

Argentina : Mendoza invests in a surface increase program

According to an official press release from the government of the province of Mendoza, the Ministry of Economy and Energy has launched a new financing plan for industrial tomato growers, under which 90 million Argentine pesos (ARS) (around EUR 1 million or USD 1.24 million) will be invested to increase the surfaces planted with processing tomatoes in Mendoza.

Growers will be allocated credits of up to ARS 150 000 (EUR 1 745 or USD 2 060) for each new hectare planted, with a cap of ARS 3 million (EUR 35 000 or USD 41 300) per producer. A 20% increase in cultivated area is expected in the province. These amounts can be repaid in three installments from April 2021.

The details of the operation were explained to the members of the Tomate 2000 Association by Minister of Economy and Energy, Enrique Vaquié, as well as by the Undersecretary for Industry and Trade, Alejandro Zlotolow.

During this meeting, Minister of Economy and Energy Enrique Vaquié commented: *“This is a very important effort that the Province is making in order to help [...] primary growers of the tomato industry. With this proposal, we are seeking [...] to focus on the south of the province (San Rafael and General Alvear).”*

“In 2019, 11 901 tonnes of processed tomato products were exported and 33 322 tonnes were imported. Covering Argentina's domestic demand would require an increase of 2 600 hectares nationwide. The main objective of this approach is to increase the area cultivated with tomatoes for processing on the local territory, and we hope to reach a total of 600 further hectares thanks to this operation,”* stated Valentina Navarrofor, in charge of agricultural affairs for the province.

“The revolving fund credits are intended to provide financing to processing tomato growers who are members of the Tomate 2000 Association and who wish to increase their cultivated area compared to the 2019/20 season. Growers who do not benefit from the Tomate 2000 scheme and new growers who wish to start in this sector can also access the program, provided that they comply with the conditions stated in the regulation and are located within the territory of the province of Mendoza,” added the government representative.

Orestes Nomikos, Vice-president of the Tomate 2000 Association, stressed that the sector needs to invest to increase productivity and improve profitability. *“Regardless of the fact that we have been fortunate this year to experience snowfall, we need to invest in pressure irrigation. We need to strive for the highest possible productivity, otherwise the business is not profitable.*





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