

WELCOME

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear colleagues,

welcome to our Workshop on “**Food Products and Information to the Consumers**”. It is a great pleasure to receive you all here today and I thank you for your kind participation and your interest in EFLA’s activity.

A special thanks to **Assolombarda** and its food sector responsible **Mr Bottelli**, for giving us the honour to make use of this beautiful conference room and for their kind cooperation and a special thanks to **Federalimentare**, the Italian Federation of Food Industry and its General Director Mr Daniele Rossi for having promoted and followed the organization of the event. Thanks also to Leggi d’Italia Professionale editor for the conference materials and a special thanks to Alice, Elisa and Giovanna of my law firm for their strong support to this Workshop.

I also would like to thank **AIDA – IFLA Italian Food Law Association** for having supported EFLA in this Workshop, in order to offer the opportunity to the participants, legal scholars and practitioners of different European Member States, to discuss relevant topics of common interest and to share opinions and proposals with food producers operating in all of the production stages, processing and distribution of food.

Now, let me briefly introduce you the **European Food Law Association**, the main character of this meeting. EFLA is an international non-profit making organization, whose essential goal is studying and promoting Food Law. In this regard, Food Law is becoming more and more a complex system, in which are involved on different levels national, regional, European and International sources, as well as soft law instruments, which are assuming more and more increasing importance. In particular,

European Food Law has been thought as a separate uniform sector with Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety.

EFLA's task is also to contribute to the Food law's development and international harmonization with a special attention to its specificity, its interdisciplinary nature and, above all, its main function, the protection of the consumers. EFLA activities include workshop, congresses, seminars and information meetings, which represent the means to attain the goals of the Association: to contribute to the development and to a better knowledge of Food Law.

EFLA has chosen Milan for the today's Workshop on "Food Products and Information to the Consumers", because Expo 2015 in Milan will be mainly devoted to the area of Food and Alimentation in all its aspects, and that Regione Lombardia has a well known reputation in the food industry.

In this regard, the Workshop will be open by the speech of **Dr Silvio Ferrari**, President of the Assolombarda's Food section and WG Coordinator "Nutrition" Special Project EXPO 2015, that I would like to thank. He will present the **Milan World Expo 2015 on human feeding**, an extraordinary universal event that will be focused on the concept that everyone on the planet should have access to food that is healthy, safe and sufficient.

"**New requirements and answers of Food Industry**" will be the subject exposed by **Daniele Rossi**, General Director of Federalimentare - Italian Federation of Food Industries -. In this regard, the Italian Food Industry is ready to satisfy national and international consumers' requests and needs, by presenting safe products of great quality reflecting Italy's tradition on food and beverages. The Food and Drink

Industry is committed to providing consumers with science-based, clear and non-judgemental information from which they can make informed food choices enabling them to evaluate a product's place in a balanced way.

It will follow **Professor Mario Abis** from the IULM University of Milan who will talk about **communication to the consumers**. An analysis of different kinds of communication means, which have the task to inform the consumers correctly on the topics and matters linked with food, mainly using the web and new forms of direct communication.

The fourth speech will concern “**EU Regulation on the provision of food information to consumers**”. **Professor Ferdinando Albisinni**, member of both EFLA and AIDA Council, will focus on the proposal of the EU Commission of January 2008 for a new regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council, regarding the information to the consumers of food products. The proposal aims to ensure food safety, protect human health and secure the functioning of the internal market for food. In order to do this, it aims to streamline the authorization procedure, develop a more adjusted safety assessment system for traditional food from third countries, which is considered as novel food under the current Regulation, and clarify the definition of novel food, including new technologies with an impact on food.

Dietrich Gorny, EFLA Vice-President, will speak us about “**Nutrition and Health Claims**”, focusing on the Regulation No. 1924/2006, which deals with all nutrition and health claims made in commercial communications on foods (labeling, presentation and advertising) that are delivered to the final consumer. This subject represents a very important part of EU Food law, because a huge number of foods labelled and advertised in the EU bear nutrition and health claims. The claim needs the prior authorization of the national competent Authority and the EFSA – European Food Safety Authority's binding opinion, when it is referred to reduction of risk

factor or to children development. In this perspective, EFSA shall verify that the proposed wording of the health claim is substantiated by scientific data and give advice on whether the proposed wording of the health claim is understandable and meaningful to the average consumer.

An interesting subject is the one that will be exposed by **Luciano Di Via**, Partner of Law Firm Bonelli Erede Pappalardo: “**Antitrust Case Law on misleading advertising**”. The Italian Antitrust Authority has always played an important role in fighting misleading advertising. In the particular field of food products, this role has to be stronger than it is in the other advertising fields checked by the Authority, because consumers’ protection is involved.

The last speech we are going to hear is about “**Risk Communication**”. **Vicente Rodriguez Fuentes**, member of EFLA Council, will explain Regulation 178/2002, which has provided the basis for the assurance of a high level of protection of human health and consumers’ interest in relation to food. In this regard, a special attention will be dedicated to the balance between the protection of public health by providing information to the public concerning a potential health risk, and the protection of the reputation of companies and products.

At the end of the speeches it will follow a brief discussion on the themes of the Workshop, during which all of you will be able to ask questions to the speakers and discuss with them.

Thank you again for your participation, I yield the floor to the esteemed Dr Silvio Ferrari and I hope to see you all in Sevilla on September 2012 in occasion of our EFLA Biannual Conference.

Alessandro Artom

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