



1 March 2024

La Cooperativa L'Ortofrutticola di Albenga's journey to expand export markets

"Our potted plants flourish early and robustly due to unique Albenga Plain climate"

"We are eager to increase our export markets and the potential is there", says Luca Lanzalaco of La Cooperativa L'Ortofrutticola di Albenga. They are one of the largest cooperatives in Liguria, Italy, with about 600 member farms. They offer potted plants (aromatic and floral), fruit, and vegetables. Due to the particular environmental conditions of the Albenga Plain, they can offer them earlier in the season than growers in many other countries. Over the years, the exports of this 80+ years old cooperative have increased and at Myplant & Garden, which took place last week, they announced the imminent launch of a new B2B eCommerce platform to facilitate and simplify business relations with its international customers.



Luca Lanzalaco and Francesco Moroni at Myplant & Garden 2024.

Climate conditions

According to Lanzalaco, the climatic conditions in the Albenga Plain are special and very good for growing potted plants. "The climate and subsoil are important factors that make our products so special. It is very stable because the area is protected by the mountains and has fresh air from the sea. We notice that the plants are not contaminated, see fewer diseases and insects, and the plants are more robust. On top of that, the weather allows the growers to finish the plants earlier, even earlier than in other parts of Italy. Our aromatic herbs of this specific territory (rosemary, thyme, marjoram, sage, as well as PDO basil) are renowned everywhere, in Italy and abroad. On top of that, the particular environmental conditions allow the cultivation with a minimum use of plant protection products and, not least, the great know-how of the local companies historically dedicated to their production. All plants we offer are cultivated according to low environmental impact regulations and some are BIO and GlobalGAP (Good Agricultural Practice) certified."

5 million potted plants per year

Every year, the Cooperative sees around 5,000,000 plants of various types pass through its warehouse; here they are packed in trolleys, pallets, or cartons (every day the Cooperative processes an average of 600 trolleys of pot plants), depending on the demands and requirements of its customers, represented by distributors, wholesalers, large-scale retail trade and large retail gardens.

The Cooperative has a large covered warehouse (3000 square meters) dedicated to the storage of all goods (plants, fruit, and vegetables), delivered daily by the producers. "The 7 loading gates that characterize the logistics area, allow for the agile movement of lorries, which, thanks to the proximity of the headquarters to the motorway, can quickly reach the main traffic ways to the destination locations in Italy and Europe."

Increase in export markets

Over the years, they have seen the demand increase, particularly from the Northern Europe market. They are eager to increase their export markets and the next launch of their B2B eCommerce portal will support this growth. "The year 2024 will mark the start of a digital transition for L'Ortofrutticola, with the launch of a B2B eCommerce portal shortly. The aim is to enable its customers to manage their supplies independently, at any time, with extreme flexibility and simplicity."