



Friultrota Di Pighin SRL

Smoked trout for the delicatessen sector

San Daniele in the foothills of the Alps in the northern Italian Regione Friuli-Venezia Giulia is renowned for its ham. The regione, however, also has another claim to fame. Friuli-Venezia Giulia produces a quarter of all the trout produced in Italy amounting to 10,000 to 12,000 tonnes thanks to the abundance of good spring water.

Although ham is probably the area's best known product, the same environmental conditions that provide the natural conditions that have fostered a long tradition of ham-making — fresh air from the alps, humidity from the Adriatic coast, good soil, and salt from the sea — are also conducive to the smoking of trout.

Friultrota started their fish farm more than 30 years ago and from its inception the company decided, in contrast to most of the other farms in the area, that it would raise fish extensively rather than intensively. Twenty years ago the company started smoking the trout, using both hot smoke and cold smoke. The fish is smoked entirely naturally using dry salt and real smoke and there are no added preservatives or additives. For the cold smoked product fillets from the bigger 6-7 kilo fish are used as they are preferred by the restaurants, while in the case of hot smoking, portions are preferred so the fillets are from 100-120 g.

Italy, specifically the northern part of the country, is the main market for the products, with lesser volumes being sold in the central and southern parts. A limited quantity is also exported



Trout products amount to about 75% of the production. The remainder is based on imported salmon, swordfish and herring.

to Germany. Customers are primarily restaurants and delicatessen shops.

Wide range of trout products

From two varieties of smoked trout the company has expanded into a range of other trout-based items that use both fresh and smoked trout such as roe, sauces, pates, salami, trout cheeks, and trout marinates. The company is now also producing cooked trout, in fact one of the recipes, a fillet of trout with herbs, was a finalist at this year's Prix d'Elite competition at the European Seafood Exposition in Brussels. This honour also went to another of the company's products, a marinated fillet of trout. Trout is the main species that the company deals in, both farming it and processing the farmed product. None of the fish is sold fresh. But in addition to trout Friultrota also imports and processes other species such as Norwegian and Scottish salmon, swordfish, and herring. These non-trout items form about 25% of the production. They are smoked or available as marinates. Typically the company will try and devise products that are a little unusual, for example the marinate for the herring is sweet rather than the more traditional salty.

Change in image

The smoked salmon is produced in relatively small quantities and is intended mainly for customers who would like some salmon smoked the traditional way using dry salt and natural smoke. As Mauro Pighin the marketing manager says, the idea is not to cannibalise the market for the trout, but just to be able to respond to the needs of our exist-

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Marketing manager:
Mr. Mauro Pighin

Ownership: Private, family owned
Products: Hot and cold smoked trout, trout roe, pates, salami, trout cheeks, marinated trout, smoked salmon, swordfish, herring, marinated herring
Markets: Northern Italy, Germany
Customers: Restaurants, delicatessen shops
Turnover 2003: EUR 2 million
Employees: 20