

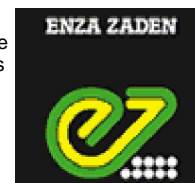


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Italy: Lettuce variety genetics have a big influence on shelf life

Last week, more than 100 participants from France, Greece, Italy and the Netherlands participated in the conference From seed to the tableq organised by Enza Zaden Italy. Enza Zaden succeeded in bringing together the whole lettuce chain in the processing segment. Growers, traders, integrated producers and buyers of large distribution chains were present to discuss the current market requirements and developments in the lettuce processing industry.



Participants had the opportunity to visit the fields and the factory of Ambruosi e Viscardi, a grower/producer for the fourth gamme industry in Italy. The company is recognized for delivering one of best quality products for processing products in Italy.

In the afternoon, a conference meeting was held about the requirements and developments in the lettuce processing industry. Speakers from all parts of the processing chain gave their opinion about the current industry trends. Grower regulations, machinery, technological innovations, supermarket and consumer trends, all presentations were focussed on improving the quality of the processed products, and the possibilities to improve shelf life in particular.



Enza Zaden presented their latest developments in their research on shelf life. During their continuous research on shelf life influencers, Enza Zaden has concluded that genetics do have a direct effect on shelf life. Thanks to the current findings of shelf life influencers in varieties, Enza



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Zaden is able to select, in the breeding stage already, the longest shelf life breeding lines. By doing so, the best combinations possible for good shelf life products can be made. The current Eazyleaf varieties are an outcome of this research.

Italian growers are very keen on high quality lettuce products, since the big potential for exporting to Northern Europe in winter time. The last 7 years, a lot of growers have made huge investments in their farms. Many of them have their own processing facilities directly at the farm, to serve the requests of Northern Europe.



The next international lettuce processing meeting will be held in Spain, 3rd of December 2009.

If you are interested in one of the presentations or if would like to know more about how to improve shelf life for your own lettuce products, please contact eazyleaf@enzazaden.nl.

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