



COMUNICAZIONE ORALE

INSPECTIONS OF THE RESTAURANT SECTOR ON THE SORRENTO PENINSULA OVER THE LAST THIRTY YEARS BY THE ANIMAL-ORIGIN FOOD HYGIENE SERVICE OF ASL NAPOLI 3 SUD

Francesco Cacace¹, Domenico Mollica¹, Francesco Saverio Castellano¹, Lucio Sola¹, Roberta Erminia Toscano¹, Vincenzo Rapesta¹, Giuseppina De Gregorio¹, Giuseppe Di Loria²

¹Ambito3 I.A.O.A., Italy; ²U.O.C I.A.O.A., ASL NA 3 SUD, Napoli, Italy.

Scope. The impact of the I.A.O.A. Service's inspection activities on the public food service sector in the Sorrento Peninsula during the 1995–2025 period is demonstrated, highlighting the main serious non-conformities detected (seizures and sanctions).

Materials and Methods. A retrospective study of inspections conducted over thirty-one years analyzes regulatory oversight in the hospitality and food service sector (hotels, restaurants, pizzerias, sandwich shops, nightclubs, pubs, campsites, etc.) across six municipalities on the peninsula, stretching from Vico Equense to Massa Lubrense. A total of approximately 3,050 inspections were carried out in the sector. Targets were selected based on the following criteria: newly opened establishments, the date of the last inspection, the business's history, and reports received; selection was also based on risk categories and/or monitoring plans. Following data analysis, inspections revealing non-compliance were identified; from this subset, cases involving only minor infractions were excluded. The study focused on establishments exhibiting major or serious non-compliance, in accordance with current regulations and regional guidelines. Given that the Campania Region's Food Safety Operating System—G.I.S.A. (Computerized Management of Services and Activities)—was launched in August 2007, analyzing official registers and working logs—both archived and currently in use—was crucial for fully reconstructing the data. The resulting aggregated data were categorized into seizures and sanctions.

Results. Between 1995 and 2025, 195 seizures were carried out, totaling 8.087 tonnes of various food products, and 90 individuals were reported to judicial authorities (an average of three per year). The most frequent penal violations involved: Art. 5, letter b, of Law 283/62 ("poor state of preservation"); Art. 515 of the Penal Code ("commercial fraud,"

such as failing to indicate frozen products on menus); and Art. 444 of the Penal Code ("food hazardous to public health"). During the same period, approximately 1,200 administrative violation notices were issued in the public dining sector alone—an average of 40 per year. The most frequent violations concerned food traceability, general hygiene requirements, failure to implement self-control procedures, and labeling.

Conclusions. Data analysis reveals that following a period in the early 2000s—marked by a rise in seizures and both penal and administrative violations, alongside vigorous enforcement activity by the Service in this area—there was subsequently a significant drop in citations, particularly criminal ones; violations that persisted were primarily administrative in nature, relating to a lack of traceability. This demonstrates how the Service's organizational optimization—achieved even with limited staff—has enabled it to become a key reference point for the restaurant industry on the Sorrento Peninsula, a sector previously considered "secondary" regarding official food hygiene controls. This restaurant scene is regarded as one of the most important internationally, as evidenced by the more than 30 establishments holding stars or awards from various guides. Further assessment is required in light of evolving criminal legislation (such as the Cartabia Law), Supreme Court rulings, administrative regulations, and—not least—Law 75/2026. Indeed, a clear legal trend is emerging to decriminalize food-related offenses—except where public health is at risk—by reclassifying them as administrative violations. The most recent regulation, enacted this year, specifically aims to leverage a deterrent effect through substantial financial penalties. Increasing the statutory penalty nearly tenfold or basing the fine on 3% of company turnover is intended to be—and can indeed prove—far more dissuasive than a criminal conviction, provided that collection procedures are swift and enforceable.