

Italy: 50% drop in kiwi production

This year's kiwi production will be very low in Cuneo. Harvesting started a few days ago in the whole Piedmont production area, which includes Saluzzo, Pinerolo, the area around lake Viverone (Biella) and Borgo d'Ale (Vercelli).

"Unfortunately, many orchards were affected by vine decline and we had to uproot them to limit the damage and try to reduce the time between productions should growers decide to replant. Nonetheless, the lack of produce will last for at least three years," explain technicians from Confagricoltura.

2017 is proving particularly bad because frost in spring reduced production significantly.

80-85% of the orchards were damaged, meaning trees won't grow more than 3-4 kg of fruit.

Confagricoltura technicians expect a 50% drop in production which in turn means Piedmont, with its over 3,800 hectares of orchards, will produce 50,000 tons instead of the usual 100,000. The economic damage has been calculated at €40 million.

"The Region should immediately work on measures to tackle vine decline by investing in an in-depth study and doing all it can to restore the damage and prevent additional losses," stresses Enrico Allasia, President of Confagricoltura Piemonte e Cuneo.

This year, due to the prolonged drought, drip and flow irrigation had to be carried out leading to higher production costs.

The only positive thing is that the fruit harvested is nice and healthy with grades over 100 grams. Prices are higher than during the past campaign, when quotations were 60 eurocents per kg (produce price). This year, smaller grades start at 80-85 eurocents/kg and reach €1/kg for the best produce.

Lien article : <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/182634/Italy-50-procent-drop-in-kiwi-production>