



## The drought could impact Malaga's next avocado campaign

The Axarquia region, the main subtropical producing area in Spain, is having serious water supply problems that could affect its agricultural campaigns; mainly its avocado production. The agricultural sector has stated that the mango campaign will be alright, but that there might be a significant decline in avocado when they start harvesting it at the beginning of autumn.

The collection usually begins around the month of November. However, there are five communities of irrigators that already are facing water cuts after having exhausted the quota authorized by the Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Planning of the Junta de Andalucía. The farmers trust that, even if they run out of resources for these two months, the administration will be flexible and allow them to carry out the irrigation they need until the new hydrological year starts on October 1.

Jose Ricardo Campos, the president of the Central Board of Users of the South of Guaro, asked irrigators to carry out exhaustive controls so as not to harm the rest of the farmers in the community. "We can't perform miracles with the water from the La Viñuela reservoir. We need the treated waters of the Velez-Malaga plant to be put into service and to expand the tertiary to have all the flow, joining the waters that reach the Peñon del Cuervo with those that reach Rincon, Algarrobo, and Torrox." Campos estimates that they could obtain a total of 17 hm<sup>3</sup> for irrigation.

The sector remains in suspense as the campaign will begin shortly. According to the data of the 2019/20 campaign offered by the Observatory of Prices and Markets of the Junta de Andalucía, the area devoted to avocado cultivation in the autonomous community has increased by 11% and stands at 12,386 hectares.





Andalusia is the leading producer of avocado in Spain, accounting for 79% of the total area devoted to this crop in the country. 82% of the crops are concentrated in the provinces of Malaga (60%) and Granada (22%).

Mango producers, for their part, are somewhat calmer. The Spanish Association of Tropical Fruit Producers expects a good mango campaign this year. According to forecasts, the Axarquia region of Malaga will produce more than 20,000 tons of this fruit. Harvesting began between the end of August and the beginning of September, and the campaign will last until November.

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