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## Italy

## Wine

# Italian Agricultural Inspectorate Overview - ICQ 2009

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**Report Highlights:** The ICQ (Central Inspectorate for Food Quality) is the Italian equivalent of the U.S. FDA, FSIS and APHIS all in one. Working under the Italian Ministry of Forestry, Agricultural and Food Policies, they control the entire domestic food and agricultural chain, including fertilizers, seeds, animal feed, labeling, and the quality of foodstuffs. The ICQ has overall control and supervision of Consortiums and Inspection Entities that are responsible for "Regulated Quality Production - Geographic Indicators" and enforces sanctions of all violations related to food and agricultural production rules.

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### ***ICQ Overview***

The ICQ (Central Inspectorate for Food Quality) is the Italian equivalent of the U.S. FDA, FSIS and APHIS all in one. Working under the Italian Ministry of Forestry, Agricultural and Food Policies, they control the entire domestic food and agricultural chain, including fertilizers, seeds, animal feed, labeling, and the quality of foodstuffs. The ICQ has overall control and supervision of Consortiums and Inspection Entities that are responsible for “Regulated Quality Production - Geographic Indicators” and enforces sanctions of all violations related to food and agricultural production rules.

The following are the various types of Italian GI’s that the ICQ controls:

Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), which means the product must be produced, processed, and prepared within the specified geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product are essentially attributable to that area.

Protected Geographic Indication (PGI) means the product must be produced, processed, or prepared in the geographical area and the quality, reputation, or other characteristics of the product are attributable to that area.

Traditional Specialty Guaranteed (TSG) means the product must be traditional or established by custom and the name must express the specific character of the product.

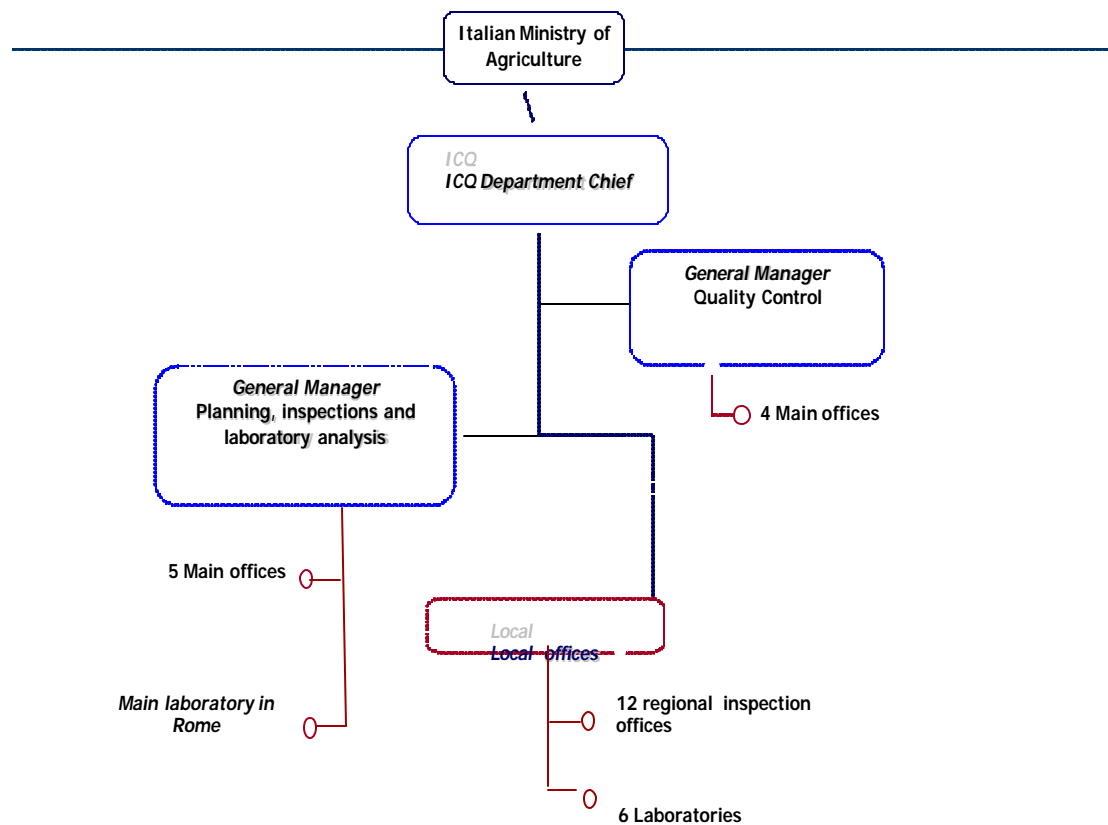
According to the Italian Minister of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies Luca Zaia “Our control inspectorate continues to work to fight frauds in order to defend consumer health, the work of honest farmers and people involved in the food sector. I have given the ICQ precise directives in order to ensure maximum collaboration with all control organisms, rationalizing and ensuring more effective controls and avoiding useless duplication of interventions. We will continue to insist in fighting all food and agriculture related frauds by intensifying control actions throughout Italy”.

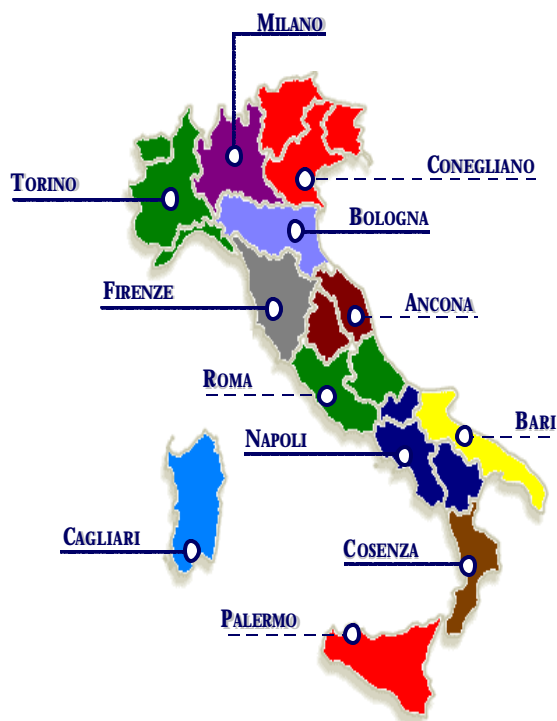
### ***ICQ Organization***

At the central level the ICQ consists of a Directorate General for Planning and Inspection and Laboratory Coordination and a Directorate General for Administration Coordination. It has 12 decentralised inspection office and 15 local units. The ICQ also has its own laboratory network, consisting of five chemical laboratories and a central reference laboratory responsible for research activity and analysis. Most of the ICQ controls are related to wine, alcoholic beverages, milk, dairy products, and olive oil. Specific controls are also carried out on feedstuffs for the detection of prohibited animal proteins, traceability of meat, GMO presence in soy and corn seeds, fertilizers and organic agricultural products for the presence of Prohibited Plant Protection Product residues.

### ***ICQ Laboratories***

All ICQ laboratories are accredited to ISO 17025:2005 by the National System for Laboratory Accreditation (SINAL). The monitoring of feedstuffs accounts for 15 percent of all ICQ activity performed by their laboratories. The ICQ laboratory in Catania is specialized in verifying the presence of unauthorized compounds used for surface treatment of fruits and vegetables. ICQ may also perform specific control activities upon request by Italian judicial authorities.

**ICQ ORGANIZATION CHART**

**Ispettorato centrale per il controllo della qualità dei prodotti agroalimentari****GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF OFFICES AND LABORATORIES****12** Inspection offices**6** Laboratories

### ***ICQ Control Activities in the Wine Sector***

The ICQ performs the following controls pertaining to the wine sector:

Varietal Identity examinations:

1. Comparison of all relevant product documentation (invoices, registration documents, transport bills, etc.).
2. Verification of the accuracy of reported information on wine labels
3. Verification of the entire wine production process – from the raw material to the final product.
4. Traceability checks from the wines raw material suppliers to the end product in order to verify the products' origin and quality.
5. Sample testing of raw materials to verify the producers' declaration and compliance with production rules established by law.

### ***ICQ Analytical Activities in the Wine Sector***

Analytical and sensorial checks to determine the effective chemical and physical composition of products whose samples have been taken during the inspections.

Development of new wine analytical testing methods.

Study and research activities.

### ***Quality Wine Control System***

- Italian wine production plays a fundamental role in country's economy, agriculture and culture scenario.
- 35 percent of Italian wine production (about 50 million hectoliters) falls within the so-called Controlled Appellation (Denominazione di Origine Controllata).
- More than 25 percent consists of wines that can be described as "typical geographical indication" wines (IGT).
- The ICQ controls all 476 types of Controlled Appellation wines, comprised of more than 800,000 wineries
- Controlled Appellation wines are governed by a Registered Quality Production Scheme, a set of rules that outline the products' distinctive characteristics and production regulations that must be observed by all wine producers.

(For previous Post reporting on Italian wine labels please see GAIN IT8036.)

***The Registered Quality Production Scheme provides very strict production regulations:***

Control of the Appellation designation origin

Outline of the wine production area, natural environment characteristics and the vineyards composition

Maximum grape and wine yields per hectare

Definition of the natural alcoholic strength by volume at grape harvest, without enrichment

Definition of the chemical, physical and organoleptic characteristics of the wine as well as the minimum alcoholic strength required for a finished product that is ready for consumption

The minimum aging period in wooden barrels and the following resting period in bottle

***ICQ Monitoring and Surveillance Activities***

Field inspections to check vineyard planting, yields and production capability. The system is based on the verification of the vineyards' output and production potential, including bottling and production plants.

Wine production and bottling plant inspections to verify compliance and respect of the Registered Quality Production Scheme specifications.

Traceability over the entire production and distribution chain. Computer tracking of all supply chain operators in order to trace the company who bottled the wine, the date of bottling, the chemical and physical characteristics of the wine and sometimes even the specific vineyard that produced it.

Ascertaining impartiality and transparency of all winemakers who are subject to ICQ control.

Examination of the Consortium's control plan compliance, which needs to be first approved by the Italian Minister of Agriculture:

Controls all producers, winemakers, and bottlers

Controls all Consortium documentation

***ICQ Wine Control Activities performed during 2007/2008***

	<b><i>2007</i></b>	<b><i>2008 (January-August)</i></b>
<b><i>Inspections performed</i></b>	10,944	5,856
<b><i>Number of Companies inspected</i></b>	7,616	4,637
<b><i>Number of Products inspected</i></b>	21,314	12,480
<b><i>Number of Samples Taken</i></b>	2,477	1,062
<b><i>Number of Analytical Tests Performed</i></b>	25,117	18,294

***ICQ Wine Control Findings during 2007/2008***

	<b><i>2007</i></b>	<b><i>2008 (January-August)</i></b>
<b><i>Percentage of Firms inspected and found with irregularities</i></b>	15.1	17.0
<b><i>Percentage of Wine inspected and found with irregularities</i></b>	10.2	11.3
<b><i>Number of Administrative fines given</i></b>	1,817	1,171
<b><i>Number of Offence Notices given</i></b>	38	95
<b><i>Number of Wine bottles seized</i></b>	276	272

***Main Types of Irregularities found by the ICQ during 2007/2008***

- Selling table wine as a superior quality wine
- Producing wines by using illegal substances
- Administrative and business document irregularities
- Illegal detection or use of prohibited oenological substances
- Noncompliance of obligations related to the delivery of byproducts before distillation
- Administrative irregularities pertaining to the wine cellar registries and wine declarations
- Illicit wine sales