



Spain: Nectarine and peach production down by 10-15%; apricot volume up by 5-10%

The Subdirectorate General of Fruits and Vegetables and Viticulture of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment convened their second meeting for the analysis of the Spanish stone fruit campaign. The production volume of peaches and nectarines is expected to drop by between 10% and 15%; that of plums will likely fall even more due to fruit setting problems, while in the case of apricots, an increase of around 5-10% is expected.

At the meeting, FEPEX supplied information on the development of the campaign in the different production areas. In Andalusia and Murcia, the peach and nectarine seasons are at an advanced stage. The acreage is expected to be reduced most significantly in Andalusia, but a similar trend is being observed in Catalonia and Aragon. It was also reported that France and Italy, which are the main competitors in Europe, will record equal or even greater drops in the production.

At the meeting, attended by representatives of the producing sector, the processing industry and distributors, it was confirmed that prices are at the level expected for a situation with a lower production. They are higher than last season, especially in the case of peaches and nectarines. For apricots, prices are closer to the average, in this case, due to differences in the prices of the different varieties.

The Ministry has also highlighted the impact of the weather this year. Frost damage hit more than 8,000 hectares; there was a poor fruit setting in some 15,000 hectares, and hail affected some 20,000 hectares, according to Agroseguro.

In 2017, Spanish peach exports grew by 12%, reaching 453,550 tonnes, while the value fell by 2.4%, totalling 376 million Euro. Nectarine exports stood at 468,445 tonnes (+13%) and 418.4 million Euro (+3%), according to data from the General Directorate of Customs. The export of apricots amounted to 88,996 tonnes (+12%) worth 108.8 million Euro (-5%), while plum shipments fell by 9.5% in terms of volume and by 11% in terms of value, totalling 98,622 tonnes and 99.4 million Euro.

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