

Spain's soft fruit sector requests an export protocol to China

The Association of producers and exporters of strawberries from Huelva, Freshuelva, has requested the Ministry of agriculture and fisheries, food and environment, through the Spanish Federation of associations of producers/exporters of fruits and vegetables (Fepex), to sign a protocol that allows them to export soft fruits to China.

Speaking to Europa Press, the manager of Freshuelva, Rafael Dominguez, said that the association had asked the Ministry to prioritize actions to export berries to China.

Currently, Spain only exports five percent of its production to Asia, and the objective is to consolidate and search marketing lines to open new markets in Asia and the Middle Eastern countries.

Freshuelva wants the export protocol to be based on the protocols that China signed with Chile and Mexico a few years ago. Currently, the Association from Huelva is on a waiting list in China, which "doesn't work on more than three protocols simultaneously and it usually takes an average of three years to finalize them."

The producers of soft fruits have a notable exporting record. Last season their exports achieved the highest value and volume for the last five years. In the 2015-2016 season they exported 263,000 tons of strawberries worth 483.8 million euro, i.e. 16.2 percent more than the value achieved in the previous season.

97 percent of these sales were to markets in the European Union, including Germany (34.5 per cent), France (17 percent) and United Kingdom (14.4 per cent).

In total, Spanish exports of soft fruits in the last campaign amounted to nearly 970 million euro, 20 percent more than the value obtained in the 2014-2015 season.

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