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Gastronomical odyssey explores benefits of fresh fruit and veg

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By Grant Scott



ROME- Italy needs to seize opportunities in fruit and vegetable production opportunities, say leading experts.

On Wednesday, nestled within a distinctly Italian street just off Piazza Venezia, a press conference organised by UNAPROA (an association for the promotion of fruit and vegetable production) transported attendants to five continents of the world with an. UNAPROA enlisted five top chefs from all corners of the world to make five dishes based on fresh fruit and vegetables, in order to encourage people to eat more fruit and vegetables, not only for personal benefits, but also to benefit the Italian economy.

Ambrogio De Ponti, the President of UNAPROA, journalist Gioacchino Bonsignore and Andrea Rasca, CEO at the BTG Group introduced the new three-year campaign, 'Around the world... In five colours', neatly related to the theme of Expo 2015 in Milan "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life". According to the speakers, the decade-long struggle of the 'five-a-day' campaign ensues in Italy, and the campaign wishes to highlight some key benefits of eating a variety of fruit and vegetables for one's wellbeing, including a 15% decrease in the risk of cardiovascular illness. Furthermore, it was stated that a greater intake of fresh fruit and vegetables would reduce obesity rates, a phenomenon which is currently costing the Italian State 23 billion euros according to data from the Nomisma-Unaproat 2015 Report.

The speakers also stressed the economic opportunities of fruit and vegetable production, saying that Italy's optimal Mediterranean climate for the cultivation of fruit and vegetables is yet to be fully exploited in comparison to other European countries such as Germany, the largest exporter of fruit and vegetables in Europe.

The five chefs also participated in the press conference, bringing their cuisines of the far corners of the world, from Brazil to Japan, to Australia and Eritrea. Each chef discussed their choice of prepared dish, which corresponded to a certain colour, reflecting five pigments of fruit and vegetables which each grant particular benefits. Among the dishes included the vibrant reds of an Italian-style gazpacho, the deep violet of blackberries with an elegant twist of melba toast and pavlova, and the luscious greens of a fresh salad marinated with an orange dressing.