



The Myplant & Garden trade fair was held in Milan from 23 to 25 February. It was attended by more than 18,000 visitors, putting it back at its pre-COVID level. The scarcity of arboricultural products was one of the issues at the fair.

The Italian Myplant & Garden fair went through a difficult preparation phase due to COVID-19 but was ultimately well attended by both exhibitors and visitors. Not many tree nurseries consider Myplant & Garden a suitable fair to show their products, particularly because it takes place a little later in the season when the sales of plants is already well underway. Those tree nurseries that do attend are mainly from Italy itself. As a result, floricultural products take a prominent place at the fair.

Favourable market conditions

One of the tree nurseries present is Vivai De Laurentiis. Sales person Giampiero Di Sciullo calls the fair a success and is positive about the market conditions in Italy: „Demand is high, and we are almost sold out,” he says. He believes that COVID-19 has had a positive impact on garden-related spending, which also benefits Italian tree growers.

Favourable market conditions

One of the tree nurseries present is Vivai De Laurentiis. Sales person Giampiero Di Sciullo calls the fair a success and is positive about the market conditions in Italy: „Demand is high, and we are almost sold out,” he says. He believes that COVID-19 has had a positive impact on garden-related spending, which also benefits Italian tree growers.

“

The fair exceeded our expectations

”

The only Dutch tree grower at the fair was Felix&Dijkhuis from Boskoop. General Manager Jeroen den Hengst: „The fair exceeded our expectations. There was a lot of traffic to our stand, and it has generated several orders. Not only from Italian companies, but also from visitors from Poland and Switzerland, for example. We’ve really noticed that whips and planting materials are scarce,” says Den Hengst.

When asked about scarcity, companies cite a wide assortment: *Acer palmatum*, *Acer campestre*, *Albizia*, *Photinia*, *Pyrus calleryana*, *Betula*, *Carpinus*, *Cercis*, *Celtis*, *Liquidambar*, *Cupressus sempervirens*, *Laurus nobilis*, *Nerium*, *Pittosporum*, *Phormium*, *Wisteria*, *Quercus* and *Quercus ilex*.

Export increase by almost 25%

While many visitors to the fair expressed concern about the rising prices of plants, they seemed even more worried by their scarcity. According to fair participants, this has led to extra purchases by garden centres and companies in the planting market, particularly on the first day. The organisers of the fair counted 18,700 visitors, the same number as before COVID. In February 2020, the Italian fair was one of the first to be cancelled due to COVID, and last year it was cancelled as well. The fair organisers therefore speak of a 'successful comeback'.

The most recent figures from Eurostat seem to support the positive trade sentiment in Italy. The export value of arboricultural products increased by almost 25% until November 2021, compared to the same period in 2020, when Italian exports of tree-nursery products amounted to EUR 522 million.

Until November 2021, the import value of tree-nursery products was 6% higher than during the same period in 2020. The import value from the Netherlands rose by over 30%, lifting the Dutch share in Italian imports to around 40%. Overall imports of arboricultural products totalled EUR 111 million in 2020. <

