

## Italy: Tomato prices keep increasing

Tomato quotations reached a new record due to the low supply of domestic and foreign produce.

"It has been the same since the beginning of the autumn season: prices increase each week. Produce has been scarce since the beginning of the campaign, as the South transplanted less and the weather affected production in the North," explains Mario Tartari of Eurofrut.

"On the domestic market, wholesale prices of bunch tomatoes hovered between €1.50 and €2/kg. Plum tomatoes rocketed to €3-3.50/kg. Cherry tomatoes sell at between €2.20 and €2.70/kg. In comparison with last week, bunch tomatoes increased by 20-30 cents per kg and cherry and plum tomatoes increased by 30-40 cents per kg. This is caused by the lack of produce in the Netherlands and Spain."

At the moment, Italian tomatoes come from greenhouses in Sicily. There are still some oblong tomatoes from Latina, but they are finishing. Quality is good, the same of the Dutch produce, "but people tend to prefer the domestic one."

"I believe that this situation will go on for a couple of weeks, until the produce from the new Sicilian transplants will arrive on the market." Until then, two things could happen: prices might find a new balance and stop increasing, or they might keep increasing, pushing consumers to choose cheaper vegetables.

"The autumn tomato campaign started well and we hope it will continue like this, maybe with slightly lower prices to favour exports. Consumption is looking good and many abroad started asking for Italian produce already in July and August. Finally our vegetables seem to be getting recognised by the foreign markets too."

Source :[www.freshplaza.com/](http://www.freshplaza.com/) 29/10/2014