

Italy: Mild weather and delayed production support tomato season

"Just like all other season vegetables, tomatoes are also doing well. Quantities are lower than in the past few years and local production in Central and Northern Italy is slightly late, so there is no oversupply, not even from Sicily. This in turn means prices have not dropped," explains Mario Tartari from Eurofruit.

"Bunch tomatoes are sold at €1-1.20/kg for early varieties and €1.50-1.70/kg for extra quality. Piccadilly hover between €1.80 and 2.20/kg, whereas cherry and date tomatoes between €2-2.50 and €2.50-2.80 respectively. Salad tomatoes are recovering as consumption is growing with prices around €1-1.30 and even €1.50/kg. Beefsteak start from €2.50 and reach €3.50/kg. Ribbed Pachino tomatoes are sold at €2-2.50/kg."

Only a little produce is coming from abroad, and mainly from Spain and the Netherlands. "The former has a lower quality than the Italian produce and is sold at prices below €1. The latter is sold at more or less the same prices than the Italian tomatoes - it has a longer shelf-life but is not as sweet."

"In the next few weeks, regions like Lazio, Romagna and Piedmont will start producing, so markets will be more likely to choose local produce, although Sicily will continue producing until late June."

As regards the winter campaign, the company explains that "many products did not start too well but then the situation improved a lot, mostly due to the better quality of new varieties."

Source : www.freshplaza.com/ 13/05/2015