

Spain: Frozen veg market saw 13% increase in production volume

The frozen vegetable industry is once again recording positive results, with a 13% growth of the production, which amounts to 774.996 tonnes, and a turnover of 775 million Euro in 2017. Furthermore, the sector has a very good reputation outside Spain thanks to the quality of the products, so it exported 7% more than in 2016.

According to the Spanish Association of Frozen Vegetable Manufacturers (Asevec), formed by twelve companies accounting for 95% of the national production, last year's production totalled 774,996 tonnes, while in 2016 this figure stood at 686,468 tonnes. It is "the best figure of the last ten years," affirms José Félix Liberal, president of Asevec.

Also, exports have increased, with the international market absorbing 64% of the national production. This is 7% more than last year, when 391,974 tonnes were exported, which was 57% of the total production intended for deep-freezing, compared to 497,623 tonnes in 2017.

These data place the Spanish frozen vegetables industry as the second most important one in the continent, only behind the Belgian. The European Union is the main destination for Spanish frozen vegetables. The main markets are France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Portugal, Italy and the Netherlands, according to the latest data corresponding to the year 2017, collected by the Spanish Federation of Food and Beverage Industries.

Meanwhile, outside Europe, the main markets for Spanish frozen vegetables are the United States, Brazil, Canada and Saudi Arabia.

Broccoli, the most produced vegetable

Looking at specific products, frozen broccoli maintains its leadership in Spain. Based on the data supplied by Asevec companies, it accounts for 16% of the national total, with 130,088 tonnes in 2017; 20% more than in 2016. "The demand for this vegetable comes especially from abroad, since in Spain consumption it's still low," says Liberal. In 2017 alone, 85% of this vegetable's production was exported.

Second in the ranking are peppers, which account for 14% of the production in Spain. The cultivation of peppers for freezing has recorded an 11% growth, going from 100,090 tonnes in 2016 to 111,158 tonnes in 2017. This vegetable's expansion also responds to the growing external demand, as in 2017 alone, 83% of the production was exported.

In third place we find peas, with a share of 12% of the total. Last year, the production amounted to 97,582 tonnes. "These three vegetables, broccoli, peppers and peas, account for 61% of the national production of the companies that make up Asevec," says José Félix Liberal.

Also noteworthy is the production of green beans, both flat and round, which reached 63,342 tonnes in 2017; 8% of the total vegetable production.

Next, with production volumes of between 33,000 and 43,000 tonnes, come spinach, carrots, cauliflower and onions. In the case of cauliflower, spinach and onions, more than 50% of what is produced is exported. Meanwhile, only 27% of the carrots produced are shipped overseas.

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