

## Poland: Strawberries twice as expensive as last year

This year, the supply of Polish strawberries will be lower due to the impact of the frosts that took place in April and May, reported Bożena Nosecka, of the Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics.

For now, the supply of strawberries is not great because of the delays in the ripening. In the Bronisze wholesale market, they cost between 5 and 8.5 złoty per kilo (between 1.19 and 2.02 Euro), which is twice as much as in the same period last year, according to Bronisze spokesperson Małgorzata Skoczewska.

Strawberries are a valuable raw material for processing, so the prices offered by processors have an impact on the market prices to a certain extent.

Nosecka reported that, this week, strawberries are starting to be bought for the production of concentrate. Processing plants are offering a price of 3.75 złoty per kilo (0.89 Euro) with delivery to the processing plant. By the end of the week, they will also start buying strawberries for frozen foods. The first ex-factory price offered is 4.25 złoty/kg (1.01 Euro), i.e. 4 złoty/kg (0.95 Euro) for the manufacturer. These are extremely high prices, stressed Nosecka; twice as high as last year when the purchases started.

The expert noted that it is not yet known how prices will develop in the coming weeks. It will depend on the weather and the actual harvest volume. It may well turn out that the high prices offered by processors at the beginning of the strawberry buying period will be too high for foreign buyers of strawberry concentrate, and it is worth noting that almost all the concentrate produced in Poland is exported.

Nosecka noted that processing plants may have trouble obtaining raw material this year. Moreover, the impact of frost has not only affected strawberries, but also cherries, and there will probably also be fewer raspberries, so their prices may be as high as in previous years. There may perhaps be increased competition between processors, especially given that the stocks of concentrate are small.

Furthermore, as the expert noted, this shortage of raw materials may also affect other countries. In Serbia and Hungary, for example, the frosts also took a toll.

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