

CSO Italy data on the peach and nectarine campaign

The peach and nectarine campaign is finally over. The produce available both in Italy and Europe was partly responsible for this year's less than pleasing performance.

Overall, supplies in the main European countries exceeded the low volumes of 2016 by 16%. Italy recorded +8% compared to 2016, Spain recorded a 9% increase and France produced 3% more. Greece saw a 53% increase compared to the poor production of 2016.

A comparison with the period between 2000 and today reveals that this year's 3.9 million tons are similar to the worse years on the market.

Spain has played a significant role over the past few years, as potential production increased from 1.2 million tons to the current 1.5 million tons thanks to the strong growth of doughnut peaches, which now represent 50% of total Spanish peaches. In Italy, however, the uprooting carried out mainly in the north meant supplies went from 1.7 to 1.3 million tons.

It's clear that, while the European potential production remains stable, Spain became stronger while Italy lost a significant share.

Particular attention must be paid to Greece, especially when it comes to competition on the Eastern European markets, while France lost importance as the produce is sent almost exclusively to domestic destinations.

Many operators defined this campaign among the most negative of the past few years despite staggered harvesting and the fact that good temperatures should have pushed consumption.

Unlike last year, when the lack of produce in the earliest Spanish and Italian regions led to a good start of the campaign, this year sales were hindered by the strong competition, especially from Spain on traditional markets and from Greece in Eastern Europe.

Italian production struggled throughout the rest of the season as well, despite the efforts made to select supplies in order to meet buyers' demands.

The pressure on quotations remained constant until mid-August, when things improved also thanks to an increased concentration of the supply.

However, the last period was not enough to bring the campaign around, which follows other seasons that were not exactly brilliant.

By way of example, below are the producer prices collected by the Forlì-Cesena Chamber of Commerce.

This situation was caused by the excessive supply as well as by the disorganisation of the Italian peach sector.

The various production systems should however be analysed as well to identify the differences in terms of production costs between the various countries.

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