Valencian farmers consider the limitation of plantations for DO Cava to be detrimental to their viticulture

The Valencian agricultural organizations AVA-ASAJA **and** La Unió de Llauradors i Ramaders **have attacked the ministerial decision to limit the new vineyard plantations for the** Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) Cava**, considering it very harmful to the interests of viticulture of its autonomous community. Thus, from AVA-ASAJA, its president, Cristóbal Aguado affirms that *the ministerial disposition "is very short and represents a serious blow to the expectations of a growing sector*". For its part, LA *UNIÓ has criticized that, with this decision, the* Ministry *has folded to the interests of the DO Cava, controlled by the large Catalan wineries*, and has called on the** Ministry of Agriculture **to initiate as many actions as it deems appropriate to defend the interests of the vine growers in a very important subject for the region of Requena-Utiel. *Throughout the month of January this agrarian union will study possible protests.***

As reported by AVA-ASAJA in a statement, the ministerial decision, collected in the BOE of December 29th, 2017, to limit the maximum authorization of new grape plantations for the production of cava is a serious blow to the interests of the Valencian wine sector in general and for the expectations of the producers of Requena in particular, since that municipal term is the only one of all the Valencian territory legally recognized to produce the aforesaid sparkling wine.

"The disposition of the Ministry - assures the president of the Valencian Association of Farmers (AVA-ASAJA), Cristóbal Aguado- is very damaging to an area like Requena, which thanks to its excellent work has managed to turn the cava into one of the main engines of growth".

> President of AVA ASAJA: "it seems inadmissible that the Government has folded to the interests of the large Catalan cava firms, which were those that were demanding the application of these restrictions, and cut the wings of a sector by decree and artificially"

The Regulatory Board of the Cava, dominated by the large Catalan wineries, had requested the Ministry to limit the authorization of new plantations to 0.1 hectares per year during the next three years, which meant, in fact, freezing the increase in area. The agrarian department of the central government has finally opted to partially estimate the demands in this respect of the aforementioned entity and will grant permission to plant grapes destined to elaborate cava to a surface that in the best of cases could be located in little more than 172 hectares in all Spain. To understand AVA-ASAJA, "*that figure is too short for the real needs of growth of the Valencian cava, since the requests made by Requena wine growers, either to restructure or to regularize their plots of face to obtain cava grapes, they cover an area of ??about 1,500 hectares*".

"Apparently, the Ministry is going to allow those companies and farms that had investments already authorized to go ahead, but the vast majority of those who had decided to bet on the production of this sparkling wine will be left out and that is an outrage because the demand for Requena cavas is booming and now the Government has decided to stop it to benefit the interests of another autonomous community", denounces the president of AVA-ASAJA.

In this sense, Cristóbal Aguado defends the convenience of "proposing the creation of some subzones of the cava and that the decisions are adopted according to the needs of each of them, in such a way that if the producers and wineries of any of those subzones They detect that their markets are saturated and it is convenient to limit their growth, well, they should do it, but what they can not pretend is to forcibly prevent the expansion of those that do have expectations and capacity to continue growing ".

However, on Tuesday, January 2nd, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Carlos Cabanas, will hold a meeting with the representatives of the Valencian wine sector, "and *we will take advantage of it," announced the president of AVA-ASAJA, to convey the reasons for the that the production of grapes for Cava in Requena should not be limited. We hope that sanity prevails*

and that the situation can be rectified as soon as possible".

On the other hand, the UNIÓ criticizes that with the decision to grant only a quantity of 172.2 hectares for the whole State, the Valencian demands have been ignored, clearly harming the producers of a growing cava. For this reason, this agrarian organization has demanded that the Ministry, through a communiqué, change its opinion and not restrict the hectares of vineyard with varieties for cava pending authorization in Requena or those already committed there also within the current Vineyard Restructuring Plan that finished in 2018, which in total would be just under 1,500 hectares.

> THE UNIÓ: "in the future it would be necessary to put a stop to the growth of the surface to dig in some way to avoid saturating the market, but at this time can not jeopardize the investments that are underway and the strong commitment made by some wine growers and wineries in our territory"

This agrarian union affirms that the Ministry of Agriculture and the central government laugh once again in the face of all Valencian and Valencian. "We do not intend to make war of anything, much less politics, but the truth is that the Valencian cava enjoys more and more recognition and prestige in the markets, thanks to its quality. It can not be restricted with decisions such as this, a growth that represents an income for the farmers who produce these varieties ", says LA UNIÓ.

> The Valencian cava has experienced an important growth in the last years. For this exercise an increase of 15% in the sales is expected, which means to elaborate about 7 million bottles

The Regulatory Council of the DO Cava has currently recognized in Spain some 36,000 hectares. The issue in the Comunitat Valenciana affects the municipality of Requena, the only one that is legally authorized to make cava in this territory. *There are now some 3,500 hectares destined to the production of the white grape variety Macabeo or Chardonnay to make sparkling wines, the second most important zone after Catalonia*. This possible limitation also affects other areas of the State such as Almendralejo (Extremadura), Cariñena or some areas of the Ribera del Duero and La Rioja.

Sources: AVA ASAJA and LA UNIÓ

YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE:

??Spain has the largest vineyard area, with 15% of world production