

The earliest Valencian varieties of stone fruit have favorable prospects both from a production and commercial point of view following severe frosts elsewhere in Europe, according to the Valencian Association of Farmers ([AVA-ASAJA](#)).

The association predicts a harvest of peaches, nectarines, plums and medlars of excellent quality, with sufficient size and without overall production losses; unlike what happened last season when weather adversities decreased volume by 30 percent.

Among the regions that have cooperating weather are La Ribera, Los Serranos, Alto Palancia and La Marina Baixa. However, apricots and cherries in some regions are facing significant losses due to excessive humidity.

Overall, the continued start of new fields due to the profitability crisis prevents capacity from increasing in Valencia compared to the average of recent years.

The Valencian season goes against the significant reductions of stone fruit volumes from other producing areas of Spain, France and Italy due to the recent severe frosts.

On March 19 and 20, several regions of Lleida, Tarragona and Huesca reported temperatures of up to five degrees below zero that caused serious damage to stone fruits and other crops.

The government of France declared a 'state of climate catastrophe' after the cold wave that began on April 5, with stone fruits being the most vulnerable.

In the Rhone Valley, it's taken for granted that even with fruit losses, production can still reach 90 percent. The same storm hit Italian regions such as Tuscany, Piedmont and Lazio with damages of up to 80 percent of the fruit.

The president of AVA-ASAJA, Cristóbal Aguado, calls for "patience from producers and marketers that work in Valencia because market conditions, especially the lower national and European supply, favor fair prices for all the supply chain, without the need to sacrifice the producer as is happening".

"The Achilles heel of this and other crops is the low price at origin. Farms have it very clear: if we do not obtain decent earnings, more and more fields will be left uncultivated; if instead, we receive a reasonable price that allows us to cover production costs, then agriculture will have a future and will help roll out the rest of the economy."