

Alain Tulpin, Tulpin Group:

"Once Spain, Morocco come into full production, Egypt's pushed out of the European market"

The Egyptian strawberry season is still going, and after a few quieter weeks, things are getting busy again. "This and last week, Spain and Morocco had cold rainy weather, while in Egypt, the weather's great. Then things pick up again, though you never know how long this will last," says Alain Tulpin of the Tulpin Group in Belgium.



"An ordinary season" is how he describes the strawberry situation in Egypt this year. "Of course, in these times, that's extraordinary. There are no peaks; fortunately, the previous years' problems aren't an issue this year." However, no more of these strawberries are being sent to the Dutch market. "We get strawberries only for the English and Irish markets. Volumes are generally similar to previous years," Alain explains.

"But the pressure on prices, as in basically every sector, continues unabated." Quality-wise, these year's strawberries are great, he adds. "Last year, it snowed in parts of Egypt around December 15, and it was quite cold. This year, temperatures were at about 25°C just before Christmas. That helped."

Still, Egyptian strawberries do not benefit from the issues in Northern European strawberry cultivation. "Spain will mainly benefit from that. There's usually significant, relatively expensive Belgian and Dutch fruit

by late March. But Spanish strawberries have been on the market for a while, so consumers would rather pay more for the Dutch or Belgian product," Tulpin continues.

"However, what was always available in late March will, this year, come onto the market in late April/early May. That leaves more for Spanish strawberries. There could be another problem. Greenhouse and plastic tunnel strawberries could come onto the market then too, possibly leading to an oversupply."



Photo: Nik Deblauwe

Looking ahead to the next few months, Alain nonetheless expects many further challenges. "People have a little less purchasing power, but that hasn't genuinely affected us. Though, fewer charters were used for transportation," he says. The U.K. quota will be Alain's main consideration. "That country used to have the European quota, but since Brexit, it has its own quota."

"That ends this week, so all the strawberries will become pricier again. Then everything depends on what comes from Morocco and Spain. That supply's still limited, but once those countries come into full production from mid-February, Egyptian strawberries will be pushed out. That's, however, not yet the case," Alain concludes.

For more information:

Alain Tulpin



Tulpin Group

Bus 6, 2A Kapelle Street

8460, Oudenburg, BE

Tel: +32 (0) 598 06 633

Email: hq@tulpingroup.eu

Website: www.tulpingroup.eu

Publication date: Tue 24 Jan 2023