

Cracking problems in Valencian citrus

An alteration in climatic conditions, especially water deficits followed by wet periods, has been causing cracking problems in some citrus varieties since mid-January.

Initially, the cracking problems appeared in specific plots, after the high temperatures in January and the rains of the last weeks. Now the issue has become widespread and more and more fruits are being affected by it in the producing areas of the Valencian Community, according to the Farmers Unions (La Unió de L'auradors).

Producers have detected damage in the three Valencian provinces, mainly in the regions of Camp de Turia, Plana Baixa and Plana Alta. The issue is affecting different varieties, such as the Ortanique, Navel Powell, and Lane Late, much more than in previous years, as more than 40% of the fruit has been affected.

The Farmer's Union have requested that the cracking damages detected in some varieties of citrus during the last few weeks be covered by the current Combined Agrarian Insurance system. According to the organization, this insurance covers this type of risk, as long as the damages are generalized and the party insured has an option that covers the rest of the climatic adversities (hail, frost, wind, fauna, fire, flood, torrential rain...).

The problem, however, is that the insurance conditions do not specify the definition of generalized. The Farmer's Union has asked Agroseguro to monitor the evolution of the damages and to consider it compensatable, as in 2014 when a precedent was created in the coverage of these damages. The agrarian organization asked the Ministry of Agriculture to mediate before Agroseguro so that the damages are compensated for by the insurance system, or to assume the payment of the same, as Valencian citrus farmers may have large losses.

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