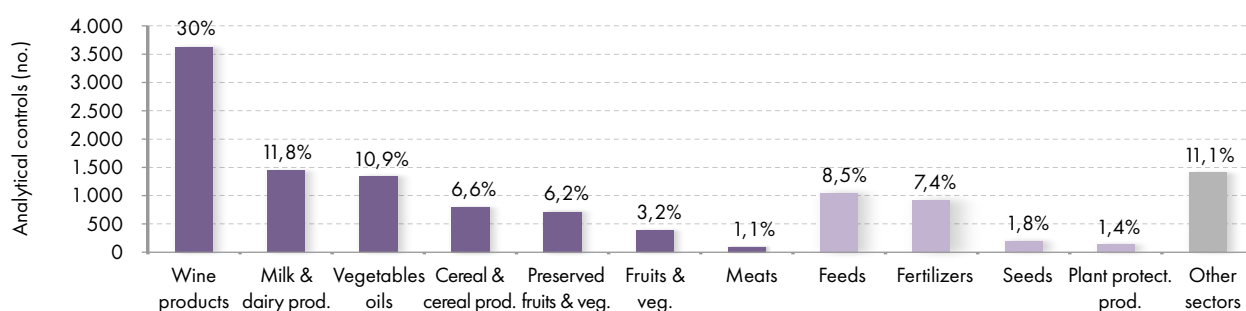
CONTROLS



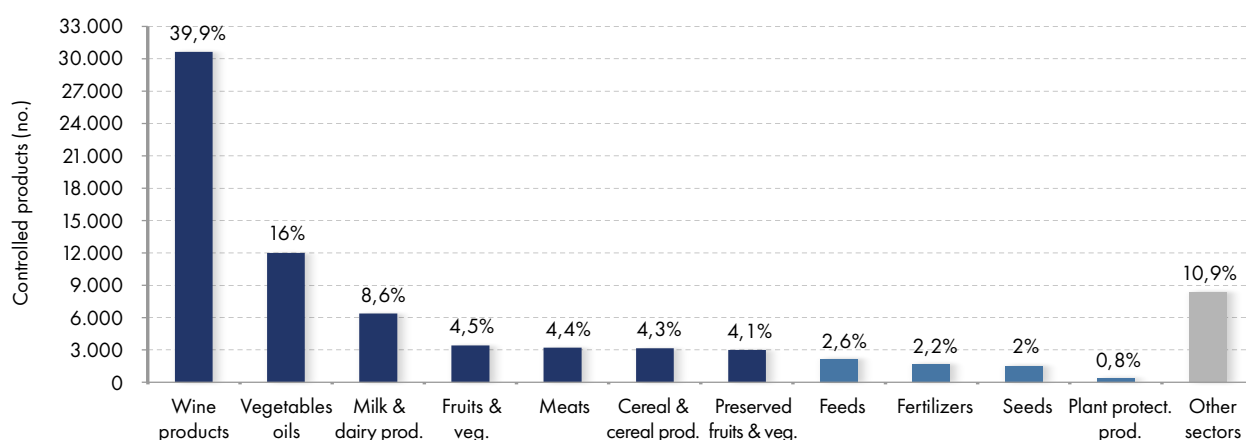
INSPECTION CONTROLS



ANALYTICAL CONTROLS



CONTROLLED PRODUCTS



5.1 Wine products

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	26.332
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	22.679
	analytical controls (no.)	3.653
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	12.062
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	18,7
	Controlled products (no.)	30.752
	Irregular products (%)	10,4
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	4,1
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	30
	Administrative penalties (no.)	2.283
	Seizures (no.)	178
	Economic value of seizures (€)	21.198.874
	Amount of seized products (kg)	19.597.531
	Warnings (no.)	1.946

Main infringements

- 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
- Wine products declared organic with the presence of residues of plant protection products
- Missed or irregular holding of the winery registers and irregularities in the accompanying documents
- Violations of the provisions concerning the description, presentation and / or in the wine closure system, of generic and GI wines
- Illegal keeping of grape marc and / or aqueous products extracted from grape marc
- Unlawful oenological practices

5.2 Vegetables oils

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	10.646
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	9.318
	analytical controls (no.)	1.328
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	6.243
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	12,8
	Controlled products (no.)	12.307
	Irregular products (%)	11,2
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	14,6
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	18
	Administrative penalties (no.)	481
	Seizures (no.)	18
	Economic value of seizures (€)	95.672
	Amount of seized products (kg)	12.644
	Warnings (no.)	844

Main infringements

- Extra virgin olive oils resulted being to a lower category at the chemical and / or organoleptic analysis
- 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 indications, irregular use of voluntary indications, misleading use of designation of origin
- Failure or irregular keeping of the electronic records of olive oils
- Marketing of blends of seed oils different than those declared
- Evocation or usurpation of PDO and PGI products

5.3 Milk and dairy products

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	6.856
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	5.415
	analytical controls (no.)	1.441
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	3.867
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	13,4
	Controlled products (no.)	6.607
	Irregular products (%)	11,6
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	5,0
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	33
	Administrative penalties (no.)	200
	Seizures (no.)	7
	Economic value of seizures (€)	10.676
	Amount of seized products (kg)	4.414
	Warnings (no.)	444

Main infringements

- Cheese, in some cases also PDO, with preservatives prohibited or undeclared
- Buffalo, sheep and goat cheeses produced with the illicit addition of cow milk
- Mozzarella o fior di latte cheese with the presence of fat substances of not milk origin
- Infringements of the labelling law provisions by the omission of mandatory indications, including indication of the geographical origin of milk, irregular use of voluntary indications, misleading use of the designation of origin
- Failure to adopt suitable traceability systems for dairy products
- PDO cheeses non-compliant to the product specifications
- Milk and butter with non-compliant fat content

5.4 Fruits and vegetables

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	3.191
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	2.807
	analytical controls (no.)	384
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	1.875
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	18,2
	Controlled products (no.)	3.490
	Irregular products (%)	14,6
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	2,3
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	35
	Administrative penalties (no.)	254
	Seizures (no.)	11
	Economic value of seizures (€)	793.319
	Amount of seized products (kg)	154.870
	Warnings (no.)	155

Main infringements

- Irregular labelling of fruit and vegetables, for use of misleading indications of origin, provenance, quality and other mandatory information
- Organic almonds with residual of unauthorized chemical
- Evocation or usurpation of PDO and PGI products
- Fruit and vegetables without traceability records
- False indications of origin

5.5 Meats

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	3.016
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	2.881
	analytical controls (no.)	135
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	1.699
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	16,8
	Controlled products (no.)	3.409
	Irregular products (%)	15,7
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	26,7
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	3
	Administrative penalties (no.)	198
	Seizures (no.)	-
	Economic value of seizures (€)	-
	Amount of seized products (kg)	-
	Warnings (no.)	217

Main infringements

- Fresh and processed meat not complying with the product specification of PDO
- Pork and beef meat products with nutritional composition different than declared
- Frozen chicken meat with a water content above the permitted limit
- Meats and meat products irregularly labelled by using misleading terms
- Irregularities in the meat traceability system

5.6 Cereal and cereal products

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	3.445
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	2.648
	analytical controls (no.)	797
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	2.186
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	12,0
	Controlled products (no.)	3.353
	Irregular products (%)	9,2
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	1,5
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	2
	Administrative penalties (no.)	132
	Seizures (no.)	13
	Economic value of seizures (€)	399.146
	Amount of seized products (kg)	1.175.723
	Warnings (no.)	155

Main infringements

- Marketing of flour, pasta and bread with product characteristics that do not meet regulatory requirements
- Rice with flaws exceeding the legal tolerances
- Missing or irregular indication of the geographical origin in rice and pasta
- Bread partially cooked and frozen, sold with no mention on the label
- Usurpation and evocation of PDO products
- Organic cereals and flours with not allowed chemicals residues
- Irregular labelling of rice and pasta, especially in relation to mandatory indications, characteristics of the food, list of ingredients and information on FBO
- Failure to adopt adequate traceability systems for cereals, flours and pastas

5.7 Eggs

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	467
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	467
	analytical controls (no.)	-
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	398
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	14,6
	Controlled products (no.)	517
	Irregular products (%)	12,4
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	-
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	2
	Administrative penalties (no.)	46
	Seizures (no.)	8
	Economic value of seizures (€)	2.350
	Amount of seized products (kg)	362
	Warnings (no.)	20

Main infringements

- Labelling and packaging with non-compliant particulars, even related to voluntary information
- Marketing of batches of eggs as organic but originating from conventional production systems
- Failure to respect time limits for grading, stamping and packing eggs
- Irregularities in accounting records

5.8 Preserved fruits and vegetables

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	3.166
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	2.412
	analytical controls (no.)	754
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	1.776
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	15,7
	Controlled products (no.)	3.163
	Irregular products (%)	12,1
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	3,6
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	3
	Administrative penalties (no.)	69
	Seizures (no.)	27
	Economic value of seizures (€)	3.009.123
	Amount of seized products (kg)	5.912
	Warnings (no.)	235

Main infringements

- Jams with sugar content non-compliant to the legal or declared values
- Organic fruit purée whit residual of unauthorized chemicals
- Olives in brine with not declared additives
- Infringement on the labelling of preserved vegetables
- Usurpation and evocation of PDO products
- Jams with preservatives not declared on the label

5.9 Honey

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	1.556
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	1.200
	analytical controls (no.)	356
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	867
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	14,5
	Controlled products (no.)	1.484
	Irregular products (%)	10,8
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	9,3
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	4
	Administrative penalties (no.)	40
	Seizures (no.)	1
	Economic value of seizures (€)	335
	Amount of seized products (kg)	75
	Warnings (no.)	95

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 indications 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.)	382
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	366
	analytical controls (no.)	16
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	337
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	3,0
	Controlled products (no.)	427
	Irregular products (%)	2,8
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	-
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	-
	Administrative penalties (no.)	6
	Seizures (no.)	3
	Economic value of seizures (€)	88.280
	Amount of seized products (kg)	169.350
	Warnings (no.)	4

Main infringements

- Failure to adopt an adequate traceability system
- Illegal detention in wineries and in cellars of sugary substances suitable for sophistication of musts and wines

5.11 Spirits drinks

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	1.794
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	1.383
	analytical controls (no.)	411
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	641
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	21,1
	Controlled products (no.)	1.220
	Irregular products (%)	10,9
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	12,2
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	2
	Administrative penalties (no.)	41
	Seizures (no.)	11
	Economic value of seizures (€)	71.773
	Amount of seized products (kg)	3.373
	Warnings (no.)	88

Main infringements

- Irregular spirits due to the presence non admitted dyes
- Spirits drinks with composition non-compliant to legal or declared values
- Irregularities on labelling
- Failure to adopt an adequate system of spirits drinks traceability

5.12 Feeds

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	2.450
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	1.417
	analytical controls (no.)	1.033
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	1.180
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	13,9
	Controlled products (no.)	1.996
	Irregular products (%)	3,9
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	15,8
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	-
	Administrative penalties (no.)	126
	Seizures (no.)	6
	Economic value of seizures (€)	23.002
	Amount of seized products (kg)	74.480
	Warnings (no.)	36

Main infringements

- Feeds for farm animals and pet, with composition non-compliant to legal limit or to that declared in label
- Organic feeds with the presence of residues of plant protection products
- Feeds infringing the labelling and packaging provisions
- Lack or irregular keeping of traceability system

5.13 Fertilizers

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	2.125
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	1.222
	analytical controls (no.)	903
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	957
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	11,9
	Controlled products (no.)	1.660
	Irregular products (%)	4,8
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	12,4
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	6
	Administrative penalties (no.)	96
	Seizures (no.)	29
	Economic value of seizures (€)	94.116
	Amount of seized products (kg)	186.038
	Warnings (no.)	32

Main infringements

- Irregular fertilizers for content of nutritive elements non-compliant with legal limit or to that declared in label
- Presence of ingredients undeclared or not authorized
- Irregular labelling of fertilizers for lack or non-compliant with mandatory indications

5.14 Seeds

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	991
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	769
	analytical controls (no.)	222
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	509
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	7,5
	Controlled products (no.)	1.538
	Irregular products (%)	3,6
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	1,8
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	18
	Administrative penalties (no.)	35
	Seizures (no.)	11
	Economic value of seizures (€)	348.548
	Amount of seized products (kg)	191.760
	Warnings (no.)	10

Main infringements

- 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
- Lack or irregular keeping of loading and unloading records by seed producers
- Irregularities in the labeling system
- Seeds marketed non-compliant with the declared one
- Sale of simple feeds passed off as seeds
- Violation of protective measures against the introduction and spread of pests
- Marketing of corn and soy seeds containing GMOs
- Marketing of patented vegetable seed varieties with false variety indication

5.15 Plant protection products

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	476
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	307
	analytical controls (no.)	169
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	258
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	5,0
	Controlled products (no.)	376
	Irregular products (%)	5,9
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	5,3
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	-
	Administrative penalties (no.)	6
	Seizures (no.)	5
	Economic value of seizures (€)	1.960
	Amount of seized products (kg)	1.408
	Warnings (no.)	7

Main infringements

- Presence of active substance different than those declared on the label
- Marketing of plant protection products not authorized
- Violation of the terms and conditions of sale, distribution, disposal, storage of plant protection product's stocks not authorized

5.16 Other sectors

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

INSPECTION ACTIVITY	CONTROLS (NO.)	4.099
	of which, inspection controls (no.)	3.533
	analytical controls (no.)	566
	Controlled operators /Premises (no.)	2.653
	Irregular operators /Premises (%)	19,9
	Controlled products (no.)	4.781
	Irregular products (%)	16,8
	Irregular analytical outcomes (%)	5,8
RESULTS	Crime reports (no.)	3
	Administrative penalties (no.)	106
	Seizures (no.)	17
	Economic value of seizures (€)	1.252.337
	Amount of seized products (kg)	306.973
	Warnings (no.)	474

Main infringements

- Usurpation and evocation of GI baked confectionery products, chocolate and fish products
- Irregular marketing of beer due to alcoholic strength by volume or acidity non-compliant to the legal limits
- Non-compliant indications on the label or packaging
- Presence of dyes in saffron
- Non-compliance with traceability system of baked confectionery products and beer

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 Vino - RTV)** is fully operational; it means that 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 31 December 2020, the operators registered on the RTV are more than 17,000, of which about 10% produce 1,000 hectolitres or more per year. There are approximately 650,000 registered vessels and more than 30 million oenological operations recorded annually.

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

From 15 September 2019, in addition to the data and with the same frequency, 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 Olive Oil Register (Registro Telematico Olio - RTO)** constitutes a system, unique in the world, of timely traceability of the olive oil supply chain at a national level, allowing official control bodies to monitor on-line the individual movements of olives, olive oil, pomace oil and pomace from each plant / warehouse as well as to know the operators, national and foreign, who carry out the movements.

Olive traders, mills, packaging companies, bulk oil traders, refineries, and pomace traders are all required to keep the electronic register for each plant / warehouse.

Operators who only hold oil for self-consumption, non-food uses, and use in certain food products, as well as operators who only hold pre-packaged and branded oils, are excluded from the RTO requirement.

As of 31 December 2020, there are approximately 21,000 active electronic registers.

Since September 2018, the ICQRF has released, in aggregate form and with a periodic frequency varying from weekly to monthly according to the 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.

Reports with graphs relating to the data presented by the RTO have been published alongside the data since 15 September 2019, and the reports have also been published in English since 15 December.

6.3 RUCI - Single Registry of Controls on Agricultural Enterprises

The **Single Registry of Inspection Controls on Agricultural Enterprises - (Registro Unico dei Controlli Imprese agricole - RUCI)** is a tool that the Italian Parliament requested in 2014 in order to reduce the duplication of inspection controls on agricultural enterprises, carried out by the different control authorities.

The Registry, implemented through a Decree of the Ministers of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies and of the Internal Affairs on 22nd of July 2015, now contains data from over 100 control bodies, including the ICQRF, Certification Bodies and Carabinieri.

The RUCI also automatically includes the data from the "Supervisory Database," a common knowledge database between the ICQRF and other competent authorities (regions and autonomous provinces) that

collects data on: supervisory operations by competent authorities (ICQRF – Regions); and the control activity carried out by Control Bodies on operators, and, in particular, the non-compliances and the list of operators included in the certification system.

The RUCI contains the identification and relevant data of inspection checks performed on agricultural enterprises, such as the tax code, the data of the Control Authority and the competent body for controls, the location of the control and the date of inspection, the type of control, the sector involved, the outcome of the inspection.

In 2020, the RUCI registered the results of approximately 322,000 checks, of which some aggregate information relating to the control bodies and the types of controls performed are given below.

Control authority	Documental controls (no.)	On-the-spot and documental controls (no.)	On-the-spot controls (no.)	Total controls (no.)
CFS General Inspectorate – SIA Office	-	22	-	22
Comando Carabinieri Politiche Agricole – Rome	70	528	2	600
ICQRF	37.204	-	17.405	54.609
Control bodies	-	-	266.755	266.755
Total	37.274	550	284.162	321.986

7. Recognition, authorisation and supervision of Control Bodies of quality products

ICQRF has the task of authorizing private or public control bodies (CB), which certify products to PDO, PGI, TSG (including wines), organic products and spirit drinks and to approve control plans and tariff, relating to the costs borne by the operators, foreseen for each production with registered PDO, PGI and TSG.

The authorized control bodies involved in regulated productions are totally 65 (33 private and 32 public) of which:

- 48 (22 private and 26 public) for PDO / PGI / STG food products;
- 26 (7 private and 19 public) for PDO and PGI wines;
- 18 (exclusively private) for organic products;
- 1 (public) for PGI Spirit drinks.

Intensive coordination work is undertaken to standardize the level of controls on operators and the actions of CBs: in 2020, 33 notes of clarification or answers to questions were prepared, the majority of which were related to the implementation of the control plans for PDO / PGI products and wines.

As part of the activity of harmonizing the control plans, two guidelines were definitively approved for the preparation of the standard control plans related to the oil sector and the GI swine sector (breeding-slaughterhouses-sectioning plants) and a guideline for the preparation of control plans for the dairy sector was drawn up.

In 2020, 153 authorization decrees were issued, including 147 in the field of PDO, PGI, TSG productions, both for new and existing designations, 4 in the wine sector, and 2 in organic farming.

During the year, 97 control and tariff plans for products were also approved, which, in addition to having an important economic impact in the national agri-food system, represent the excellence of made in Italy recognized also abroad.

All the authorisation decrees and the control and tariff plans have been published on the Ministry's website, for a total of 250 documents.

Once recognized and authorized, the CBs are supervised by ICQRF to verify the maintenance of the requisites required for carrying out control and certifications. ICQRF performs Office audits at the CBs and examines samples of company files by performing review audits and witness audits at a representative sample of system operators.

Supervisory activities in 2020 involved a total of 50 Control Bodies / regulated areas, of which: 13 operating in the field of PDO, PGI and TSG agro-food products, 19 in the field of PDO and PGI wines, 16 in organic farming and 2 in meat labelling.

An Office audit was carried out at each of these CBs to assess the maintenance of the organizational, managerial, and administrative requirements necessary to operate in the field of the certification and control of quality productions. The checks at the operators or review audits, which consist of a critical examination of the activity carried out by the CBs, and the side-by-side checks or witness audits, were **491** in total.

ICQRF – Supervision activity on CBs operating in the quality | regulated areas

Regulated productions	Office audits (no.)	Review Witness audits (no.)
PDO, PGI and TSG (agro-food)	13	76
PDO, PGI (wines and varietals wines)	19	104
Organic sector	16	302
Meat labelling	2	9
Total	50	491

8. ICQRF laboratories: quality protection and research

With **6 analytical laboratories** 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 **286 tests¹**, 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 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 evaluate their analytical performance, also for the purpose of maintenance of. Accreditation.

The harmonization of the ICQRF Quality System, a priority objective for the uniform application of the specific sector standard and to guarantee the quality of the analytical data produced by the individual laboratories, is coordinated by the PREF IV Office and by a working group that involves all the Quality Assurance 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 developing new methods of analysis on various agri-food matrices in order to discover possible use of fraudulent activities in production practices or to identify new 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.

Thanks to the funds from the government program "Industry 4.0", in 2020 the ICQRF evolved the laboratories and began to enhance the new equipment acquired with the development of relevant analytical methods. An example is the determination with ORBITRAP™ (ion trap mass analysers) of residues of active molecules, such as glyphosate, glufosinate, AMPA, MPP, phosphorous acid and fosetyl, on different matrices.

Furthermore, the following scientific collaborations were carried out:

- ICQRF Laboratory of Perugia and CNR ISPAAM of Naples aimed at the recognition and dosage of milk and / or buffalo curds in buffalo mozzarella from Campania PDO from areas outside the PDO production area;
- 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 Modena and the Joint Research Center - European Union Reference Laboratory (JRC EURL) for an interlaboratory study on the analysis of carotenoids in feed.

¹ The update of the accredited test list of each ICQRF Laboratories, with the law references (where applicable), is available on-line at the official ACCREDIA web page: The accreditation of the Central Laboratory in Rome is temporarily suspended due to the transfer of location.

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

The research activities carried out in 2020 have been the subject of experimental theses, publications, and presentations of the results in national and international frameworks. The main ones are listed below:

1. Di Febo T., Schirone M., Di Domenico M., Visciano P., Krasteva I., Sonsini L., Cerquaglia O., Carpino S., D'Onofrio F., Tittarelli M., Luciani M. *Detection of undeclared bovine milk in different food matrices by a multi-technique approach*. International Dairy Journal, 2020. 111 (2020) 104845.
2. Pellicano S.I., Paci G., Pierini F., Carpino S. 2020. *Control activities carried out in the MIPAAF ICQRF department for ascertaining milk and dairy products quality*. Poster. 8th IDF international symposium on sheep, goat and other non-cow milk.
3. Di Simone B. e Carpino S., correlatori. *Contenuto in metalli in olive da mensa trattate illecitamente con soluzione di rame solfato*. Tesi di Laurea, Università di Perugia.
4. Cerquaglia O. e Carpino S., correlatori. *Un marker a tutela della qualità dei formaggi DOP a latte crudo*. Tesi di Laurea, Università di Perugia.
5. Sabatino L., Scordino M., Borzì M. A., Lazzaro F., Gargano M., Chiappara E., Indorante A., Gambino G.L., Traulo P., Gagliano G. 2020. *Valutazione di tecniche analitiche HPIC e FTIR nella ricerca quantitativa della SO₂ totale in matrici vinose come alternativa di screening ai metodi ufficiali*. Poster Convegno Congiunto delle Sezioni Sicilia e Calabria della Società Chimica Italiana.
6. Lancelotti L. e Napolitano A., correlatori. *Utilizzo di indicatori primari e secondari per la classificazione geografica e botanica di mieli nazionali*. Tesi di Laurea, Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia.

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

Following violations ascertained by the control bodies, the ICQRF proceeds to impose administrative fines. The territorial offices of the ICQRF provide penalties of up to € 50,000; the Central Administration (DG VICO) provides above this amount. DG VICO also provides, regardless of the amount, for the imposition of sanctions in specific sectors such as the geographical indications of food and wine, organic, GMOs.

The imposition of sanctions takes place at the end of a specific procedure governed by Law no. 689 of 24 / 11 / 1981.

Of the **4,119 administrative penalties** directly raised by ICQRF during 2020, 1,807 were immediately voluntarily paid by the transgressors, taking advantage of the reduced payment provided by the law, for an income benefit of over 2,1 million euros. The sectors most affected were the wine sector and regulated quality productions (PDO, PGI and BIO), which account more than 60% of the total income consequent to the payment of fines by offenders.

Also relevant are the revenues collected from the payment of fines for mislabelling, mainly deriving from the application of Legislative Decree 231 of 2017, sanctioning of Regulation (EU) 1169 of 2011, which represent the 15% of the total amount.

ICQRF – Reduced payments for penalties imposed by sectors

Sectors Fields	Reduced payments (no.)	Amount of payments (€)
Wine products	1.022	724.422
Quality products	158	558.793
Labelling	150	311.593
Feeds	94	125.882
Vegetable oils	142	121.799
Fertilizers	70	109.688
Seeds	18	33.601
Traceability	29	31.311
Cereal and cereal products	29	28.193
Fruits and vegetables	20	16.010
Preserved fruits and vegetables	8	14.700
Milk and dairy products	19	13.980
Honey	12	12.208
Eggs	27	8.445
Meats	2	5.600
Other sector	7	3.098
Total	1.807	2.119.323

ICQRF - Reduced payments on penalties imposed by sector and provision infringed

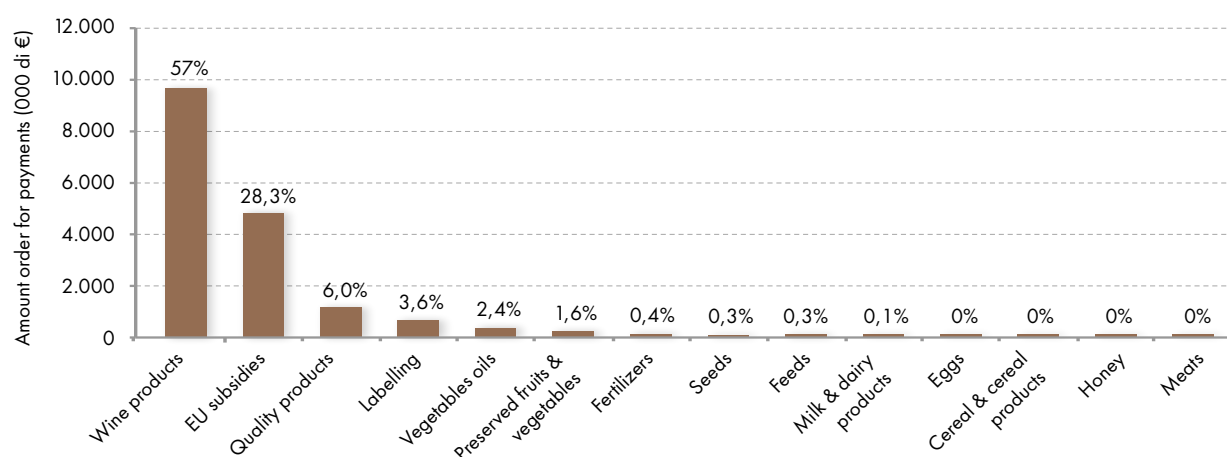
Sectors Fields	Provision infringed	Payments (no.)	Amount (€)
Wine products	D.lgs. n. 61 del 8/4/2010	3	6.330
	Legge n. 238 del 12/12/2016	1.018	717.392
	Legge n. 82 del 20/2/2006	1	700
Vegetable oils	D.lgs. n. 103 del 23/5/2016	125	42.067
	Legge n. 1407 del 13/11/1960	17	79.732
Milk and dairy products	D. L. n.91 del 24/06/2014	7	10.850
	Legge n. 138/74 del 11/04/1974	11	914
	Legge n. 4 del 3/2/2011	1	2.216
Fruits and vegetables	D.lgs. n. 306 del 10/12/2002	20	16.010
Meat	D.lgs. n. 58 del 29/1/2004	2	5.600
Cereals and cereals products	D.lgs. n. 131 del 4/8/2017	16	24.108
	Legge n. 580 del 4/7/1967	13	4.085
Eggs	Legge n. 88 del 07/07/2009	27	8.445
Preserved fruits and vegetables	D.lgs. n. 151 del 21/5/2004	1	2.100
	D.lgs. n. 50 del 20/2/2004	7	12.600
Honey	D.lgs. n. 179 del 21/5/2004	12	12.208
Feeds	D.lgs. n. 26 del 3/2/2017	82	98.681
	Legge n. 281 del 15/2/1963	12	27.201
Fertilizers	D.lgs. n. 75 del 29/4/2010	70	109.688
Seeds	Legge n. 1096 del 25/11/1971	18	33.601
Quality products	D.lgs. n. 20 del 23/2/2018	62	284.655
	D.lgs. n. 297 del 19/11/2004	96	274.138
Labelling	D.lgs. n. 145 del 15/9/2017	5	12.600
	D.lgs. n. 231 del 15/12/2017	142	283.523
	D.lgs. n. 27 del 7/2/2017	1	8.400
	Legge n. 350 del 24/12/2003	2	7.070
Traceability	D.lgs. n. 190/2006 del 05/04/2006	29	31.311
Other sectors	D.lgs. n. 193 del 6/11/2007	1	1.000
	Legge n. 1354 del 16/8/1962	6	2.098
Total		1.807	2.119.323

ICQRF also issued 4,762 warnings to operators in implementation of the so-called “Campolibero” Decree, and subsequent regulatory interventions (Simplification Decree).

In 2020, ICQRF issued 1,899 orders for payment, for an amount of about 17 million euros.

Also in this case, wine, regulated quality products, and mislabelling are the sectors in which the ICQRF sanctioning actions were more concentrated, both in terms of the number of orders (over 85% of the total) and the amounts of the sanctions imposed (about 67% of the total amount).

ICQRF - Orders for payments by sector



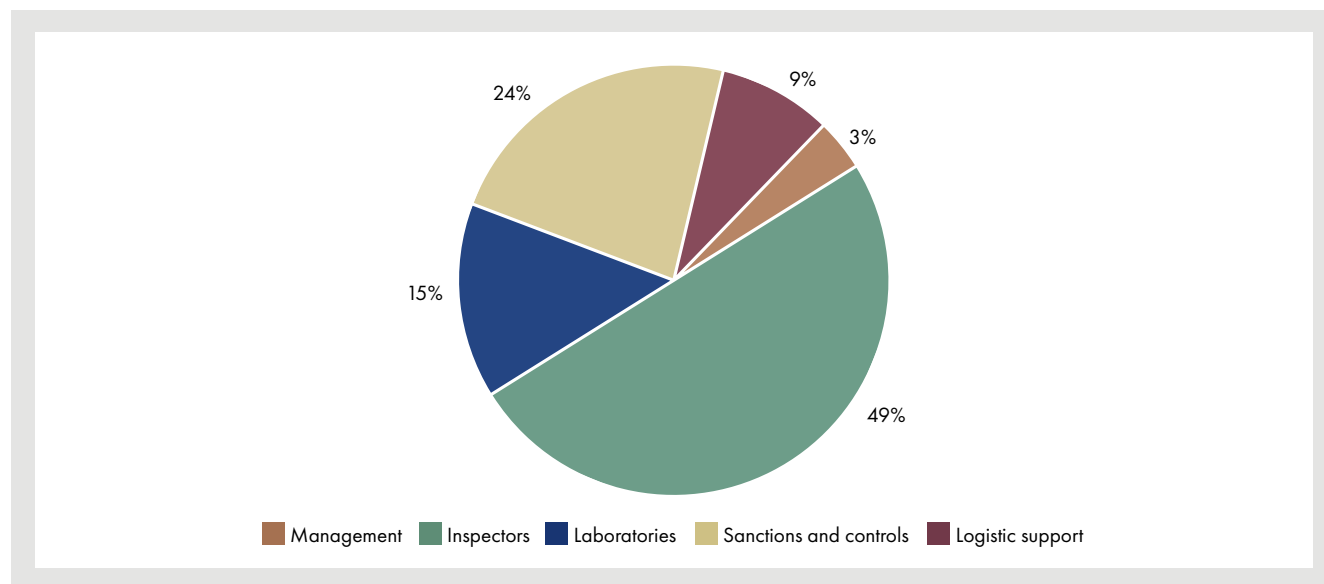
Sectors Fields	Orders for payments (no.)	Amount of payments (€)
Wine products	918	9.643.528
Labelling	379	613.252
Quality products	323	1.022.893
EU financial supports	128	4.783.099
Vegetables oils	64	402.671
Fertilizers	19	59.500
Feeds	19	43.319
Milk and dairy products	16	12.124
Eggs	12	5.877
Seeds	8	46.900
Cereal and cereal products	6	2.634
Preserved fruits and vegetables	3	276.000
Honey	2	1.200
Meats	2	1.032
Total	1.899	16.914.029

ICQRF – Orders for payments by sector and provisions infringed

Sectors Fields	Provision infringed	Orders for payments issued (no.)	Amount (€)
Wine products	D.lgs n. 260 del 10/08/2000	26	47.554
	D.lgs. n. 61 del 8/4/2010	381	1.364.263
	Legge n. 238 del 12/12/2016	487	941.422
	Legge n. 82 del 20/02/2006	24	7.290.289
Vegetable oils	Legge n. 1407 del 13/11/1960	48	384.171
	Legge n. 9 del 14/1/2013	16	18.500
Milk and dairy products	D. L. n.91 del 24/06/2014	13	9.750
	Legge n. 138/74 del 11/04/1974	2	774
	Legge n. 4 del 3/2/2011	1	1.600
Meats	Legge n. 26 del 13/2/1990	2	1.032
Cereals and cereals products	Legge n. 325 del 18/03/1958	2	618
	Legge n. 580 del 04/07/1967	4	2.016
Eggs	Legge n. 88 del 07/07/2009	12	5.877
Preserved fruits and vegetables	D.lgs. n. 151 del 21/5/2004	1	264.000
	Legge n.154 del 28/7/2016	2	12.000
Honey	D.lgs. n. 179 del 21/5/2004	2	1.200
Feeds	D.lgs. n. 26 del 3/2/2017	10	21.800
	Legge n. 281 del 15/02/1963	9	21.519
Fertilizers	D.lgs. n. 75 del 29/4/2010	19	59.500
Seeds	Legge n. 1096 del 25/11/1971	8	46.900
Quality products	D. lgs n. 297 del 19/11/2004	323	1.022.893
EU financial supports	Legge n. 898 del 23/12/1986	128	4.783.099
Labelling	D.lgs. n. 145 del 15/9/2017	2	2.500
	D.lgs. n. 231 del 15/12/2017	377	610.752
Total		1.899	16.914.029

10. ICQRF staff, their proficiency and the regional organization

ICQRF staff consists of **816 units**, (**25** of which **are managers**); however, the staff currently in service consists of only **682 units** (**20** of which **are managers**), with a ratio **managers / officers of just 2.9%**. The staff on duty is distributed among the different functions / activities as follows:



The ICQRF is divided, at 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 of and fight against agri-food fraud - PREF) and at territorial level into 29 Offices (10 local offices and 19 local units) and 6 Laboratories carrying out analytical activities. More than 84% of the ICQRF staff is located in the offices and laboratories.

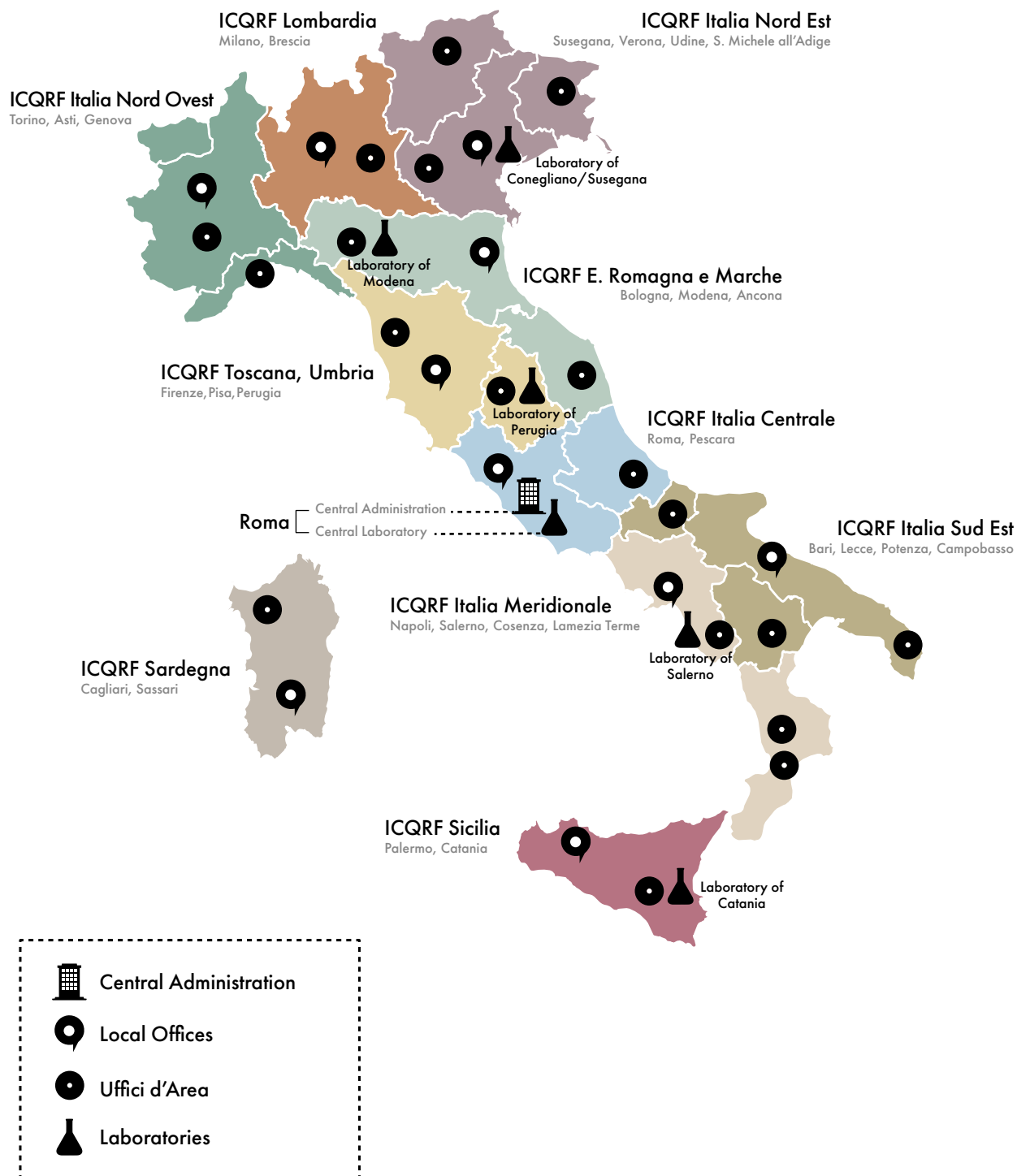
The General Directorate VICO carries out activities for the recognition of control bodies of PDO, PGI, TSG and organic productions, imposes administrative sanctions relating to violations in the production and trade of agri-food products and substances for agricultural or forestry use, manages the budget of the Department, plans the needs of instrumental and logistical resources of the structure, manages the accessory economic treatment of staff, manages specific professional training and staff transfer.

The General Directorate PREF is responsible for planning, monitoring, coordination of inspection activities, promotion and coordination of extraordinary control programs and actions of particular importance carried out, even in collaboration with other control bodies, through the Central Investigation Unit (*Unità Investigativa Centrale* - UIC). Furthermore, DG PREF is responsible for the supervision of the control bodies, coordinates the laboratories and, through the central laboratory in Rome, carries out counter-analyses, unrepeatable analyses, also on request of the Judicial Authority, as well as coordinating research activities for the identification of new analytical methods to be applied to fight against fraud.

There are also five special Units at central level:

1. Central Investigative Unit - U.I.C.: for specific activities of Judicial Police of national and international importance;
2. Ex officio Protection Unit: for the protection of food and wine geographical indications, on the Web and worldwide, against any form of illegal use or misleading practice;
3. Labelling Unit: to support ICQRF Offices in solving problems related to labelling regulations;
4. ICQRF Newsletter Editorial Unit: promotes in-depth internal analysis and rapid dissemination to all staff of documentation and information to support institutional activities;
5. ICQRF Communication Unit: to coordinate and carry out institutional communication activities at national and foreign level.

Locations of ICQRF Offices and Laboratories



ICQRF - Distribution of staff (by Office)

Office Lab	Location	Local units	Staff on duty (no.)
Central Administration	Rome		92
ICQRF Italia Nord Ovest	Turin	Asti	40
		Genova	
ICQRF Lombardia	Susegana	Brescia	30
ICQRF Italia Nord Est	Bologna	Verona	45
		Udine	
		S. Michele all'Adige	
ICQRF E. Romagna e Marche	Naples	Modena	52
		Ancona	
ICQRF Toscana e Umbria	Palermo	Pisa	49
		Perugia	
ICQRF Italia Centrale	Rome	Pescara	45
ICQRF Italia Meridionale	Naples	Salerno	59
		Cosenza	
		Lamezia Terme	
ICQRF Italia Sud Est	Bari	Lecce	70
		Potenza	
		Campobasso	
ICQRF Sicilia	Palermo	Catania	44
ICQRF Sardegna	Cagliari	Sassari	30
Laboratory of Catania			33
Laboratory of Conegliano			13
Laboratory of Modena			19
Laboratory of Perugia			21
Laboratory of Salerno			24
Laboratory of ROME			16
Total			682

10.1 ICQRF internal audits

In 2020, 2 internal audits were carried out at the “ICQRF Sardinia” and “ICQRF South-East Italy” Territorial Offices.

The internal audits at the Territorial Offices are aimed at verifying that:

- the agri-food provisions and the procedures for carrying out inspection activities and other provisions issued by the central Administration have been correctly applied;
- training of inspection staff is ensured;
- the inspection activity is properly documented and that this working documentation (reports and other inspection documentation) is kept available for possible subsequent audits;
- the documentation of the inspection activity is complete and consistent;
- the follow-up of the inspection acts has been carried out in compliance with the procedural deadlines;
- the inspection activity carried out is correctly recorded in the ICQRF information system.

In consideration of the delicate task carried out by the Inspectors, the ICQRF pays great attention to the measures for the prevention of corruption and, precisely in relation to the anti-corruption requirements (three-year plan for the prevention of corruption), the following aspects were verified:

- team rotation;
- 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 2020 two auditors witnessed the performance of an official control activity at an operator.

This audit activity was aimed at verifying the methods adopted by the staff in charge of:

- the preparation of the inspection activity;
- the presentation of the staff in charge of the official control at the economic operator;
- the carrying out of the control during the inspection with particular regard to the application of the inspection procedures.

The Territorial Offices, in the years covered by the audit (2018-2019), have complied with the procedures and provisions on inspection activity in their areas of competence. They also showed good organisation and management of the planning and execution of inspection activities, based on risk analysis and in compliance with the general guidelines provided by the central administration.

As regards the specific anti-corruption requirements, all the territorial Offices audited implemented team rotation, with reference to the members of the inspection team and / or the sector and / or the territorial district where the inspection task was carried out.

Finally, following the examination of the results of the audits carried out in 2019 and 2020, a number of “best practices” have been identified, which may contribute to the improvement of the activity of the Territorial Offices in terms of efficiency and effectiveness of the inspection activity and for the achievement of institutional objectives.

10.2 Staff training

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

In 2020, the ICQRF involved 490 staff in training activities, equal to 71.84% of the actual attendance.

Individual participation in the various activities totalled 1,350, 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” most of the staff carried out their work in agile work, so in 2020 a distance learning programme was also prepared and implemented.

The main training events on specialised topics carried out in 2020 are listed below.

Residential activities (training and in-depth courses)

- Honey sensory analysis - introduction (duration 4 days - 11 participants);
- Specialised English in agri-food for staff, senior managers and top management - this activity was converted into distance learning during the year;
- Advanced German (duration 10 hours - participants: 3 employees of the ICQRF North-East Office);
- INPS - Valore PA 2019 Project - Management of EU Funds (1st level) - The digital transformation of the public administration: innovation processes and strategies (duration 40h+60h - 1+2 participants).

Activities in videoconference (refresher seminars / meetings / debates)

- Joint training event between ACCREDIA and ICQRF - final day (duration 1 day - 98 participants);
- Sharing of BTSF experiences on Protected designation schemes - Course 3 Control of PDO / PGI / TSG in the field of agricultural products and foodstuff - Control of gis in the wine sector - Organic farming - scheme II (duration 1 day - 90 participants);
- Illustration of the new ICQRF circular on web controls (duration 1 day - 96 participants).

Distance learning activities (webinar and web meeting)

- Electronic Oil Register (duration 1 day - 43 participants);
- Judicial police activities - remote controls and supporting tools (duration 1 day - 58 participants);
- Supervisory activities on delegated control bodies [Article 28 et seq. of Regulation (EU) 625 / 2017] - Controls in the organic sector - overview (duration 1 day - 65 participants);
- Recognition of control bodies - organic sector (duration 1 day - 59 participants);
- Sanctioning activities in the organic sector (duration 1 day - 76 participants);
- Blockchain in the agro-food sector: technical-legal implications and significance for the Control Authority (duration 1 day - 38 participants);
- The problems encountered by laboratories in the activity of detection and contestation of offences following the analyses carried out (duration 1 day - 55 participants);
- EU Reg. 2018 / 848 - organic farming (duration 1 day - 142 participants);
- Focus group on cross-cutting issues of sanctioning activities (duration 1 day - 62 participants);
- Use of Microsoft Teams (duration 1 day - 224 participants);
- The internal audit activity - ICQRF staff (duration 1 day - 7 participants);
- Illustration of the main regulations concerning the marketing of plant protection products: labelling, classification, authorisation system and sampling methods (duration 1 day - 109 participants);
- Indications regarding warnings, following the entry into force of law no. 120 / 2020 (duration 1 day - 44 participants);
- Auditor / Lead Auditor of Quality Management Systems (no. 2 editions in e-learning mode - duration 40h x 2 - 38 participants).

10.3 Transfer of skills and training of external personnel

In 2020, the ICQRF consolidated its presence in training and knowledge transfer activities at international level, expanding its network of collaborations with other Control Authorities. This approach contributes significantly to the dissemination of the concept of the intrinsic quality of geographical indications and the importance of adequate protection for local consumers against fraud linked to the presence on the market of counterfeit products or products evoking renowned geographical indications.

ICQRF in Georgia

The administrative Twinning GE 16 ENI EC 03 18 'Establishing efficient protection and control System of Geographical Indications (GIs) in Georgia' continued throughout 2020, with the secondment of an ICQRF officer as Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA) and the participation of several Mipaaf / ICQRF experts.

ICQRF in Indonesia

In December, ICQRF participated in a webinar on “Control and Protection of GI Registered Names: Approaches and Best Practices from the EU”, organised by the Italian Embassy in Jakarta in collaboration with the ARISE + Indonesia Project managers and with the support of the Directorate General for Intellectual Property (DGIP) of the Indonesian Ministry of Justice and Human Rights.

The Indonesian Authorities involved showed particular interest and enthusiasm for the system of controls and protection of the Italian Authorities and during the meeting it was proposed to deepen the issues on GIs and develop new lines of cooperation.

ICQRF in Morocco

An ICQRF expert was invited to report in the framework of a TAIEX concerning the labelling requirements of food products according to the European legislation.

ICQRF for Southeast Asia

An ICQRF expert was invited as a speaker at the High Level Virtual Conference on Geographical Indications (18 November 2020) and the Webinar on Geographical Indications (Maximizing the Benefits from a GI System: Protecting and Enforcing GIs) on 25 November 2020.

ICQRF at the European Commission

ICQRF participated in the following events:

- Meeting of the Food Fraud Network of the European Commission- 20 January, 16 November and 11 December;
- Meeting of the Fertilizers Working Group of the European Commission - 25-26 June and 24-25 November;
- Meeting on 24 September on the status of notifications received in relation to olive oil compliance checks carried out in 2019;
- Working group of e-Commerce managers of food safety - 8-9 December.

ICQRF in other events

Worth mentioning is the presentation of ICQRF activity at:

- Interpol - Europol OPSON IX debrief and OPSOPN X kick-off virtual meetings on 19 November on “Operation BUBBLES”;
- SIRIO meeting on Supply Chain Security - food fraud” on 20 November, organised by UNICRI (United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute).



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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