COEXPHAL blames the Andalusian Ministry for the loss of thousands of euros in organic production

The Association of Fruit and Vegetable Producers' Organizations of Almería (COEXPHAL) **claims that the delay by the** Andalusian Regional Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development **in resolving cases to move from conventional to organic farming has led to farmers and businesses lose thousands of euros in organic production. Dozens of farmers from Almeria who invested in new greenhouses for organic production during 2015 and early 2016 are forced to continue selling their organic products as conventional, with the subsequent loss of income, Organization.**

> From COEXPHAL the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development is requested to adopt reorganization measures to solve this urgent problem

As established by the Andalusian regulations, a greenhouse must wait two years in conversion or be recognized by the Andalusian Regional Ministry of Agriculture within a maximum period of six months. *Given the strong demand for organic products registered in the past two years, many horticultural companies and farmers in Almeria have invested during 2015 and early 2016 to dispose of organic products since September of last year.*

Once the investments have been carried out and the ecological process has been requested, with the favorable reports from the certification bodies, all necessary documentation is sent to the central services of the Ministry of Agriculture in Seville.

> From COEXPHAL it is pointed out, as the main cause of the delay in the resolution of files, to the excess of centralization, that takes to dispense with the intervention of the Delegation Territorial de Almería, that is really the one that knows the circumstances on the ground

To date, files filed during 2015 and the first quarter of 2016 still do not have the resolution of the Ministry, *which is assuming the sale of products as conventional at a lower price.*

> It is estimated that a farmer in this situation is losing on average about 6,000 euros per hectare and the economic result for these farmers is being disastrous due to the lack of response by the Ecological Production Service

To this is added that numerous contracts with supermarkets, where the schedule of provisions with specific quantities was collected, *are being breached by the Almerian companies as a result of the lack of ecological product due to these circumstances.*

Source: COEXPHAL