



WORLD PROCESSING TOMATO COUNCIL

WPTC Crop update as of 30 April 2020

The global world production estimate currently stands at 39.25 million metric tonnes but is likely to reduce by the end of May when more information is available on the actual surfaces planted in all countries and the new California official estimate is released by NASS.

AMITOM countries

In **Egypt**, it is now the last loop of the winter season. Spring harvesting (early summer season) is supposed to start by early May as the weather started gradually to become hot, helping the tomatoes to ripen quickly. The brix is expected to be 4.90. The forecast for 2020 remains above 400,000 tonnes at around 420,000 tonnes.

In **France**, about 500 hectares, 25% of the total surface of 2,000 hectares, have already been planted but there is a 7 to 10 days delay in the south-west due to the rain since early April. In the south-east it rained last week and this week with heavy rain so there is also a delay of about one week. Plants are still in a good condition for the moment. All the surfaces should be planted in May and until early to mid June if the weather help us. The forecast remains 150,000 tonnes.

In **Greece**, planting is going well with 75% of the surface done in the south and 40% in the Centre at the end of last week, i.e. 50% of the total surface. The weather is good and there is no problem with water availability. Total production is expected to increase by 10% to 440,000 tonnes.

In **Hungary**, although a few farmers had issues with seedlings due to cold nights the recovery was successful, so the 100,000 tonnes forecast is maintained. Transplanting started on 23 April and will last until approximately 20 May.

In **Iran**, it is too early to give a forecast for the 2020 crop as different parts of the country are still under cultivation because of heavy rains. A first estimate will be given at the end of May.

In **Israel**, 2020 production should be similar to 2019 at 200,000 tonnes.

In **Italy**, at the end of last week 35% of the surface had been planted in the **North** with an additional 10% expected per week until the beginning of June. There was no real rain in April and the ones expected this week did not materialise. Irrigation is consequently needed in the fields which are very dry since there has been limited rain since January. Some frost around Modena and Ferrara have caused limited damage. Weather conditions are now good, but the lack of rain is worrying the farmers. A small percentage of the total surface contracted will not

be planted, but no more than normal. The forecast remains between 2.55 and 2.6 million tonnes.

In the **South**, the situation is similar with a good weather for planting. There is a serious need for rain in part of Puglia area as the reservoirs are quite empty (the Occhito Dam is currently at 130 million cubic metres when it normally should be at 160-180; it serves about 7000-8000 hectares). Anyway, transplanting operations are going better than last year. The total surface planted should be between 28,000 and 30,000 hectares for a volume expected between 2.4 and 2.5 million tonnes. Farmers are waiting to see how the coronavirus situation will evolve to agree on prices.

The total forecast for Italy is about 5 million tonnes.

In **Portugal**, only around 25% of the surface had been planted at the end of last week, which is much less than normal because of the rains in April. There was no rain this week and hopefully May will be dry so all the surface planned (c. 14000 hectares) can be planted. The forecast is maintained at 1.4 million tonnes but may be lowered.

In **Russia**, the new plant built in the Astrakhan region will not operate in 2020 which leads to a reduction of the forecast to 550,000 tonnes. Last winter was dry and warm and April is unusually cold. Planting is currently in progress.

In **Spain**, the situation is similar to Portugal with a lot of rain from the start of April until last week. The rainfall reached up to 190 mm in some areas of Extremadura which is the equivalent of half of the annual total. Growers lost 20 days of transplanting and the operations are therefore very late with 20% delay in Vegas Altas (about 30% planted) and 35% delay in Vegas Baja (c. 15% planted).

In Andalusia, it rained less and about 88% of planting is now done and it should finish in the next couple of days.

Some hectares have already been lost as farmers have decided not to plant them. The total surface will depend on the weather in May as farmers do not want to take the risk of planting in June. Therefore, the total forecast of 3.1 million tonnes may not be reached.

In **Tunisia**, as of 28 April already 14,800 hectares out of the total 16,000 hectares had already been planted. Planting operations are finishing in the north-west region. Weather conditions since March have been favourable to plant development. The forecast remains one million tonnes.

In **Turkey**, the planting is nearly finished in the south and on schedule in the north. There have not been any delays due to rain and water availability is not an issue. The forecast remains 2.3 million tonnes.

In **Ukraine**, the days are now warm at about 20°C but the nights remain cold with frost in some areas. Some fields have already been seeded directly in the ground but are not germinating yet due to the cold. Transplanting was delayed by 2 to 3 days due to the cold and started last Friday. The forecast remains 850,000 tonnes.

Other countries

In **Argentina**, the weather remains dry and the harvest will continue until next week. The final volume should be 460,000 tonnes. The yield of the late crops was not as good as expected.

In **Australia**, there is a confirmed yield of about 203,000 tonnes to date. There is still some crop remaining to harvest, but the region is now experiencing significant rain and this is expected to persist over coming days. The total crop is now estimated at about 205,000 tonnes.

In **California**, currently planting continues in the Central and the Northern parts of the state and is nearing completion in the Southern region. The Southern region did see some extended weather delays in planting but, so far, the plants look good. With regards to tonnage our original estimate in January was for 12.0 million short tons (10.8 million metric tonnes). Due to the COVID-19 situation, and its impact on food service customers, some processors have reduced their contracted acreage. This should be reflected in the NASS May crop intentions update due to be released on 28 May

In **Canada**, preliminary contract intentions for the 2020 crop are up from 2019 to just over 477,500 short tons (426,300 metric tonnes). Weather permitting, planting is set to begin the first week of May.

In **China**, recently, it was the field transplanting period, and the sustained high temperature had a certain effect on the seedling preservation rate of tomato in the field. According to the weather forecast, the temperature in May will be higher than that of the same period last year, which is expected to have a certain effect on the growth of tomato. The data will not be updated until early June. The total amount of raw materials is expected to remain unchanged at 5-5.5 million tons.

In **Japan**, the forecast remains 32,000 tonnes from 450 ha.

In the **US Midwest**, the planting is scheduled to start this week although predicted rain may cause some delay. There was frost on Monday 27 April so it is lucky that operations did not get underway earlier, although processors would have liked an early start. The total volume to be processed in 2020 is estimated at about 450,000 metric tonnes (500,000 short tons).