

## Spain: High temperatures cause 10% drop in Extremadura's tomato production

The high temperatures recorded during the first three weeks of June will cause Extremadura's tomato production to be slightly lower this campaign than in a normal year, with forecasts pointing to a 10% drop.

The president of the Association of Agrarian Cooperatives of Extremadura (Acopaex), Domingo Fernández, has said that the intense heat of June has affected several plantations of early tomatoes, as well as those that were in full bloom.

"So many days in a row with high temperatures is not normal in the region of Extremadura, and therefore, they have taken a toll," stated the head of Acopaex.

The president of Acopaex recalled that the production usually obtained in a normal campaign amounts to around 90,000 kilos per hectare.

According to Fernández, the 10% reduction expected will be "bad" for the growers affected, but "not so much" for the sector as a whole, as these circumstances should make it possible to prevent the accumulation of stock, even though it remains to be seen how other producing areas will perform.

In any case, the weather conditions have been good for this crop during the months of 2017 prior to June, which should indicate a production without major upsets.

Furthermore, the optimum weather conditions of the months leading up to June will allow for this year's campaign to kick off about a week earlier compared to 2016, so it will probably start in the last third of this month.

Last year, intense rains in April caused the campaign to start in August, as recalled by the head of the Agrarian Cooperatives Association of Extremadura.

As for the development of the international markets, Domingo Fernández stated that it remains to be seen what the production levels will be in competing countries, like the United States or Italy.

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