

ARTICLES COMPILATION FOR UNECE FOOD OUTLOOK

13 MAY 2020 COVID-19 Market Update Pip Fruit (Spain)

Berry growers and processors are working together. After the promotion of the qualities of the processed products, the time has come for fresh fruit. There is a great demand for the first strawberries, and the media have already published over 1000 publications on the qualities of this favourite fruit of Poles. The growers are involved in plans to promote Kamchatka berry, raspberry, gooseberry, blueberry, currant, blackberry, chokeberry and mini-kiwi. Everyone is invited to the harvest and to the first tasting.

Even before the start of the season, the supermarkets have joined forces to fight against the coronavirus. More than 2500 kg of processed berries - juices, jams and jams - were collected. The producers donated them to the most needy hospitals in Mazovia, Lombardy and Piedmont. The action had a wide echo in social media, with a reach far beyond Poland and Italy.

Strawberry the favourite fruit of Polish people

The berry season starts with strawberry. It is our favorite fruit and the most awaited one. This is confirmed by the results of the "National Research on the Consumption of Fruit and Vegetables" conducted by Kantar since December 2019. The consumption of strawberries grew most dynamically among all fruits and vegetables in 2019. It is declared by 98% of the Polish population. This is an impressive result, which explains the huge interest of the media and encourages the production of fruit for the fresh market.

The first greenhouse strawberries appeared on the market. According to Kantar monitoring data, in April this year 37% of Poles ate strawberries. At the beginning of May the harvest of varieties grown in tunnels began. The common goal is to build a habit of everyday consumption. Growers promote the quality of our strawberries and invite to harvest.

(FruitVegetablesEUROPE - e-sadownictwo.pl)

13 MAY 2020 COVID-19 Market Update Pip Fruit (Spain)

The Stone Fruit Committee of FEPEX, made up of representatives of producer and marketing associations from the main Spanish regions, met yesterday by videoconference and confirmed that this year's campaign will be reduced by at least 15% compared to last year. A decrease is also expected in other EU countries such as Italy and France.

In the Spanish regions that are already in the middle of the campaign, such as Andalusia and Murcia, and those that are starting now, such as Extremadura, there has been a reduction in volumes compared to last year. At the beginning of this month, Asociafruit (Andalusia)

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announced that the peach and nectarine crop would fall from 49 million kilos in 2019 to around 40 million kilos this season. Murcia, on the other hand, and according to data from Apoexpa, is forecasting a 20% decline compared to 2019 for the earliest varieties while the mid-season varieties will see a smaller decline.

A reduction of between 15 and 20% is also expected in the northern growing areas such as Aragon and Catalonia, although harvesting has not yet begun in these communities.

The decline in stone fruit production has been largely due to a reduction in surface area, which has been around 2,000 hectares in Catalonia and the same amount in Extremadura.

As far as demand is concerned, although a few weeks ago uncertainty was shared due to the behaviour of consumers in this exceptional situation caused by the COVID-19, it remains fluid.

In the meeting of the FEPEX Stone Fruit Committee, the information provided by other EU producing countries in the meeting of the Spanish-French-Italian-Portuguese stone fruit contact group held on the 7th was also analysed, according to which both France and Italy are also expecting a drop in production. In the case of Italy the reduction will be between 15-20%.

Source: Private sector (FruitVegetablesEUROPE - FEPEX)

11 MAY 2020 COVID-19 Market Update Flower and Plant Sector (Spain)

FEPEX producers and traders of flowers and live plants consider that the losses caused by the fall in consumption and the closure of the points of sale by the COVID exceed 440 million euros, placing this sector in a situation of almost bankruptcy and asks the Council of Agriculture Ministers next Wednesday to support the sector with useful measures that can be implemented at this time.

For the President of the Flower and Plant Committee of FEPEX, Daniel Marichal, the support measures approved by the European Commission in Regulation 2020/594, which came into force on 5 May, are not effective and are not adapted to the situation generated by the pandemic, which has already caused losses of more than 440 million euros. The only support approved by the Commission is the authorisation for producers affected by the COVID crisis to adopt agreements to stabilise the market, financed by the producers themselves who are suffering the losses, since no additional budget is envisaged.

It is therefore reiterated, this time to the Council of Agriculture Ministers, that it should take account of the fact that the flower and plant sector does not have any type of aid under the CAP, and that useful measures should be drawn up, adapted to the reality generated by the pandemic and effective at this time. It is proposed that extraordinary crisis management measures be approved by means of an extraordinary system of market withdrawals, to be compensated at market prices, open to all the companies affected that can prove their marketing activity and that flexible administrative procedures be established to facilitate their management.

FEPEX has also asked the Ministry of Agriculture to activate aid channels through ENESA and the participation of the Insurance Compensation Consortium to compensate for losses suffered by plantations with the crop insured, as well as to carry out campaigns to promote the consumption of flowers and plants in Spain and of Spanish plants in France and Germany.

As for the garden centres, the main point of sale of flowers and plants, the Order published this Saturday, which sets out the activities that may be carried out in the provinces and health areas in Phase 1 of the de-climbing, authorises the opening of the garden centres and nurseries as from today.

Source: Private sector (FruitVegetablesEUROPE - FEPEX)

29 APRIL 2020 COVID-19 Market Update Spain

In Spain, it has been a general increase of the demand of fresh produce in both domestic and export markets in the past 4-6 weeks. This was not the same for all products, it was bigger for fresh vegetables, in general, than fresh fruits. This situation was causing small shortages in some moments and some crops, but, did not reach the market as the logistics played as a buffer.

Precisely the distribution system is working very well, meaning a full transportation capacity able to make regular deliveries on time : traffic flows exceptionally well. It is remarkable the positive behaviour of all agents facilitating the distribution process of primary goods, so that food reach consumers in a fluid manner.

It is difficult to predict the next days but the trend for the fresh produce seems reasonably positive and keeps high expectation. In the current restrictive environment, consumers eat at home and try to eat healthy which means more fresh vegetables and fruits.

Growers are doing their jobs and sowings and crop preparations are at the normal level or a bit over normal, so to respond to potential high demand in the coming months. Weather conditions were making works difficult due to persistent rainfalls, but this water will be very beneficial for crops next summer and fall.

Labour is at good balance, maybe some less foreign workers but some more local manpower available.

We can say the fresh food supply is guaranteed at the right amount and quality for the coming months.

Source: Private sector (FruitVegetablesEUROPE - Sakata Seed Ibérica)

29 APRIL 2020 COVID-19 Market Update France (Tomato and Cucumber)

With regard to tomatoes, at the beginning of the crisis, we observed a lack of interest from French supermarket chains for the purchase of certain categories of tomatoes (of the traditional variety). Mass consumer purchases were given priority (grape tomatoes and round tomatoes) as well as pre-packaged products (cherries).



French retailers have played the game of preferring purchases based on the origin of the tomatoes in France. Faced with this, the offer of French products available in April being significantly delayed by 15 days, the prices of tomatoes have soared (especially grape tomatoes).

Today, with the approach of the deconfinement announced for May 11th, the market is more and more complex. The supply of French tomatoes is well present and consumers have been hampered in their purchases by the very high price levels at the retail level, this has been moreover strongly relayed by the media. Imported products have made progress on the shelves. Last week, price levels were therefore sharply revised downwards and the gloomy weather this week is not helping the volumes that are accumulating in cherry tomatoes and old-style tomatoes.

Source: Private sector (FruitVegetablesEUROPE - Tomates et Concombres de France)