

## Spain: More watermelons and fewer melons this campaign

Almeria's watermelon acreage and production continues to increase at the expense of melons, which are losing ground among consumers.

This campaign, some 2,340 hectares will be devoted to the cultivation of melons, while 8,310 hectares will be used for the production of watermelons. In terms of volume, prospects for the watermelon harvest point to a total of 540,150 tonnes (2% increase), while that of melons is provisionally expected to reach 105,300 tonnes (8% less than in the previous year).

In recent years, there has been a marked recovery of watermelons, which had been losing ground very quickly in both the domestic and international markets. The awareness-raising campaigns of recent years, aimed at guaranteeing the fruit's ripeness at the time of the harvest, and the introduction of excellent quality varieties, like the Fashion or the Bouquet brand, has led to a recovery of markets that had already been lost, as well as to increases in the average prices per kilo.

The melon acreage has been reduced by almost 14% compared to last year, influenced by several factors, with one of them being that the autumn campaign has been marked by good prices and the vast majority of producers have extended the cycle.

Almeria aims to obtain melon varieties that can allow it to develop commercial strategies similar to those in place for watermelons.

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