



WORLD PROCESSING TOMATO COUNCIL

WPTC Crop update as of 24 May 2021

AMITOM countries (from a conference call on 19 May)

Egypt

The harvesting of the summer crop has now started with deliveries to processors increasing. The weather is good, and fruits are of a good quality with brix close to 5. There is no change to the forecast of 440,000 tonnes.

France

The planting operations are late due to a succession of rains and to date only about 1400 – 1500 hectares have been planted (60% of the total), of which only 200 hectares of organics (only 40% of the organic surface expected). Planting will finish before the middle of June. Moreover, the unusual cold weather is slowing the growth of the plants in the fields, with the first flowers only now appearing in the fields planted in March. It is expected that the crop will be 7 to 10 days late and there may be a gap in the harvest around mid-August. More rain is expected for the next few days.

Greece

The weather is good with temperatures now above average at around 30°C. Planting is at 82% of surfaces and will finish in the Centre and North by the end of May. The forecast of 460,000 tonnes is maintained.

Hungary

Springtime was cool and cloudy in Hungary this year which was not favorable for seedling cultivation. At the early period of transplanting (end of April-beginning of May) growers faced unusual cold weather with nights around zero degrees. Thereby and due to rains in the meantime transplanting was delayed and there are still 300 hectares left to plant which represent circa one third of the total surface.

Italy

North- At a meeting with processors yesterday the POs reported that 65% of the surfaces have now been transplanted and that operations should be finished by mid-June with all the surfaces contracted planted. Temperatures have been on average 2.5°C lower than normal during the last two weeks which is delaying the growth of the fields. It is expected that the harvest will be delayed by about a week with a concentrated ripening of fields planted during the first three weeks of operations and probably lowered yields on the first 25% of the surfaces. No pests or diseases reported at the moment.

South- Negotiations between growers and processors are still ongoing but they should conclude by the end of May. Transplanting is going smoothly as there are no rains and should finish by mid-June. Temperatures have been about 1.5°C lower than normal in May but there are no issues at this stage. The forecast for Italy is confirmed at 5.4 million tonnes.

Russia

Transplanting is on schedule and should be finished in three weeks. The weather in the spring is favorable and the rains in May have not affected operations. The forecast remains 550,000 tonnes.

Spain

Transplanting has just finished in Andalusia. There is still no official confirmation of the surfaces planted but they are reported to be higher than expected despite the low water availability (50% of normal). In Extremadura, most processors are finishing planting this week. The total forecast is raised to 3 million tonnes but could evolve when the exact surface planted is known.

Ukraine

Transplanting is going ok with small interruptions due to local rains and slightly more than 50% of the program has been done to date. Operations should be finished by 8 June. The weather in May is slightly colder than average but it does not affect tomato development now. No problems reported so far. The forecast remains the same at 850,000 tonnes.

Portugal

Over the last two weeks, a week with days of heavy rain affected some areas but not homogeneously. It slowed down planting for a few days, but not significantly. Now, for the last week it is the opposite as the weather is quite good with warm days and in the last 2 days, we reached temperatures between 26-30°C. At the moment, around 70% of the area has been planted. The estimated volume remains the same for Portugal (1.4 million tonnes).

Tunisia

No change to the forecast of 1 million tonnes.

Turkey

The forecast remains as before. There were some rains this week, but the weather is warm now with a possible risk of local showers. A more detailed regional forecast will be provided next time.

Southern hemisphere countries

Argentina

The final crop harvest in Argentina was 594,540 tonnes from 7,331 ha with a final country yield of 81 t/ha. High yields around 110 t/ha in San Juan (2,250 ha) were achieved. These final country crop results indicated the highest volume attained in all the Argentine history of processing tomatoes. This number is attributed to a fair climate in combination to a better application of field technologies advised and generated from the Asociacion Tomate 2000.

It is good to remind that the Tomato 2000 Association has a team of extensionists who visit all its 163 member growers by extensionists every week for advice, supported by researchers in coordination to nurseries and processors. All fields were tested to check the absence of pesticides and the association has a self insurance system against hail that covers all the field cash costs spent till the hail occurs. This shows the Tomato 2000 Association as a very innovative associative model to increase the field competitiveness of its members.

Australia

The Australian processing tomato season finished in the third week of April 2021 and saw a total delivery of approximately 230,000 payable metric tonnes to processors, of which 2,731 tonnes was organic.

Apart from experiencing wind damage in November 2020 and a generalised heavy rain event in March 2021, the season was considered to be relatively ideal for growing, with only mild foliar disease pressure and absence of extreme heat events. Gross yields varied from 50 t/ha on the aforementioned wind affected areas to approximately 200 t/ha on the some of the highest yielding blocks. Brix levels were ideally high early, however dipped toward the end of the season, especially after the March rain event. The industry average yields won't be properly known until the formal industry survey is completed; however, they are expected to be at or above last seasons.

Chile

The harvest was extended by a week due to the rains in the area of Curicó to the South, which occurred in the last days of April. The harvest began at the end of January, and despite having suffered heavy rain at the end of January, volumes did not change so strongly with a final volume processed of 1.174 million tonnes from 12,230 hectares.

Peru

The harvest was good and the final volume is 120,000 tonnes as per forecast.

South Africa

The summer season in the Western Cape was successful with 45,000 tonnes processed from 500 hectares with a 90t/ha average yield.

The winter tomato season in Limpopo started in April and will end in September. It is expected that 104,000 tonnes will be processed from 1250ha at an expected yield of 83.2 t/ha. However, as not all processor contract with growers before the season, the industry risks losing some tomatoes which are sold to the fresh market.

In total, it is expected that 149,000 tonnes will be processed in South Africa in 2021.