Apples Val Venosta expects to double its ecological growing area by 2020

The Association of Fruit and Vegetable Producers of the Valle Venosta (VI.P) **is planning for the coming years an important growth strategy, based on one of its main values, respect for the environment. The Val Venosta VI.P-Manzanas, through its line** BIO Val Venosta **- which has positioned it among the first producers of organic apple in Europe, and since the market is dynamic and with a strong demand for organic product, will increase its organic production area by 50%, from its current 500 hectares to around 800 in 2020. A significant increase that will help confirm its European leadership.**

The VIP-Manzanas Val Venosta faces the last third of the season with a positive balance, having sold so far 60% of its total production and with marketing forecasts close to 270,000 tons of apples, despite having started the campaign with an estimated crop reduction of 20%, due to adverse climatology, which has led to a lower total collected in previous years and has led to a slower start. As commercial manager Fabio Zanesco points out, "although the almost 270,000 tons of apples that we are going to bring to the market represent a decrease compared to the average of the previous year, we will still guarantee the service to our customers and distributors until August and September, with the output of 40% of the remaining production and maintaining the high level of quality that distinguishes our production".

Despite the difficulties, Apple Val Venosta has strategically bet to maintain its position in the Iberian Peninsula and guarantee until the end of the season the 10% market share, which in recent times has allocated to the Spanish market.

> Spain is confirmed as one of the highlights of marketing for VI.P- Manzana Val Venosta, for this reason to preserve the current distribution levels are part of its strategic line within the Iberian Peninsula

That is why it has strengthened its communication and marketing strategy throughout the season, introducing the new corporate image, present in its 50 international markets, and taking actions to claim the figure of the fruit producer as prescriber of the product. One example is the Golden Gold Awards, which recognize the country's most demanding fruit shops and have their third edition. Also celebrated for the second time in Spain was the Fruit Day, an initiative that received the support of leading associations in the sector. And the action 'Graffiti of Nature' has been launched, which seeks to alleviate the problems of graffiti suffered by many of the fruit establishments in their closures. These actions seek to consolidate the knowledge of the brand not only among consumers, but also throughout the chain of professionals that makes possible the passage of Val Venosta apples from the trees to the table.

> 80% of Spanish sales correspond to the Golden High Mountain feature of Val Venosta Manzanese, increasingly sought after by Spanish consumers and distributors

The remaining 20% of the production marketed in the country is distributed in varieties such as Red Delicious, Gala, Pinova or the new varieties Kanzi® club, Ambrosia® and Envy, which progressively increase its presence. "One of the lines of work to strengthen our brand in the Spanish market is the varietal renewal, betting on the Club varieties, which allow us to offer a novel and differentiated product, aimed at very specific audiences and which is well received by the most young people", says Zanesco.

Europe, the main international destination

The international scenario continues to pose certain limitations because of the continuing Russian embargo and the volatile situation in Libya and Algeria, which creates a certain mistrust of exporters. *This makes the VI.P- Apples Val Venosta strategy focus mainly on Europe, where Italy continues to position itself as the main market, accounting for 50% of marketing. And northern Europe becomes one of its most powerful squares, with the Scandinavian countries leading the way. It is followed by Germany, and Spain, in the set of 50 international markets in which it operates.*

As for the production forecasts for next season, VI.P sales manager admits that it is still too early to venture anything: "exports and markets respond to a changing nature, which affects the balance of supply and demand . This forces us to be alert and prepared to define the strategies of action that help us to remain among the leaders of the sector of the European apple, "says Zanesco. But *it does confirm that for the next financial year the Spanish market will continue to be among the association's most ambitious objectives and will continue to invest in increasing Iberian market share and introducing new varieties both in traditional commercial channels and in new sale.*

Source: Apples Val Venosta