Andalusia will promote research to optimize the quality and price of water for irrigation

During the closing of the day 'Efficiency in the use of water and use of non-conventional water resources in horticultural crops protected', held on December 1st by the Institute of Agricultural Research and Training and Fisheries of Andalusia (Ifapa) in La Mojonera**, the Andalusian Agriculture Minister, Rodrigo Sánchez Haro, has advanced the implementation of a strategy aimed at optimizing the quality and price of water for irrigation.**

This initiative is the response to a request from the Water Board of Almeria and its objective, for which it is going to design a program of research, testing, transfer and training to irrigation communities, is to fine-tune the mechanisms of mixing different types of this resource for irrigation, management and control in its distribution and application for its adaptation to the different crops and their phases.

> Almeria contributes 20% of the total value of the Andalusian agricultural production despite concentrating only 8% of the irrigated area in the community

Sánchez Haro has highlighted the fact that, *for every cubic meter of water used in the greenhouse, the equivalent of between 6 and 15 euros of production is obtained, an amount that in the open-air crops is 1.60 euros*. These good numbers from Almería, as he underlined, are possible thanks to modern farms and highly efficient automated and precision irrigation systems. A point in which it has affirmed that, *to maintain this "productive leadership", it is necessary that the research and the transfer of technology in the irrigation of protected horticultural crops be constant*. In this way, from its perspective, it is possible to face the improvement of the available water resources, maintaining the quality without overexploiting the resources, thanks to the possibility of using water sources that require differentiated management -dueled or regenerated- or the application of new irrigation and automation technologies to improve efficiency.

Rodrigo Sanchez has indicated that *all these challenges are framed within the lines of work of Ifapa, whose center of La Mojonera has extensive experience over the past 20 years, a knowledge that must be transferred to the sector with specific applications*. In addition, he stressed the importance of research and transfer in the efficient use of water, since "it is a satisfaction to see first-hand" the dedication and efforts made to alleviate, and try to solve, one of the most important current and future challenges, such as water management.

Source: CAPDER