

THE CHEESE OLYMPICS

Silver medal for milk of Valmorel in Verona

Award-winning Robiola production in a dairy in the province of Treviso

LIMANA. Valmorel milk mounts the podium on the silver level in the «Mountain Cheese Olympics», the prestigious Verona exhibition that ended last week. Thanks to the milk originating from the area above Limana, Latteria Perenzin of San Pietro di Felleto (in the province of Treviso) won a silver medal for its superb goats' milk Robiola.

This was the fourth consecutive year that the mountain cheeses of the world have battled it out in a series of tasting sessions in one of the most important international dairy product exhibitions. Latteria Perenzin procures its milk from Valbelluna and from here it supplies both the headquarters of San Pietro di Felleto and also the outlets in Campolongo di Conegliano and San Giacomo di Veglia. In the words of the dairy management «Once upon a time every farmhouse was a small-scale dairy and the older generation of women were skilled in making cheese, butter, and warm ricotta from the fresh milk from nearby milking sheds. Our work consists in the attempt to re-create this culture and the delicious flavours associated with it. In addition to the goats' milk Robiola we have been making a further three cheeses for four generations and we have already received several awards in addition to today's prize. The milk is processed in accordance with time-honoured manual techniques, while keeping a very careful check on milk hygiene aspects».

The international competition of Verona was reserved for cheeses produced in the Alps and in the Apennines: in the words of the organisers



Goats' milk Robiola produced by Latteria Perenzin of San Pietro di Felleto

after the awards ceremony and an emotional rendering of the Italian anthem, the event is «the greatest 'friendly' challenge, held in a truly inspiring setting».

In the words of the expert cheese makers: «72 years from the gold medal at Salon Des Arts Menagers and just 4 years from Biocaseus 2001, our dairy has received another important award that fills us with pride». The event, which «aims to bring together different cultures, peoples, and their traditions», has the stated goal of «rewarding the quiet work of thousands of farmers and promoting the excel-

lence of dairy products».

From 20 to 23 October in the Palazzo della Gran Guardia an international panel of judges made up of more than 100 experts tasted the best products from the mountains, resulting in endorsement of the natural goodness of milk from the Belluno area.

And from this year also the general public was given a role among the protagonists of the Mountain Cheese Olympics: the end of the event saw the creation of the Olympic Cheese Trail: a cheese-tasting itinerary involving all the champion chee-

se-makers enrolled in the exhibition. Sunday, the final day of the event, was given over to celebrations and the awards ceremony.

The enthusiasm of the winners was unmistakable: «With these medals producers get a real opportunity to achieve recognition of their activities and their cheese making tradition throughout the world». And the Verona 2005 edition of The Mountain Cheese Olympics was also the subject of a commemorative postmark. In addition, the cheeses were tasted for the first time also by the very youngest experts, in the first Children's Olympics.