

Espagne: nouvelles mesures contre les virus dans les légumes de Murcie

Yesterday, the Minister of Agriculture and Water, Antonio Cerda, demanded producers to collaborate as they have to implement the necessary preventive measures to stop the new virus diseases in vegetables from spreading. Cerda made this strong call at the Technical workshop on current problems and new risks of virus diseases in vegetables, which was attended by specialists, from Murcia and Almeria, on the detection of these diseases.

The workshop focused on the emergence of a new virus, transmitted by the *Bemisia tabaci*, a small white fly also known as the New Delhi virus, which affects various horticultural crops in the Region of Murcia, mainly zucchini and squash. The most worrisome risk is the possible infection of other species as peppers and tomatoes; something that hasn't happened so far.

Control strategies are based mainly on the struggle against the insect vectors that transmit the disease, as well as on the use of resistant varieties, which are obtained five years after the virus' first outbreak. Preventive and prophylactic measures also help in the fight against the disease; raising awareness among producers is required in order to eliminate possible sources and infected plants.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Water is currently processing an order to make a series of measures, which will be agreed with the industry, obligatory to implement.

Virus diseases in vegetable crops have contributed to the modification of production structures in recent years. The tomato spotted wilt virus, transmitted by the insect vector *Frankliniella occidentalis*, led to a great revolution in horticultural production systems aimed at obtaining healthy plant material seedlings and make it available to farmers.

Currently, researchers from CEBAS, IMIDA, and different seed companies, are working to get to know the New Delhi disease virus and provide solutions via substantiated resistant varieties.

In this regard, the Minister said that "plant defence is a key element in Murcia's agriculture as the aim is to offer consumers a plant product with a quality and safety that meets the expectations of those markets that entrust us."