

**Processing tomato, the 2024 harvesting campaign has concluded in Northern Italy: low yields, high production costs and only 2,4 million tons of raw material conveyed to the processing factories. Interbranch Organization’s official data:**

The 2024 harvesting campaign for processing tomato in Northern Italy concluded in the first week of November. The harvesting and processing campaign extended over the autumn months, impressively reaching 113 processing days, with the first plant opening on July 18th and the last one closing on November 8th. In addition to the long duration, processing was characterized by several plant closures and re-openings, due to the rains that interrupted the harvest and thus tomato deliveries. This matter resulted in high industrial costs due to the large number of processing days, with also production lines not working at full capacity due to the scarcity of product, in a year in which the price negotiated for the raw material with the Producers' Organization’s was 135-140 euro per ton.

Agricultural production recorded remarkably low yields: 57,8 t/ha compared to a five-year average of 74,3 t/ha. Specifically, integrated production yields were 58.6 t/ha, lower than the five-year average of 75.9 t/ha, as were organic production yields of 50.3 t/ha compared to the five-year average of 60.2 t/ha. These are the lowest historical yields never previously recorded by the Interbranch Organization of Northern Italy. Thus, despite a large area of 41,618 hectares cultivated with tomato, including 37,583 hectares under integrated production and 4,035 hectares under organic production, only 2,405,967 tons of raw material conveyed to the processing facilities.

Such a low figure has never been recorded in recent years in the Northern area. The reasons lie in the adverse and abnormal weather conditions that have characterized the year 2024: starting with the persistent rainfall, well above climatic normality, concentrated in May, the month of transplantation, and September-October, months in which large quantities were expected to be harvested.

Beyond the delay in the transplanting and harvesting operations, agricultural production has been affected by phytosanitary issues related to the rains, which have required a strong commitment, including an economic one, from farmers to ensure a product of quality while complying with integrated or organic production. This has also generated serious economic difficulties for farmers, which, despite the negotiated price, are experiencing a loss of income due to the use of technical means and missed yields.

“*The year 2024 will be remembered as a bad year for processing tomato production in Northern Italy due to low yields caused by the climatic anomalies* - comments **President Tiberio Rabboni,** -. *This is why the Interbranch Organization of Northern Italy has requested the intervention of the Ministry and the Regions to activate compensatory provisions in favor of the damaged companies, both agricultural and industrial*”.

From a recognition carried out by the Interbranch Organization of Northern Italy among the Producer Organizations after mid-October, about 850 hectares of tomatoes remained in the field in the territory of Northern Italy, due to the impossibility of harvesting, to which must be added the fields flooded by overflowing canals and watercourses, which occurred on several occasions in various parts of the area. The supply chain is still waiting for feedback from the institutions addressed to receive support in this critical situation, for the benefit of both farmers and processors, in order to cope with the investments of the new 2025 campaign.

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