

Argentina: Concordia lost 15% of its blueberry production area

Regarding this year's harvest, the president of the Association of Producers of Blueberries of Mesopotamia Argentina, Alejandro Pannunzio said that most of the representatives of the sector had very good expectations.

Unfortunately, he said, "I can't ensure this for most fields, as some plantations have had to close, due to last year's market situation."

During 2016, nearly 2 million kilos of blueberry were not harvested because of Peru's competitiveness, a fall in prices, and rising costs in Argentina. At that time, APAMA itself described the situation as "the greatest stagnation after years of growth." He also said that between 2016 and 2017, "we lost 15% of the productive area in Concordia."

Despite that hard blow, the producers who continue in the race have tried to produce "a product with the highest quality possible, because what we do know is that the people in the supermarkets are looking for quality products, and they are the ones who ultimately decide our fate," he said.

"However, it is true that we live in a reality where all sectors know that the exchange rate is behind for the regional economies," he added. "Nobody wants to take charge and say that the dollar is behind, until after we've had a conflict," he added.

Pannunzio reiterated that production continues have a very high internal cost. In addition, "our main competitor, Peru, is increasing its supply and that will drive prices down." Local blueberry producers say that from a productive point of view they are in a very good situation, but that the variables that they don't control will be determinant for the season, he concluded.

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