AVA-ASAJA estimates a million euros of losses for hailstones in 700ha of vine, olive and almond trees

The intense storm of hail that discharged in the afternoon of Wednesday, September 6th, in the region of Utiel-Requena has caused damages worth one million euros in an area of 700 hectares of cultivation of vineyard, olive and almond tree, according to the estimates of the Valencian Association of Farmers (AVA-ASAJA)**. The municipal terms that have been more punished have been Jaraguas, Venta del Moro, Villargordo del Cabriel and Casas del Rey.**

> The production that has suffered to a greater extent the effects of this last time are the vineyard, fundamentally, with about 600 hectares affected, and the olive grove and the almond tree, to a less degree, since between both crops agglutinate the remaining 100 hectares hit by the stone

Regarding the degree of affection, AVA-ASAJA calculates that the damages are very variable, so that they can be appreciated from farms with only a 10% decrease to fields with practically all of the lost harvest. *In general terms, the average damage is around 40% of production, although it is also worth highlighting the damage caused by land drainage and the breakdown of agricultural infrastructure.*

"If the hail is always bad news for the farmer," says the president of AVA-ASAJA, Cristóbal Aguado *- this case is especially frustrating because it has arrived at the worst possible time of the year. Winemakers in the area began collecting the white grapes a week ago, but the bulk of the vintage, with red grapes like the Bobal, was to start just next Monday. In addition, this reduction of harvest adds to the reduction that already were going to suffer due to the drought and that AVA-ASAJA calculates around 30%. The result of all this is that many winegrowers will hardly have grapes to sell in a campaign where the commercial prospects are positive for the first time in several years because of the scarce supply in the European wine market. "*

While the hail has also occurred coinciding with the beginning of the campaign of the almond, in the case of the olive still have a few weeks to collect.

> Aguado points out that "it is important that in the coming days the rains and the humid climate do not continue since this would aggravate the damages derived from the hail by the rotting of the productions"

I*n view of this situation, AVA-ASAJA claims to the administrations fiscal measures for the farmers of the affected terms.*

Source: AVA-ASAJA

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