



PRESS RELEASE

CONCERNEING THE SHORTAGE OF TOMATO IN BRITISH SHELVES

The boards of APEFEL (Association des Producteurs et producteurs Exportateurs des Fruits et Légumes) and AMCOM (Association Marocaine des Conditionneurs Maraichers), the most representative associations of growers and exporters

Concerned by the media development of the tomato shortage would like to communicate the following clarifications:

As all Countries of the Mediterranean basin, Morocco has known very unusual climatic conditions since the beginning of the tomato growing season.

First, the consecutive and long waves (going all the way from September to December) , of abnormally high temperatures rising from annual normal average of 22° TO 25°C to 30°C (for example in the tomato growing region in Agadir) area. These waves have exhausted the plants and forced a high daily harvest from the greenhouses.

The heat waves were sharply followed by an also long wave of cold temperatures starting from January bringing the minimal below the zero of growth reducing the yield and slowing sharply the maturation of the tomatoes.

As a natural consequence, the daily harvest has dropped sharply, resulting in shortening the supply capacity of packing stations and provisions of the local Moroccan market as well as markets abroad. This situation has induced intense pressure from the consumers in both sides. of the Mediterranean Unfortunately amplified in many cases by some media.

This situation was also impacted by, the turbulence and blockage of the Maritim traffic in the Mediterranean, for fear of a potential tsunami following the earthquakes of turkey and Syria. This perturbation has lasted now over a week and might be the principal cause of the shortage in British shelves.

One energetic action has already been taken by preventing opportunistic exporting activities encouraged by high sales prices in some destinations. This type of business is of nature to perturbate the normal flow of merchandise. Only packing Stations backed by their production are allowed to export, at least at this period of shortage.

The Associations ensure their clients and customers that this situation is fully temporary and conjunctural. A huge joint effort of the Professionals and the agriculture ministerial department is deployed to soundly manage the situation to balance as usual the domestic need and the engagements of the growers overseas.

We remain optimistic as we advance in the season toward more mild temperatures and increased production to return to normal situation. Our aim and principal objective is to remain as reliable origin as we are. We call upon our leaders in both sides of the Mediterranean to closely seek ,in a collegial manner, the mitigation measures to address the effects of climatic change that affecting more and more sharply our region.

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