



European Association of Fruit &
Vegetable Processing Industries



EUROPEAN FRESH PRODUCE ASSOCIATION

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON FRUITS & VEGETABLES

20 November 2023



Importance of Fruit & Vegetables - EU context

- European production and consumption of fruit & vegetables are integral to the ambitions of the Green Deal, the Farm to Fork strategy and the EU beating cancer plan.
- The Fruit & Vegetable sector provides highly nutritious foods with widely recognised health benefits, produced with a low environmental impact. Fruit tree orchards in particular, play an important role in carbon sequestration, crucial for achieving carbon neutrality in Europe by 2050.
- And yet today, there is a race against the clock for the sector to secure the diversity of fruit and vegetable production and to minimise further weather-induced crop shortages.



Climate change threatens the viability of F&V

- 2022 - Historical high temperatures and droughts across much of Europe negatively impacted many fruit and vegetable crops grown for both the fresh market and for processing (canning, freezing, etc).
- 2023
 - Droughts
 - Floods
 - Uncharacteristic high temperatures
 - Prolonged weather patterns
 - Change in crop and insect phenology
- Recent extreme weather events provide a timely reminder of the vulnerability of perishable fruit & vegetable crops, where destroyed crops result in negative farm incomes, and ultimately create empty supermarket shelves.



Climate change threatens the viability of F&V

Not just this year or last

- 2011 to 2020 was the warmest decade on record
- Six warmest years all occurred since 2015
- Prolonged settled weather patterns now a phenomenon of modern times
- Sector is facing an ongoing challenge to address weather-induced crop yield reductions experienced since 2015
- Disruption to scheduled crop production windows with harvests brought forward or delayed by extreme weather events
- Climate change has become the foremost concern in Europe for both the fresh and processed fruit & vegetable sectors



Europe's Fruit & Vegetables are on the line!

Higher temperatures alter crop and insect phenology

- Proliferation of new pest & diseases create new crop protection challenges
- **Challenges that are exacerbated by the ongoing depletion of the European farmers' plant protection toolbox**
- Impact felt most profoundly for growers of “Minor Use” crops such as fruit and vegetables, where authorised products are far fewer than for other crops
- Research and innovation is needed to adjust agricultural practices, introduce new technologies and manage data more effectively to improve resource efficiency and precision in production
- Introduction of new varieties will be an essential part of the resource to mitigate new threats



Climate Change Adaptation

The fruit and vegetable sector is responding as far as it can, by investing and protecting areas of production and embarking on research and field trials to develop climate-resilient ways to grow the crops that the sector relies on.

However, the sector cannot achieve this alone.

Policymakers must help.



Call for help

The fruit and vegetable industry is at a delicate crossroads which will require close cooperation and partnership between the public and private sectors.

European legislators and national authorities must take responsibility for determining the rate of progress to secure Europe's future supplies of fruit and vegetables.

Policies and Actions are urgently needed to protect the future production of speciality crops in sufficient volumes, by:

- Securing the availability of water in fields and orchards
- Supporting the advancement of plant science and the development and introduction of new plant protection solutions
- Ensuring access to an adequate toolbox to protect crops against the proliferation of pests appearing and evolving as our climate changes





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Thank you