



Average production in NEPG zone threatened by quality issues.

Gembloux, 11-09-2023

The last 4 months were not a long and smooth river for potato production. In spite of the difficult weather conditions, first yield estimates suggest a return to multi-year averages. The NEPG estimates that growers will harvest around 23 million tonnes of earlies and maincrop potatoes. This is 1,3 million tons more than in 2022 and equal to the 2021 production.

Late blight (*Phytophthora infestans*) is going to have a major impact on the 2023 harvest with important attacks on tubers in some subregions.

Yet another exceptional growing season!

Globally, average planting dates were 3 weeks later than average (around 15-20th of May instead of 20-25th of April). The weather in August led to a sharp increase in yields, but also maintained very high levels of late blight.

Mid late varieties as Fontane and Challenger, and late varieties like Markies, will not have all their growing days, unless crops are left to grow up to mid-October. Lower tuber counts and physiological disorders (hollow heart, misshaped, rot) and above all tuber blight will impact net production! In addition, mitigated under water weights will lessen processing yields.

Impact of tuber blight to be urgently assessed!

Growers are strongly encouraged to check every single field they have and evaluate if they have problems of tuber blight. Assessing the impact of tuber blight is of utmost importance to decide on further steps to take regarding haulm destruction and storage planning. NEPG stresses the importance for the producers of communicating on this issue with their buyers. Weather in the coming weeks will either stabilize the problems (blight, hollow hearts, rots,...) or sharpen them.

Higher processing needs and good export perspectives

Whereas the 2023 production is to be compared with the 2021 one, processing needs have strongly risen. Processors throughout the NEPG zone need at least an additional 2.000.000 tons of potatoes compared to 2 years ago! Following lower productions in Poland and southern Europe (due to smaller planted area and bad weather conditions) export season has already started and competition between buyers from the industry and export will again be on the agenda!

Globally in Europe experts think that the demand for processed products will continue to grow by around 4 % every year!

Update on planted area in the NEPG zone

EU-04 CONSUMPTION POTATOES (Excl. Seed and Starch)									
05 September 2023 year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	actual vs l.y.	5y-avge	2023 vs 5y- avge %
Countries NEPG									
Hectareage 5y avge	447.357	461.253	475.755	494.068	502.886				
Annual Variation	2,5%	4,1%	1,3%	(4,6%)	2,5%				
Total	495.338	515.541	522.275	498.010	510.616	518.873	2,5%	508.356	2,1%
BE - Belgium	94.428	97.921	96.985	89.649	92.355	96.639	4,6%	94.268	2,5%
DE - Germany	178.500	186.000	189.700	183.060	189.000	189.810	0,4%	185.252	2,5%
FR - France	145.260	152.720	158.590	153.913	152.590	156.940	2,9%	152.615	2,8%
NL - Netherlands	77.150	78.900	77.000	71.388	76.671	75.484	(1,5%)	76.222	(1,0%)