



**Gourmet and ready to snack fruits and Vegetables, high-end tomatoes, mini cucumbers and peppers or seedless water melons;  
The EU production of fruit and vegetables under solar greenhouses evolves to serve new consumer habits**

- *Solar greenhouses in southern Spain continuously adapt to a growing interest of consumers into niche products for specific moments*
- *The gourmet trend ignites greater production as well as more space in supermarkets for high-end fruit and vegetables.*

**Brussels, Belgium (22.12.2020)** – The fruit and vegetables production under solar greenhouses in south-eastern Spain is in continuous evolution as the sector incorporates new options to its production in order to respond to consumers’ changing preferences and life habits. Fruit and vegetables lovers, vegetarians that seek new varieties to enrich their plates, consumers that look for exclusivity, those that prefer a healthy snack on-the-go or professionals and school children that carry their food from home, many are the demographic groups that demand new choices when it’s time for their recommended fruit and vegetables daily intake. EU producers from Almería and Granada respond to these demands by innovating and widening their offering.

Luxury tomatoes, cucumbers or peppers are examples of the gourmet trend. People with exquisite taste, vegetarians or simple veggie lovers show an increased interest in varieties such the RAF (an extremely fleshy and sweet variety of tomato) that, even though it can cost up to ten times the price of regular tomatoes, provides a fantastic taste that satisfies the finest palates. We observe this trend in supermarkets as well, where gourmet sections frequently include sophisticated, high-end fruit and vegetables varieties.

Peoples’ lives are increasingly busy. As a result, consumers frequently choose products that require little preparing or cleaning while still expecting great flavour and satisfaction from them. The seedless watermelon, developed and grown in Almería and Granada, is an answer to this type of consumer, enabling them to skip the seed cleaning process. Also, in this line of convenience or ready to eat products there is a wide variety of mini vegetables, such as mini peppers, mini cucumbers or cherry tomatoes. These products can be shared or eaten as snacks and they all have an intense flavour. Not everyone will pay more to save time but the sector pays attention to everyone and gives innovative solutions to modern preferences.

“The solar greenhouse fruit and vegetables production in Almería and the coast of Granada is a testimony of the ability of local producers to innovate and adapt to change. Moulding our production to changing social habits, empowering the generalized conception of eating fruit and

vegetables as an essential part of a healthy lifestyle, is therefore in our nature,” said Juan Antonio González, president at APROA.

More and more people are conscious of the importance of introducing fruit and vegetables in their diet as part of a healthy lifestyle. Likewise, there is a growing demand for greater variability in the product supply and a better adaptation of these to new moments of consumption. The great capacity of adaptation and productive flexibility that has always characterized this sector has allowed it to respond promptly and efficiently to these new market niches, multiplying its production capacity of fruit and vegetable specialties in the last 10 years. Today, this segment represents almost 15% of the total production and there are several companies dedicated exclusively to the production of gourmet and convenience fruits and vegetables.

#### **About CuTE SOLAR:**

*The EU financed CuTE-SOLAR is a promotion program that brings together a consortium made up of the Association of Producer Organizations of Fruit and Vegetables of Andalusia (APROA-Spain), the Spanish Fruit and Vegetables Interbranch Association (HORTIESPAÑA) and FruitVegetablesEUROPE (EUCOFEL). The campaign seeks to increase awareness of the specific features of EU fruit and vegetables agricultural production methods (solar greenhouse) and the characteristics of EU fruit and vegetables (varieties, quality, taste) in the EU internal market. Actions will be conducted in three EU countries (Belgium, Germany and Spain) from 2020 to 2022.*

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