

Spain: Almeria importing more Moroccan green beans

Green beans are the only vegetable that Almeria imports more than it exports. With each season, the product has gradually been becoming a complement to Almeria's vegetable supply.

Their harvesting is very expensive in terms of labour, and although in recent seasons their cultivation had recovered somewhat in the province's greenhouses, there is still much dependency on the Moroccan produce.

Last season, Almeria's companies purchased 19,000 tonnes of Moroccan green beans, compared to the 10,810 tonnes they exported, which represents 177% of Almeria's production sold overseas, according to Cajamar's latest Horticultural Campaign Analysis.

Increasing volume

Although the increase in green bean purchases is lower during this period, it is significant to note it is the most imported product and that the number of tonnes acquired has been growing for four seasons.

As for the evolution of imports in general, they dropped last year by 8.4%.

Produce

There have been significant declines in the purchase of aubergines (74%), peppers (68%), watermelons (59.9%), tomatoes (29.5%) and courgettes (22.3%); but also increases in the volume of imported lettuce (53.9%), cucumbers (51.5%), melons (16.2%) and green beans (6.5%).

Regarding the monthly evolution of external purchases, the campaign has started with negative interannual variations in September (0.9%) and October (13.5%), just like last season.

In November, the volume has remained stable, although it has increased from December to February.

In fact, the only percentage increases are registered in that quarter and in June, with significant declines taking place from March to May. The main source of horticultural products imported is still Morocco, distantly followed by the Netherlands, the United States and France.

During the campaign at hand, Moroccan sales to Almeria have been 2.2% lower, although in absolute terms the volume is much higher than that of 2011-2012. Moreover, the increase in purchases to the United States is also remarkable, mainly those of almonds, making this origin the second most important. As for the evolution of imports from the Netherlands and France, the results have been quite different, with Dutch purchases increasing by 10%, while the French have registered a 58.8% drop.

Regarding the value of imports, this has grown by 30.4% compared to the previous year, which entails an increase in average purchase prices for Almeria's operators.

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