

## Who wants to “adopt” a Christmas tree?

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This weekend, it will be possible to “adopt” and decorate a tree that was destroyed by bad weather, which devastated forests in the North East.

This initiative, by Coldiretti and Campagna Amica, will bring fir tips damaged by bad weather, which are ideal as home Christmas trees, to the **markets in Varese** (Piazzale De Gasperi, Friday 14th, from 8.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.) and **Induno Olona** (San Cassano, Saturday 15th, from 8.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.).

For €15, people will be able to buy **fir tree tips of sizes varying from 1.5m to 2m, that fell onto the Asiago upland**, one of the places that suffered the devastation: this initiative was already tried, with great success, on the day of Immaculate Conception, at the covered, farmers’ market in Porta Romana, Milan.

“It’s a real and important gesture that helps in the recovery of the damaged territories and gives a second life to the trees affected,” explained **Paolo Zanotti**, the Chairman of the provincial association AgriMercato. “Trees recovered by Coldiretti, Federforeste and Pefc will be available. This is a solidarity initiative, but not only; it is also an opportunity to publicise how important it is to choose a real, Italian-grown tree for Christmas, which combines respect for tradition with respect for the environment, unlike plastic trees, which are created from oil and which pollute.”

On 29 October, the wave of bad weather caused decimation of trees in the North East, with over 8 million tons of them falling to the ground, mainly beeches, silver firs and Norway spruces, thereby

compromising the ecological and environmental balance of vast mountain areas and putting hydrogeological stability at risk.

“It was a hard blow for the people affected, from an environmental and landscape point of view, but also in terms of the economy and employment,” the Chairman of Coldiretti Varese, **Fernando Fiori**, said. “The necessary removal of the fallen trees was made difficult because of the machinery, which had been destroyed, and because of the damage to the forest roads, but the cost of cutting, organising and restoring the forest was also considerable; this is why it’s even more important to support the initiative.”

The Coldiretti “tutors”, who, as always, can be seen in the markets selling the trees, and the usual food products, such as fruit, vegetables, honey, jams and cheeses, will also be present to help and advise consumers to choose, position and recycle their trees after the holidays. Finally, signatures will be collected at the two Farmers’ Markets to support the European petition “*eat original/choose origin*“, to ask Europe to make the indication of place of origin of food mandatory, to protect our health and prevent food fraud.

di Translated by Alessandra Lunardi (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)