Extended Practice Abstract Nº 7

The sustainability of avocado crop in Europe

Challenge

To meet the growing European demand for avocado, this product is imported from South America, which has a high carbon footprint. At the same time, many European farmers are turning to this crop as a substitute for others, due to its better economic profitability and the new climatic conditions.

Because avocado is a new crop in Europe, many farmers are not familiar with the most appropriate agronomic techniques adapted to the specific conditions.

Solution

It is necessary to know whether the conditions are suitable before opting for this crop. To this end, a regional agro-climatic map has been drawn up.

Moreover, the best available techniques to increase productivity, achieve more efficient water management and more effective biological control have also been studied.

Benefits

- Consider the agro-climatic conditions, in order to know the viability of this crop, before opting for this product.
- Increase avocado productivity and improve water efficiency thanks to new cultivation practices.
- Reduce imports from South America and, therefore, decrease the CO2 emissions that this transport entails.

Applicability box

Theme
avocado; climate change adaptation; water-use efficiency; cover crop

Context
Mediterranean area with potential for avocado growing

Application time
All year

Required implementation time
No time required

Period of impact
Immediately after applying the techniques

Equipment
No specific equipment is required

Practical recommendation

- Before planting, the agro-climatic map must be consulted to determine whether the plot meets the optimum conditions. In case the plot is not located in the area of influence of the agroclimatic map, the climatic data of the closest weather station to the plot must be consulted and compared with the scales established in the cultivation manual.
- Select the appropriate variety as well as the pollinating variety in accordance with the manual, considering for the type of soil and water available, the salinity and limestone concentrations in the plot.
- A good irrigation system is essential for water efficiency. Capacitance probes can be chosen to know the irrigation needs at each moment (some are autonomous and work with a small solar panel).
- Pollination is key in avocado cultivation, so the installation of ground covers is recommended. This will increase the number of pollinators and productivity, as well as water efficiency.

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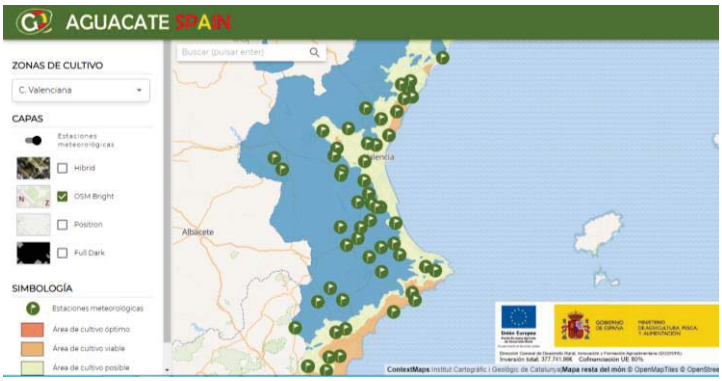

Picture 1. Agro-climatic map

Picture 2. Capacitance probe in avocado plantation

Picture 3. Avocado field

Further information

Web links

Project website: https://goaguacatespain.com/

Agro-climatic map (only available for some areas of Spain): https://goaguacatespain.com/mapa/

Further reading

- Manual of practical management of avocado cultivation *(Spanish)*

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