

## Europe

Nov 30th 2019 edition >

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The nuts of wrath

# Hazelnut-planting bothers the Italians

Locals in Umbria are up in arms over Nutella

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SAN QUIRICO

**I**N THE DISTANCE, Orvieto's cathedral sits majestically on the massive edge of the Alfina plateau, stands a castle encircled by fields—part of the landscape which Alice Rohrwacher, an Italian director, set her prize-winning film “

returned to find it transformed. “Fields, hedges and trees [had vanished] could see,” she wrote to the regional governors of Umbria and neighbour

Around the castle, 200 hectares are earmarked for intensive hazelnut cultivation, an environmentalist. This is largely to satisfy the world’s appetite for Nutella, to transform the producer, Ferrero, into a multinational with turnover of m

On the Alfina plateau, however, the firm’s strategy is meeting vigorous irrigation with 30 litres of water a day, pesticides to deter insects and fertilisers to boost yields. Runoff drains into Lake Bolsena, since it receives most of its water from the plateau. The area, ringed for decades by hazel plantations, where in 2009 a build-up of chemicals led to the installation of a costly water-treatment plant. Ferrero disagrees, saying the area is “marginal” and that crops such as olives, grapes and apples need even more

*This article appeared in the Europe section of the print edition under the headline "Hazelnut"*

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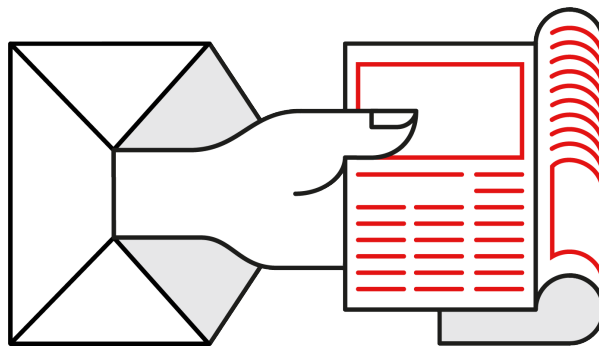
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