



Spain: Organic acreage grew by 3.1% in 2017

The acreage devoted to organic farming in Spain has reached 2,082,000 hectares, 3.1% more than in 2016. Spain thus remains the number one country in the European Union when it comes to agricultural acreage devoted to organic crops and one of the five most important in the world.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food reported these data, which "confirm the trend of sustained growth and the consolidation of organic production."

Half of this acreage is devoted to permanent pastures, a quarter to arable land crops and another quarter to permanent crops.

The number of organic operators also increases

Also, the Ministry has highlighted that the acreage considered to be in production has grown by more than 280,000 hectares compared to the previous year, which confirms the trend of the past 5 years, with an average annual growth of 3.7%.

The number of operators has also increased in all categories, which highlights "the growth in the final links of the food chain, due to the rise in the demand."

Thus, the total number has increased by 5.3% to 43,984, with a more moderate increase in the case of primary producers (4.2%), a somewhat greater one in that of industrialists (12.8%) and high growth figures in the case of importers (28%), exporters (49%) and wholesale traders (22%).

More acreage devoted to vegetables

Thus, the average annual growth rate over the last 5 years has been of 4.7% for agricultural producers, 15.2% for industries and 17.5% for organic product traders.

There has been an increase in the number of hectares dedicated to vegetables, fodder, fruit trees, nuts, citrus and berries. Vineyards and olive groves remain stable, and the acreage devoted to cereals and legumes has been reduced.

Green industries on the rise

Aquaculture is another subsector in which production has experienced strong growth this year, by more than 29%.



The number of industries dedicated to the organic sector has also gone up, with 6,662 involved in plant production (with fruits and vegetables and the production of beverages in the lead) and another 1,151 involved in animal production (with the meat and dairy industry standing out).

The total number of official controls carried out in 2017 was 48,166, with 1,633 on imports at the border. A total of 4,736 samples were analysed, and of these, only 8.2% yielded unfavourable results.

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