

Spain: Ministry of Agriculture organising event to analyse stone fruit sector situation

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment (Mapama) has organised a meeting of representatives of the stone fruit sector in its headquarters in order to analyse the factors that have caused the price crisis.

This was reported by the Director of Productions and Agricultural Markets at the Mapama, Fernando Miranda, in a speech during the opening of the Stone Fruit Congress that took place in the framework of Fruit Attraction 2017.

"Our sector is mature enough to tackle the problem," Miranda said before assuring that it has "a promising future, provided that it has the capacity to restructure itself, and despite the difficult situation it is currently in, given that its products are healthy and consumers demand them."

The sector needs to play its part

"The sector also has to play its part, not only the Ministry or the autonomous regions," he warned.

In his view, "the sectoral organization must be able to deal with crises head on, and if these become unmanageable, the administrations can then act with the instruments provided by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)."

Miranda has refused to clarify whether the initiatives to be taken focus on providing aid for the uprooting of fruit trees or for varietal reconversions, because "no measures should be considered before there is an actual diagnosis of the situation."

Severe crisis prior to the Russian veto

The stone fruit sector, which "was already immersed in a severe crisis before the Russian veto, due mainly to an imbalance between supply and demand," has been praised for managing to "export more than before the closure of the Russian borders in August 2014 in terms of both volume and value."

The Councillor of Water, Agriculture and Fisheries of Murcia, Francisco Jódar, has highlighted that, in his region, the stone fruit sector is "strong and well-organised, with a production that has gone back to normal levels in 2017 and with an export volume that has increased by 10%, to 164,000 tonnes, in the first semester alone.

For his part, the president of the Association of Producers of Fruits, Table Grapes and other Agricultural Products (Apoexpa), Joaquín Gómez, has asked for distribution chains to advance their stone fruit campaigns from June to May as a measure to balance the market.

Moreover, "it is necessary to restructure the sector; to devote perhaps fewer hectares to stone fruit and to organise the supply by production schedules and varieties," he commented.

Source <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/183800/Spain-Ministry-of-Agriculture-organising-event-to-analyse-stone-fruit-sector-situation>