

Record-high temperatures and unprecedented low rainfall this year have caused severe droughts across Europe and in Spain's southern region of Andalusia, drought is costing local farmers their avocado plantations, as well as reducing table olive production.

Farmers are being forced to sacrifice parts of their avocado plantations to save the rest and the lack of water means olives cannot ripen fully, according to a [report by La Prensa Latina](#).

The Spanish Association of Tropicals estimates that the avocado season for 2022-23 in Axarquía, one of the main avocado and mango harvesting areas in Spain, will only yield half of what was harvested last year.

Currently, the La Viñuela reservoir, which is located in Axarquía, Malaga, is 13% below capacity, according to Domingo Medina, acting President of the non-profit organization that acts as a trade union and is made up of tropical fruit growers.

While the drought is a problem for all kinds of farmers, it is even worse for avocado growers, as the fruit requires a lot of water and has a low water stress resistance.

Some farmers are uprooting the entire tree to replant it later on, while other farmers are aggressively pruning — a technique that encourages the regeneration of new stems — but this could lead to farmers losing harvests for two years, Medina warns.

Medina himself has had to take drastic measures in one of his avocado plantations in Vélez-Málaga and uproot some 1,500 trees, which make up around a fifth of the estate.

“If it weren't for the drought we would have never uprooted the trees,” he tells Efe.

In the olive groves, the next table olive harvest will also be affected by the drought, as the lack of water is stopping the olives from growing to the right size.

“A table olive has to be beautiful, smooth and of a good size but if it is wrinkled or small it goes to the mill,” president of Spanish Association of young farmers in Malaga, Baldomero Bellido, tells Efe.

The association has anticipated a significant drop in production although it is waiting for the beginning of the harvesting season in September to draw any firm conclusions.