

Spain: Strawberry planting season in Huelva

The strawberry planting for the 2014-2015 campaign is currently underway in most farms in the province of Huelva, which accounts for 95% of the Spanish production, and is expected to continue until early November. Meanwhile, other berries, including raspberries and blackberries, are now in full production.

Some farms started planting strawberries in late September, but most are doing so during the month of October. In late December or early January, the harvest of the early varieties should start, although the peak in terms of productivity will be reached in March.

The strawberry acreage last season (2013-2014) stood at 6,980 hectares. The largest strawberry acreage in the province of Huelva was registered in the year 2000, with 8,750 hectares, while in recent years the average has remained at around 6500-7000 hectares, according to data provided by Alberto Garrocho, president of Freshuelva, during the Fresh and Life symposium, held last week as part of the International Fruits and Vegetables Fair, Fruit Attraction.

Regarding other berries, raspberries and blackberries (autumn varieties) are now in full production, and blueberry harvests are expected to start in March.

The cultivation of berries is expanding in Huelva, in the framework of the crop diversification policies of many growers and in response to the growing demand for berries in the EU.

The number of raspberry hectares in the 2013/2014 season totalled 1,300; up 14% compared to the previous year; for blueberries, it reached 1,150 hectares (+19%), while for blackberries it stood at 70 hectares (+23%).

During the Fresh and Life Symposium, Rune Flaen, director of the leading Norwegian fruit and vegetables distributor BAMA, addressed the growing consumption of berries in Norway, with 30% of the population currently consuming berries once a week and outlined the reasons driving consumption, which are mostly good taste (21%) and health (18%).

Source :www.freshplaza.com/ 29/10/2014