

IPA Congress 2009 – Italy

Italy, as you all know, is the smallest member of IPA. We produce only 1600 MT of prunes with about 470 hectares.

The prune production started in Italy 40 years ago around the area of Modena drying prunes produced by plants imported from Agen. After a few years Italy started drying Stanleys for the syrup industries, but today the Stanley production is disappearing. Today prunes are cultivated in the Po Valley (north), in Tuscany (centre) and in Basilicata (south).

The majority of the prunes are produced in a few large farms (from 40 to 60 hectares) that harvest with American machinery. Some of the larger farms have drying facilities in the farm.

The prunes are totally dried in tunnels heated with gas.

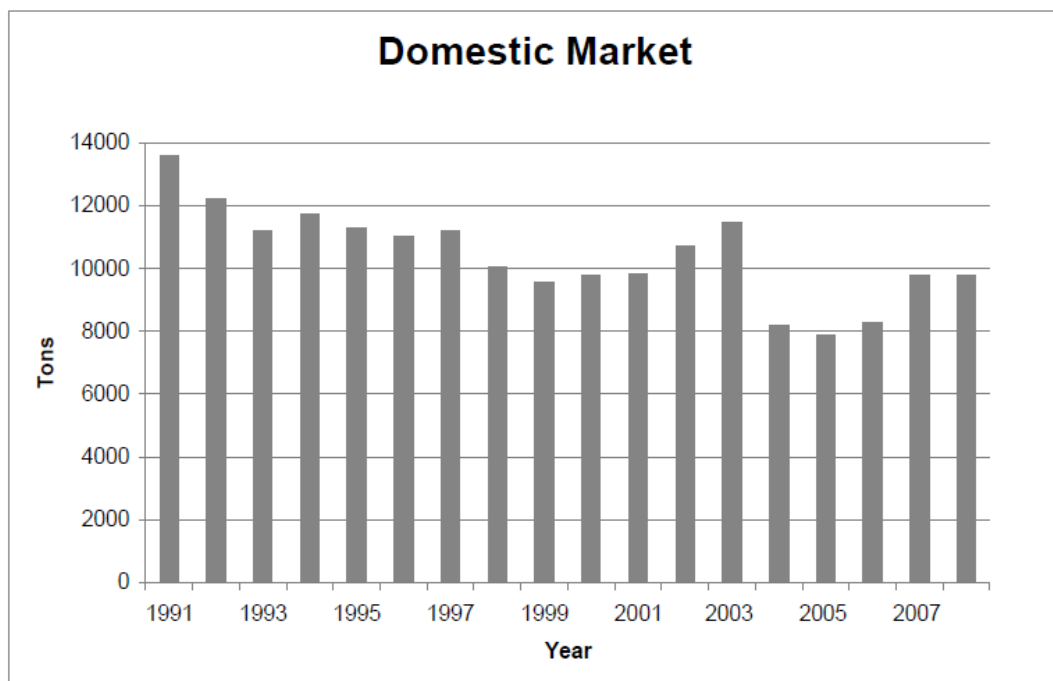
The prunes are produced by three cooperatives: Cooperativa Modenese Essiccazione Frutta, Veba and CBS.

Modenese produces about 80% of the total Italian production and processes also part of the production of the other two cooperatives.

We sell our production processed pitted and not pitted with our own brand and with private labels, and we can grant the consumer a sophisticated traceability system.

The other two cooperatives sell the rest of the production in bulk to other industries.

The consumption of dry prunes in the past 20 years was rather stable: around 10 thousand tons per year.



At the beginning the prunes were almost totally imported from California and a small percentage from France. In the last years the Italian production has been increasing and also the import from Chile.

Imports of Italy 2008	Tonnes
U.S.A.	3 857
Chile	2 069
France	1 146
Bulgaria	607
Serbia	376
Other	534
Total	8 589