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By Maura Maxwell

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## Italy mulls Middle Eastern promise

Italy's premium fruit and vegetable brand, Solarelli, will present at WOP Dubai 2017



Renzo Balestri

**A**pofruit is to showcase its premium fruit and vegetable brand, Solarelli, at the forthcoming WOP Dubai trade fair, held on 5-7 December 2017 at the World Trade Centre, Dubai.

"This year we will be hosting a press and trade conference on the wide range of fresh produce we offer at our booth during the WOP Dubai event," said Apofruit's Renzo Balestri.

"The major players in the UAE fruit and vegetable sectors, including importers and distributors, will be updated on various varieties, selection and availability, quality and control, logistics and supply."

Balestri said in light of the increasing saturation of the Italian and European market, the Middle East was becoming an increasingly attractive option for Italian exporters, not least because of the high income of the local population and recent improvements in logistics.

"We started with some sea shipments to the Gulf region a few years ago, and now we ship 365 days a year, both by sea and by air," he explained.

As well as supplying Carrefour in the UAE, Apofruit also exports to Saudi Arabia, as well as other markets including China, Taiwan, Malaysia, India, South Korea, North Africa and, to a lesser degree, North and South America.

"The range of products we offer are the best in terms of flavour, ripeness and variety, with practical but elegant packaging that enhances the characteristics of strictly Italian produce, even in its colours," he said.

The Solarelli range also includes a number of products with PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) and PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) status.

The main fresh goods offered include mini watermelons and melons, strawberries, peaches, nectarines, apricots, plums, cherries, kiwifruit, pears and persimmons, seedless grapes, oranges, apples, tomatoes and carrots.