

## Spain: Fall of blueberry and raspberry prices

The price at origin of blueberries and raspberries has fallen during the month of May compared to the previous season. In the case of blueberries, they have dropped by 34%, while raspberries have become 33% cheaper. These data have been highlighted in the latest report issued by the Prices and Markets Observatory of the Government of Andalusia.

In general terms, the strawberry and raspberry harvest in Andalusia is recording a decline, while that of blueberries is increasing. These are the most commonly grown berries in the province of Huelva.

The blueberry campaign started one month late compared to that of the previous year, around February 2017. It is estimated that 1,780 hectares of this fruit are in full production, and in May, the fourth consecutive harvesting month this year, the production volume has grown by 20% each week.

Also in May, the price has remained stable at around 2.79 Euro/kilo, although this is 34% below the one reached in the same period last season.

The fruit's value was high at the beginning of the season, with a price well above the one achieved in the same period of the previous season, reaching 8.5 Euro/kilo in February, and with a peak of 9 Euro when the production was still very scarce, while in 2016 it did not even reach 5 Euro/kilo.

The price of this fruit began to fall in March (8.49 Euro/kilo), and the decline has been on-going until the end of May, with a value of 2.81 Euro/kilo. The most striking fall was recorded in the second week of April, when it went from 5.57 Euro/kilo to 3.1 Euro/kilo in just one week.

### Raspberries

The raspberry campaign has also been in a downward trend in May, both in terms of production (in the last week of May the volume harvested has been 10% smaller than in the previous one) and price, with consecutive drops throughout the month.

The various raspberry varieties grown in Huelva, both remontant and non-remontant, make it possible to produce almost all year round, with the exception of the summer months. The price of this fruit between September 2016 and February 2017 was 14.3% higher than that registered in the same period of the previous season; in absolute terms, it stood at 6.07 Euro/kilo, compared to 5.31 Euro/kilo.

However in the last part of the campaign, that is to say, since March 2017, there has been a downward trend that hasn't stopped, with prices falling to several lows: one in the month of March, of 4.43 Euro/kilo; another in the month of April, of 4.27 Euro/kilo, and another in May, of 3.84 Euro/kilo.

The average value of this fruit during the month of May was 33% lower than in the previous season (4.5 Euro/kilo versus 6.67 Euro/kilo).

### Strawberry campaign

As regards strawberries, the most important berry for Huelva's agricultural sector in terms of both production and prices, the volume harvested in the last week of May has halved compared to the previous week, which means that the campaign is about to come to an end. The price has remained stable during that month, although slightly below that of the previous season, except in the first week, when it was 20% higher (1.21 Euro/kilo).

The average price during the month of May has been very similar to that reached during the previous campaign and stood at around 1 Euro per kilo.

The 2016/2017 strawberry campaign is developing normally and without any surprises. It kicked off in the month of December with lower harvest volumes than in the previous campaign, which had been exceptional because of the high temperatures in winter. Thus, both in terms of volume and price, the campaign is considered to have been a normal one, as revealed in the monitoring reports of the Government of Andalusia.

The development of the price at origin this campaign resembles that of the 2014/2015 season. The most noteworthy is the peak of mid-December, when the value of strawberries came close to 5 Euro/kilo.

The average value of this fruit in the first part of the campaign has remained above 2 Euro, and in the second part, above 1 Euro. Worthy of note in this last stage is the drop registered between late March and April, reaching a minimum of 0.69 Euro/kilo in the second week of April, coinciding with the holiday period of Easter.

Also noteworthy is the fact that the low temperatures recorded in the month of January helped improve the fruit quality.

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