

Spain: Melon production in Murcia expected to grow by 6%

The Association of Producers-Exporters of Fruits and Vegetables of the Region (Proeport) expects the melon production in Murcia to increase by around 6% this campaign, mainly due to the good weather conditions registered during the winter and the increased acreage. The harvest is expected to start around mid-June. Demand in international markets will depend largely on the weather, "because heat is what stimulates consumption," points out Laureano Montesinos. The president of the Melon and Watermelon sectorial of the agricultural association said that quality this season is expected to be high, as "calibres and conditions at the plantations remain really good for now."

Increasing demand in Eastern Europe

This summer, Murcia's melons will again be a very sought after commodity in the domestic and foreign markets. In this sense, Montesinos notes that the product has a high international reputation. "In Europe, its main customers are the United Kingdom and Germany, but demand is on the rise in Eastern Europe." He also affirms that in recent years they have opened new niche markets outside the continent, mainly in Saudi Arabia, UAE, Canada, Singapore and Martinique. "This has been achieved as a result of the many visits to trade fairs over the years," he explains.

He states that while the main varieties consumed overseas are the Yellow, Galia, Cantaloupe and Charentais, demand is also growing for watermelons and green melons, which are traditionally more popular in the domestic market.

In this sense, Montesinos stressed that Murcia is the leading supplier of melons and watermelons to the EU during the summer months, because "we produce in a region with ideal weather conditions and the right soil to produce a unique fruit in terms of flavour and sugar content."

The representative of Proexport appreciates the professionalisation of the sector and the comprehensive food safety controls carried out by companies in Murcia, as well as the good practices and handling enforced by producers.