Tejerina highlights the commitment of the Fira Agraria de Sant Miquel for precision farming

The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment, Isabel García Tejerina, inaugurated the 63rd edition of the Agrarian Fair of Sant Miquel and the 32nd edition of Eurofruit, highlighting the fair's commitment to precision agriculture, whose clearest example is the use of drones. She also congratulated the organization for the record number of exhibitors, occupied area and foreign countries participating in this last edition. In the words of García Tejerina, "we are in an interconnected and interdependent Europe" and pointed out that "thanks to joint agrarian policies, the European Union has become the world's leading exporter of agri-food products and that Spain's agri-food industry is the fourth European power and the world's eighth".

In reference to the current crisis of the price of the stone fruit, García Tejerina has assured that her

Ministry is carrying out a campaign of promotion of this fruit, that will activate a new program of fruit school and that maintains conversations with the great chains of distribution to increase the price they pay farmers. She added that thanks to negotiations with the European Union, 40,000 tonnes of bone fruit have been removed.

Meritxell Serret, Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food, said that the Sant Miquel-Eurofruit Fair has been developed "in a spirit of trust with the Catalan agricultural and livestock sector". The minister emphasized that in this legislature her department is working together with farmers and ranchers to achieve sector viability. It has highlighted the new regulations for the management of livestock waste and other fertilizers, the construction of new irrigation systems and the modernization of historic areas, the commitment to internationalization, achieving the differentiation of Catalan products by their singularity and quality, or Law of Agrarian Spaces, to facilitate access to land and the incorporation of young people to the agricultural world.

> Consellera de Agricultura, Livestock, Fisheries and Food: "the Catalan Government wants to promote a food policy based on local and sustainable production"

The mayor of Lleida and president of the Lleida Fair Board of Trustees, Ángel Ros, *has highlighted the novelties of this year, such as the increase of foreign countries represented, the space reserved for drones dedicated to precision agriculture, recovery of* Plaza del Aceite*, with the presence of* the DOP Les Garrigues *and the growth of the number of companies dedicated to irrigation, nursery and agricultural machinery at the service of agricultura.*

The mayor has asked the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment to "implement a firm agricultural policy to address the current price crisis in the bone fruit sector, caused by a commercial struggle and political-strategic interests."

Ros added that "one of the solutions would be to improve the negotiations with the current markets and to open new ones", as the case of the pork that has increased exports "thanks to the entrance through the big door in China."

The president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Lleida and the Delegate Commission of Lleida Fair, Joan Simó, has highlighted that in this year's edition of the fair, which has defined as a "showcase for news and management agricultural and livestock ", *has strengthened its internationalization, with the increase of the foreign countries represented and the celebration of the* PIC Meeting *(European Congress of the vegetal production).*

In order to increase the competitiveness of agri-food companies, Simó proposes the sector to open new markets in order to sell sweet fruit, oil and pork, but for this it demands an improvement in the connectivity of the province of Lleida with the the rest of the world, investing in infrastructures such as the N-240 to the Port of Tarragona or the Mediterranean Rail Corridor.

Source: Fira de Lleida