

Parma and the world united under the banner of Italian food.

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The city of Parma is trying to be one global hub for one of Italy's most prized cultural and economic assets: its food and beverages industry. Over the last few weeks, the Emilian city is laying the foundations of this renewed effort thanks to **Parma Alimentare's** endeavours and the presentation of **Cibus Connect**.

Parma Alimentare will sustain local food companies in participating Foodex Japan, the largest Asian fair dedicated to the food & beverage world, which will be held in Japan starting on 5 March: over 85,000 professional operators will arrive in Tokyo. Alessandra Foppiano, Executive Manager of Parma Alimentare, explains that attending Foodex Japan this year is of particular significance, following the coming into force, on 1 February, of the free trade agreement between the EU and Japan. According to her, the JEFTA (Japan European Free Trade Agreement), by recognizing the Protected Geographical Status of 46 Italian products will help fighting counterfeit brands and boost Italian sales abroad. "In general, as also stressed by Federalimentare, the free trade agreement between the EU and Japan should bring good results in terms of exports for the Italian food system," continues Ms. Foppiano, especially for Parma's food industry and its main PDO products, Parmigiano Reggiano and Prosciutto di Parma. Foodex will also present many opportunities to further expand Italian's products market thanks to the participation of many Asian operators coming from China, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Thailand.

On the home front, this year's Cibus Connect was presented on 26th February. The trade fair, organized by Fiere di Parma and Federalimentare with the collaboration of ICE Agency, will take place in Parma on 10 and 11 April. Compared to the first edition in 2017, the event more than doubled the number of exhibitors as well as the exhibition floor space: about 10,000 professional visitors are expected in Parma, 30% of whom will come from abroad. In 2018, the food sector's production grew by 1.1% over the previous year while exports increased by 3% generating a 140 billion euros revenue. In 2018 emerging markets such as Egypt (+ 48.8%), Ukraine (+ 43.6%), Latvia (+31.3%), Nigeria (+22.6%), Philippines (+24.5%), Bulgaria (+31.1%), New Zealand (+22.0%) and Vietnam (+19.0%) were among the fastest growing ones.

Parma is not just an industrial hub for food and beverages but also a vibrant cultural centre. Non-EU patrons can donate towards the organization of the 2020 Parma Music Festival and, by doing so, be able to request the new Italian investor visa whose application procedure will be taken care by *Investorvisa.it* and its professional staff.

Source: AISE