

Unique varieties of fruit and vegetables from sustainable European solar greenhouses brighten up summer barbecues.

Sustainable production goes hand in hand with a healthy lifestyle.

Now that summer is in full swing, and the weather is getting warmer, a new barbecue season is upon us. Although barbecue is often synonymous with "meat", more and more people include vegetables and fruit in their diet as part of a healthy lifestyle. If you want a sustainable addition to your diet or if you like refinement on your plate, this summer, you can count on fresh, healthy vegetables from the European Solar Greenhouses on the coast of Almeria and Granada.

The farmers of the Solar Greenhouses in southern Spain produce a wide variety of tasty and healthy fruits and vegetables that are perfect for a summer barbecue. These producers grow and harvest around 4.5 million tonnes of vegetables per year, mainly tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, aubergines, courgettes, melons, and watermelons. With this, the region can supply sustainable and healthy food for 9 months to 500 million people in the EU.

In recent years, the extra quality of the premium varieties grown in the solar greenhouses of this southern European region, such as sweet and fleshy salad tomatoes, delicious cherry tomatoes, sweet and crunchy mini cucumbers or surprisingly tasty elongated peppers, have become increasingly popular with discerning gourmets.

Since 2012, the delicious tomatoes from the Protected Geographical Indication "Tomate de La Cañada", which is grown entirely in the solar greenhouses of La Cañada (Almeria), have joined this premium range. This designation protects the tomatoes produced in the area from imitation and guarantees and differentiates the quality of the tomatoes produced in the area. To date, "Tomate de La Cañada" is the only Spanish tomato and one of only two European tomatoes with this quality seal, a recognition that makes it unique and gives it a differential value.

People who are not so fond of grilled vegetables but who want to eat fruit and vegetables grown sustainably can also count on the products of Solar Greenhouses. Some different combinations and recipes offer delicious textures and flavours, such as salads, steamed or as a condiment or accompaniment to other dishes. Furthermore, the tasty seedless watermelons or the Piel de Sapo melons, also known as Christmas melons, are typical of the region and its greenhouses. The Solar Greenhouses also offer many convenience and ready-to-eat fruits and vegetables, such as mini peppers, mini cucumbers, or cherry tomatoes. These are ideal for consumers who lead increasingly busy lives and are looking for easy and tasty snacks.

Whether the fruit and vegetables are for the barbecue or not, they are always produced as sustainably as possible. "Local producers on the coast of Almeria and Granada are constantly innovating not only in terms of new varieties but also in terms of the sustainability of their production methods and of course always trying to respond to new trends and consumer habits, such as the growing demand for healthy and ready-to-eat food. Through our products and production methods, we strive to contribute to a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle for all Europeans", affirms Juan Antonio González, President of APROA- Spain, Association of Producer Organizations of Fruit and Vegetables of Andalusia.

What is a solar greenhouse?

A solar greenhouse is a closed structure covered with a plastic film through which the sun's rays shine, giving the plants the light they need to maintain the right temperature for their development during the winter months so that they can carry out photosynthesis. In the process, the plants produce nutrients from the CO₂ they absorb from the air and release enormous amounts of oxygen into the atmosphere. Solar greenhouses are very different from the production methods used in other greenhouses, which use fossil fuel-based heating and lighting systems that consume up to 30% more energy and are therefore harmful to the environment.

About CuteSolar

CuteSolar is a promotion programme funded by the European Union (EU) and supported by a consortium of Andalusian fruit and vegetable growers' associations (APROA), the Spanish inter-branch fruit and vegetable association (HORTIESPAÑA) and the European fruit and vegetable trade association FruitVegetablesEUROPE (EUCOFEL). The aim of the information and promotion campaign, which will run until 2022, is to inform consumers about the sustainable

and environmentally friendly production and cultivation methods of EU fruit and vegetables, the high standards of greenhouse technology and the quality of fruit and vegetables from southern Spain.

The programme, with a total investment of €1.95 million, is co-financed by the proposing organisations and the European Union, will run for three years (2020-2022) and will be implemented in Spain, Germany and Belgium.

Disclaimer

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