



Paris, 24 March

Press release

The closure of out-of-home consumption places in Europe has a strong impact on the processing and stocks of industrial potatoes.

Understandable in the context of the fight against Covid-19, whose professionals in the sector fully share the objectives and approve of the measures, the closure of restaurants has a major impact on the economic balance of the potato industry.

The production of industrial potatoes represents nearly 3 million tonnes in France, including more than 1.5 million for European manufacturers. The current situation, the containment and closure of restaurants and the decline in freight to Asia has a strong negative impact on the processing of potatoes into frozen products, in France and in Europe.

Today it is estimated that 500,000 tonnes of French potatoes are in stock today and may not be processed before the end of the season (UNPT source). The increase in consumption of processed products and fresh potatoes in stores will not make it possible to absorb sufficient volumes. The starch factories, which work more than a million tonnes of specific potatoes under contract, are now closed, undergoing cleaning and inter-campaign maintenance.

In concert, the potato sector for the processing industries and that of the potatoes sold in the fresh state are studying all the alternatives in terms of outlets without destabilizing already fragile equilibria: animal feed, methanation, transformation into alcohol, public storage which could reduce stocks of potatoes. If no solution is quickly found, the industry expects a very critical situation in economic, health and environmental terms, and this in the very short term.

The exceptional situation and the possible postponement of certain volumes transformed in July and August obliges everyone to take responsibility for the plantations to come.

The sector is in permanent contact with the Ministry of Agriculture to find solutions to this crisis situation.

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