

Spain: Huelva expands berry acreage by 11%

With the planting stage of the 2017/2018 strawberry campaign already completed, the total area planted with berries in the province of Huelva has grown by 11.12%, compared to the 10,030 hectares of berries planted in the previous year. This season, there will be a total of 11,145 hectares devoted to berries.

The Association of Producers and Exporters of Strawberries from Huelva (Freshuelva) has reported that, according to the data supplied by its associated companies, there have been changes in strawberry planting trends. After several campaigns with drops in the acreage, there will be a 9% increase in 2018. The trend is similar in the case of raspberries, blueberries and blackberries, whose acreage is expanding by an average of 14.15%.

The area planted with strawberries has gone from 5,400 hectares last season to 5,890 hectares in the current one. As for raspberries, there will be 2,121 hectares planted, compared to 1,932 hectares last year, which represents an increase of 14.45%.

In the case of blueberries, the acreage will increase from 2,538 to 2,858 hectares; a 12.50% growth, considerably lower than the 30% registered in the previous campaign. Meanwhile, the acreage devoted to blackberries has grown by 15.50%: from 160 to 180 hectares. In the latter case, new extra-early varieties have been planted with the goal of covering the first months of the year (January-February) in European markets.

Although the growth of blueberries is slowing down, the fruit has consolidated as the second most important berry in terms of acreage in the province of Huelva, although it ought to be taken into account that it is a shrub that starts its commercial production from the third year after the planting, so not all plants will be productive this season.

This confirms Huelva's commitment to crop diversification, which is allowing Huelva's berries to be in the market practically nine months a year.

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