

Spain: Low prices reduce strawberry export revenue by 25 %

The Andalusian strawberry sector, 94 % of which concentrates in the province of Huelva, has suffered a reduction of its export revenue of around 25 % compared to 2013, mainly as a result of falling prices in the destination markets. Last year, the value of Andalusia's strawberry exports reached 400.1 million Euro, of which 383.5 million corresponded to fresh strawberries and the rest to frozen produce. This figure already represented a decrease of nearly 12 % compared to 2012 caused by a decline in production volumes. These figures mean that the export revenue has dropped by more than 35 % in just two years.

The President of Freshhuelva and the Strawberry Interprofessional, Alberto Garrocho, explained that the decline in 2014 has not been caused by a lower production, as in the absence of definitive data we can say that "the amount of tonnes exported has actually been higher than last season, but by falling prices at the destination markets.

The good weather has resulted in an advance of the start of the campaign at the major consuming countries, such as Germany, Italy and France, which led various productions to overlap in the market back in April, driving prices down for many weeks to levels below production costs, reaching minimum values of between 0.30 and 0.45 Euro per kilo.

This circumstance also drove many strawberry producers to finish the campaign almost a month earlier than usual, given the lack of profitability, to the point, according to Garrocho, that around 15 % fruit may have been discarded, in addition to an unaccounted percentage shipped to the processing industry.

Source: agroinformacion.com, 11/06/2014