EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF
FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PROCESSORS

ORGANISATION EUROPÉENNE DES INDUSTRIES
TRANSFORMATRICES DE FRUITS ET LÉGUMES

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PRESS RELEASE

Extreme heat takes its toll on Europe's fruit and vegetable crops

PROFEL, the voice of the European fruit and vegetable processing industry, is raising the alarm about the impact of the summer 2026 heat waves on most fruit and vegetable crops across Europe. Growers and processors are recording significant yield and quality losses during the current harvest season, and the sector warns that heat waves of this intensity are no longer exceptional events. They require urgent adaptation and policy responses.

A summer that is no longer exceptional
Since late May, Europe has faced a series of severe heat waves, five of them by August/mid-September. June and July were the hottest ever recorded in western Europe, and rainfall between April and June stayed below average from Portugal through Italy and as far as southern Finland. France and Spain recorded record drought levels, with water restrictions covering close to 70% of French territory, while alert conditions spread across main European producers' regions.

Lower production volumes impact the whole value chain
The preserved fruit and vegetable sector depends on open field crops harvested within a fixed window, with sowing dates and areas locked in months in advance. Where heat and drought hit that window, there is very little room to adjust. Beyond reduced yields, heat stress affects size, uniformity and processing characteristics, so part of what is harvested cannot be used. Fields were left unharvested and land was never sown where no water was available.

Adaptation is necessary, and not always simple
Climate models and recent experience suggest that extreme heat, drought and water scarcity will become more frequent and more severe. To cope with repeated summers of this kind, the sector needs:

- reliable access to water and the possibility of local water storage within a sound environmental framework;
- financial and political environment that supports investments to mitigate weather-related challenges;
- sustained breeding and agronomic research to develop varieties and cropping systems that better withstand heat stress, supported by adequate public and private funding for these long-term investments;

Summer 2026 shows more than ever that lower and more irregular harvests translate directly into reduced availability of European raw materials and lower processing volumes. Lower processing volumes and consequent underutilisation of capacity mean higher costs of production per unit. Securing the long-term supply of fruit and vegetables grown close to processing facilities matters for rural economies, for transport related emissions and for Europe's food security.

PROFEL is the European Association of Fruit and Vegetable Processing Industries, representing over 400 companies in 12 European countries, producing canned vegetables, frozen vegetables, dehydrated vegetables, jams and fruit preserves, frozen fruit and canned fruit. The members of PROFEL employ more than 80.000 people. The combined turnover of our members amounts to roughly €22 billion. Members annually produce approximately: Frozen vegetables: 3.300.000 Tons; Canned vegetables: 2.100.000 Tons; Canned Deciduous fruits and compotes: 1.000.000 Tons; Fruit preserves and jams: 485.000 Tons; Dried vegetables: 55.000 Tons (equivalent to approximately 600.000 tons of raw materials).