



Seaweeds on the table, the new sushi?

Eating seaweeds was not an unknown practice in Europe, even before the arrival of sushi and other oriental cuisines. The Celts and Scots were used to "shop" along the Atlantic shores, at least a couple of millennia ago. But now, a "wave" of foods and ingredients based on different algae - those invisible to the naked eye, the microalgae - is going to come. Properties, benefits, and many recipes to be tried... during the second day of AquaFarm, which is in Pordenone Fiere on 26th and 27th January.

Milano / Pordenone 20 January 2017. The final clearance came in December 2015, with the publication of the European regulation governing novel foods, i.e. foods and food ingredients produced with new processes or from new raw materials. Among these there are those derived from microalgae, invisible to the naked eye. The Aztecs and the people who lived on the shores of Lake Chad, in Central Africa, gathered the "blooms" of spirulina, so named for its spiral shape, as a dietary supplement, able to confer proteins, vitamins, minerals and iron to the usual diets. And precisely spirulina and chlorella - the first two species accepted by the EU for use in food - are going to enter the kitchens, if the idea of introducing them - as ingredients for themselves or as a supplement to traditional foods- will meet the consumers' approval. Now, different kinds of dry pasta with spirulina are already produced, and with the same seaweed a type of semi-artisan ice cream, the Spirulì, is made.

Many, including FAO, put a lot of hope in algae to provide part of the diet to the growing world population without extending the area under cultivation at the expenses of other natural environments. In fact, the microalgae we are currently examining are grown in outdoor facilities, preferably in areas not otherwise enhanced (for example the coastal deserts of the Americas, Africa and Australia), or directly at high density, in sealed containers called photobioreactors, grouped - also vertically - in the hundreds or even thousands. Italian researchers, like those at the University of Florence, have an important role in the design of those photobioreactors.



Algae as a food are a topic of the second day of AquaFarm, Friday, January 27th, dedicated to the algae in the Hall "Novel Food". The second session, in the late morning, **"Algae for animal and human feeding: need, fashion, convenience?"**, will try and go beyond the simple "fashion" of the consumption of algae in the kitchen, very "trendy" and generally "green", despite the algae are of many colors besides green. We will seek to understand the contribution that these simple organisms can give as a stable component of the food landscape, such as supplements and ingredients for more nutritious and healthy foods, with the help of the greatest Italian experts.

With the coordination of Professor Mario Tredici, vice president of EABA - European Algae Biomass Association, we will begin with the keynote speech by Professor Vincenzo Fogliano - an authority at European and world level in the field of food science, who trained at the Federico II University of Naples and was recently called to Wageningen in the Netherlands, academic sanctuary in Europe of research in the field of food innovations -, from the novel food, to storage and packaging techniques, from hydroponics to vertical farm. Professor Fogliano, who studies the interaction of different ingredients at a molecular level and the beneficial changes that processes such as cooking bring in food, will speak about *"Microalgae in food: current status and future prospects"*.

The biologist nutritionist Chiara Orsetti will follow with a focus on *microalgae and macroalgae as a source of supplements and ingredients for the food industry* (just for example, agar agar, which is widely used as gelling agent, is extracted from seaweed: go and take a look at the label).

Then it will be the turn of two experts also active on the industrial front. Tommaso Caltarossa will talk about the European project *EcoLogic GreenFarm*, which aims to produce spirulina with an almost closed circuit process. Finally, Andrea Moro, entrepreneur and expert in the cultivation and use of microalgae,



and literally with "hands-on" experience because he is also a cook besides being a successful businessman, will provide clues as to understand whether micro-algae in recipes are going to become a mass phenomenon. The sushi parable that twenty years ago was just a niche item in Italy is repeating. Raise your hand if you have ever predicted the current situation! Andrea Moro does not just experiment recipes that he has founded around the world, but creates his own: bring something to take notes and good work in the kitchen!

The AquaFarm 2017 conference program is available and constantly updated on the Program section of www.aquafarm.show Web Site. Participation is free. This is the link to the online pre-accreditation. It will however be possible to register during the event.

For more information

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