UPA, dissatisfied with the Plan of measures to alleviate the crisis of the stone fruit

In its assessment of the Plan recently presented by MAPAMA to tackle the structural crisis affecting the stone fruit sector, the Union of Small Farmers (UPA) has expressed its dissatisfaction with a measure that, although necessary, qualifies as "insufficient" and a "disappointment". UPA has indicated that the Plan "forgets small family farms and requires a larger budget".

The Union of Small Farmers and Cattle Ranchers (UPA) has expressed "dissatisfaction" with the Plan to alleviate "the deep structural crisis" suffered by the stone fruit sector due to the strong imbalance between supply and demand. "A situation that was aggravated in 2014 by the Russian veto", UPA recalled.

As UPA has recognized, to design the Plan the opinion of the agrarian organizations was collected in a series of meetings that took place last fall. However, now that it has been presented, farmers do not see their demands fully met, although they have recognized that the measures that the Plan does contain are "very necessary and timely".

> Within the short-term measures to inject liquidity into the sector, UPA regrets that the Ministry has not made a major budgetary effort. In the opinion of the organization, the 3.7

> million euros that will be used to finance the aid line through the coverage of the SAECA guarantees are "totally insufficient to suppose real help"

Regarding the measures aimed at rebalancing the sector, *UPA has indicated that the Plan has not established "a single shock measure for small family farms*". UPA has declared that the organization had claimed that "the aids to this type of operations could have been carried out through the minimis aid". The organization regretted that *"they have not heard us in this regard. This is bad news not only for small farmers, but for the entire rural environment due to the importance of this type of exploitation in its development and structuring",* concluded UPA.

> On the proposals to organize and restructure the sector, the agrarian organization considers that the aid to encourage the start of the plantations "*are poorly thought out", since said aids "have only been articulated through the operational programs of the producer organizations*"

Therefore, since aid has not been developed at a national level, a large part of the producers will not be able to benefit from this measure, which will make it less effective.

Finally, *UPA has insisted on the need to have "an updated register of farms in which the product typology is collected". In this way, the organization believes that campaigns can be better planned. From the Ministry they have committed themselves to find a way to develop such a registry*.

Source: UPA

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