Spain: the sweet fruit sector asks for urgent aid to be able to face the next campaign

Before the suffocating lack of liquidity, derived from several years with prices below production costs, the sweet fruit sector has demanded from the Minister of Agriculture urgent support measures so that producers can face the next campaign. Among the actions requested are tax reductions, aid and moratoriums for loans contracted, soft loans and remission of Social Security contributions.

The agrarian organizations ASAJA, COAG, UPA and Agri-food Cooperatives of Spain have transferred by letter to the Minister of Agriculture, Isabel García Tejerina, their great concern for the suffocating economic situation of the producers of sweet fruit and the cooperatives of the sector. In this regard, they have called for urgent solutions to ensure the viability of farms and enable farmers to face the next campaign.

Specifically, *they have requested financial and fiscal measures, such as the reduction to zero of the modules for sweet fruit and expansion of the item of expenses difficult to justify from 5% to 10% for those who opt for simplified direct estimation in the 2017 income calculation*, the immediate opening of a line of SAECA guarantees, grants and moratoriums for the loans contracted and the establishment of subsidized credit lines and soft loans to face the future campaign, *the cancellation*

of the installments to the Social Security, the remission of the Tax on Real Estate (IBI) and the recovery of the maximum percentage of state subsidy in the contracting of the insurance of the fruit.

> After several years of low or very low prices, which have caused the reduction of income and led to the abandonment of farms), the prospects for facing the future campaign are very negative due to lack of liquidity

To this must be added the constant increase in production costs, the stagnation of consumption, the collapse of the European market (Russian veto), the abusive commercial practices of distribution or the difficulties generated by the drought and the lack of access to water.

The sector is aware that this is a structural problem that needs to be addressed in depth and, in this sense, *a clear recognition has been transferred to* MAPAMA *for the work that is being done to advance in the solution of problems in the medium and long term, through the design with the sector of a Sector Strategic Plan*.

> In addition to structural actions, it is requested that a series of measures of immediate application be activated as soon as possible so that fruit growers can continue in the medium and long term and are not forced to abandon

Sources: ASAJA, UPA, COAG and Cooperativas Agro-alimentarias

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