

## TuttoFood – BALKANS FOCUS

*“Innovation, typicity and excellence: Italian cooperation as a driver for the development of the Balkan agri-food system”*

TUTTO Bio Arena, Pavilion 5

May 11, 2:30 PM

CURATED BY: CIHEAM Bari, in collaboration with AICS Tirana

LANGUAGE: Italian

### ABSTRACT

The Balkans are emerging as a highly dynamic area for the agri-food sector, where innovation, sustainability, and the enhancement of traditional products intersect with the preservation of a unique European heritage of biodiversity, production cultures, and local traditions. In this context, international cooperation and the Italian system play a key role in promoting inclusive, resilient, and quality-oriented development patterns.

This event aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the main development trends shaping the agri-food sector in the Balkans through Italian Cooperation. It will focus in particular on opportunities to strengthen local value chains, promote traditional products, support the transition towards sustainable production systems, and foster collaboration among institutions, territories, and businesses. Through context analyses, project presentations, and direct testimonials from producers, the session will showcase concrete examples of development cooperation initiatives implemented by CIHEAM Bari in the Balkans, with a focus on the *Green&Healthy* and *TypicAl* projects, developed in partnership with institutional stakeholders and local producers in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania.

The session will open with remarks from representatives of the organising institutions (AICS Tirana and CIHEAM Bari), who will highlight the strategic importance of coordinated cooperation between Italy, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina in strengthening the regional agri-food sector.

This will be followed by an overview of the Balkan agri-food landscape by Piero Pelleschi (AICS Tirana), outlining the current state of the sector and key opportunities for cooperation across the region.

CIHEAM Bari's technical experts will then present two complementary case studies in territorial development:

- **In Bosnia and Herzegovina** - Mladen Todorovic will introduce the *Green&Healthy* project, highlighting the role of innovation, quality, and the link between agri-food and health in sector development.

- **Albania** - Gianluigi Cardone will discuss the objectives and results of the *TypicAl* project as a best practice in preserving typicity and tradition, enhancing local production, and supporting the transition towards sustainable agri-food systems that promote the territory.

The session will conclude with testimonials from two exhibiting companies - one from Bosnia and Herzegovina and one from Albania - directly involved in the projects. They will provide practical insights into the impact of initiatives funded by Italian Cooperation on their respective production contexts.

The event is intended as a platform for dialogue and exchange, offering participants an opportunity to reflect on the future of the agri-food sector in the Balkans and on the role of international cooperation in generating economic, social and territorial value.