

DI GIORGIO FRUIT CORPORATION

433 CALIFORNIA STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

ADDRESS REPLY TO:
**WINTERHAVEN,
FLORIDA**

Tatem Hotel
Miami Beach, Fla.

January 9, 1944

Major Arthur Puccinelli
Co. A 2675 Reg. A.C.C.
A.P.O. 394
c/o Postmaster, New York

Dear Major Puccinelli:

I can't find words to tell you how pleased I was to received your very kind letter of December 20, and this was actually the first letter I have received from Sicily in the past several years--in fact since Italy went to war. Also, it did my heart good to read your words about Cefalu.

As I write this letter I am watching the ocean here at Miami Beach, and although it isn't as blue as at Cefalu, th ere is the same soft climate here.

I was very relieved to read about my relatives as this was the first I had heard concerning them either direct or indirectly. As no doubt he told you, Mr. Peluso has charge of whatever little property my father left--of course, for Cefalu this was a large property but it is very small in comparison with the terms we use in California. It would be hard for a Sicilian to realize that if we took the property which Di Giorgio Fruit Corp. owns in California and Florida and laid it one mile deep it would more than cover the 40 miles between Cefalu and Palermo. I can remember that my father thought I had gone crazy when I told him that I had 3,000 acres in cultivation.

You may be interested to know that we dried 30,000 tons of grapes for the government this year, and everything from our cannery here in Florida went to the government. Last spring Mayor La Guardia asked for my assistance in breaking the "Black Market" on potatoes in Mew York, and I am happy to say that we were most successful in doing so.

Of course, next to America my heart is on the litttle island of Sicily where I was born, and it is too terrible that Italy should find itself in such a position, but we hope that by the time this letter reaches you Rome will be in the hands of the Allies and the Germans will have been driven from the soil of Italy and Italy can once again establish a free government with the aid of the Allies.


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Of course, Sicily does not have such virgin soil as California, but if they keep the water in the mountains in the winter time and open good roads for trucks in the small valleys, then Sicily could raise anything that California can, because they have about the same climate and would only require plenty of water and the help of some kind of fertilizer. Then the island of Sicily could produce two or three times more than they have in the past, even if it is done by hand work.

I can't thank you enough or tell you how grateful I am for the news contained in your letter. I wish you the very best of luck, and it goes without saying that we all wish for a speedy conclusion to this war.

Yours very truly,



Joseph Di Giorgio

JDG:KWS

DI GIORGIO FRUIT CORPORATION

433 CALIFORNIA STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Di Giorgio, Calif.

October 13, 1944

Major A. E. Puccinelli
Co S 2675 Reg. A.C.C.
A.P.O. 394 c/o Postmaster, New York

Dear Major Puccinelli:

Your letter of September 28 was forwarded to me here in California yesterday.

First, I want to thank you for the nice expressions in your first paragraph, and naturally, I can't help but feel a little proud that I was able to take a desert and turn it into Di Giorgio Farms as it is today with 10,000 acres under cultivation. We also have 3,700 acres at Delano and eventually this will be increased to 10,000 acres, which will give us a total of 20,000 acres, of which 80% is now in bearing.

Naturally, grapes have brought a tremendous profit for the past couple of years, but even under normal conditions we had such excellent quality that we were able to take the London market. This year we are making a large volume of sweet wine.

I had heard of your work in Sicily, and would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on the splendid job you have done.

We all had a good laugh over your comments about the "indoor work". This reminded me of something which Alec Thomas said to me after I had spent the night in Ukiah. I had complained about a train's whistle waking me up at 4:30 in the morning, because the tracks go practically through the center of the town. Then while we were having lunch I commented on what a fine lot of little children they had there, and Alec Thomas said, "The train whistle is responsible for that".

It is certainly too bad that those poor innocent people should find themselves in such a terrible plight through no fault of their own. Actually, I don't think "Mussi" was as bad as some people make you believe, but I think the people who made up his clique were the bad ones. I recall that the last time I was in Italy I saw a bunch of them in a restaurant and thought at the time that if these men were going to run Italy it would be too bad for the people.

As far as Sicily is concerned, they may not have any clothes, but I imagine they are self-sufficient as far as food is concerned. I have been and am continuing to send my relatives as much as the law permits in the

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form of money, and I am waiting to send a lot of clothes which I have been saving up, but I don't want to send them through any relief organization because I want to be sure they reach the proper people.

I was pleased to note that you have been in Lucca, which means that Monte Catini is safe. I have a very soft spot in my heart for this particular section, because Mr. Di Giorgio and I always managed to spend about 10 days at Monte Catini each year. We used to drive all around that vicinity so I am very familiar with the walls and the inside of Lucca. I hope Monte Catini was not destroyed, because I consider it one of the best health resorts in the world, and I had hoped that the War would end last month so that I could come over this fall. The entire valley where we are fighting now is beautiful, and I have taken that trip many times. I see they are now ready to go to Bologna and I imagine from there it will be Venice. I hope the Germans won't ruin this country.

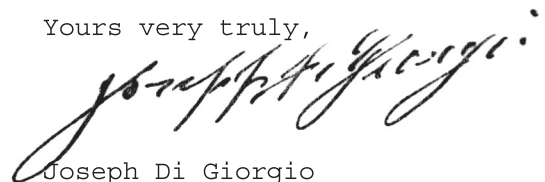
You were very fortunate to meet the Pope, because I understand he is one of the most intelligent men in Europe today and a very good man, although I have never had the pleasure of meeting him myself.

I am very familiar with The Banca D America and D Italia, both in Rome and Milan. I think we all feel the same about Naples--it looks beautiful from the mountains. I love Capri and Sarento and Amalfi, and I miss those drives which I always took each year when I was in Europe. As a matter of fact, I have always said that Hitler and "Mussi" were responsible for my heart attack a few years back, because if it had not been for them I would have still been enjoying my trips to Europe each year.

I have sent a copy of your letter to Tom McManus whom I saw in New York last Friday when he came up from Washington to see me. Regarding those steaks you mention, we have our own slaughter house at Delano where we kill about 40 cows a month to supply all of our employees. As a matter of fact, we have had no trouble getting enough workers, because we feed them the best steaks in the country. Last month we had several U.S. Senators here for lunch, and they said it was the best filets they had had since the start of the War. We always keep a good supply on hand, so you come back and come here and invite all your friends you want and I promise to give you a steak dinner -- and a little wine on the side.

With kindest personal regards, I remain

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Joseph Di Giorgio". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Joseph Di Giorgio