

## Spain: Murcia's apricot production down by 30% this year

The Confederation of Agro-Food Cooperatives predicts that Murcia's apricot production will fall by 30% compared to the previous campaign due to problems in the fruiting and ripening. The total production will reach 57,000 tonnes, compared to the 81,000 tonnes harvested in 2016. In the whole of the country, the harvest will amount to 102,571 tonnes; a 17% drop, according to data presented at the Europech 2017 meeting, which brought stonefruit producers from Spain, France, Italy and Greece together.

The reduced apricot harvest in the Region will not translate into better prices, since the European production will reach 572,604 tonnes; a 17% increase compared to last season. In fact, this figure stands 10% above the average of the last five years. This year, Italy will be the largest producer, with 241,736 tonnes (+20%), followed by France, with 151,297 tonnes (+39%); Spain, with the aforementioned 102,571 tonnes (-17%), and Greece, with 77,000 tonnes (+41%).

Currently, apricot prices at origin in Murcia range between 30 and 50 cents per kilo, according to the Council of Agriculture. A year ago, prices oscillated between 75 and 90 cents. The production cost ranges from 35 to 42 cents. In other words, sales are made at a loss.

Despite this hard blow, Murcia remains the largest apricot producing area in the country. Aragon will have 18,885 tonnes (+40%); Castile-La Mancha, 10,856 tonnes (-36%) and the Region of Valencia, 4,500 tonnes (+73%). In the rest of Spain, the production will amount to a total of 11,330 tonnes (+27.5%).

For his part, Javier Basols, head of stonefruit at the Confederation of Agro-Food Cooperatives, assures that, despite the reduced volume, the fruit will be of good quality, with good calibres.

**Lien article :** <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/176148/Spain-Murcias-apricot-production-down-by-30-procent-this-year>