



By Maura Maxwell

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Weather slows Spanish F&V exports

Wintry conditions holding up trucks at French border and causing delays to deliveries

A large number of Spanish trucks transporting fruits, vegetables and other perishables to the European market are stranded at the French border because of the wintry weather.

Pedro Diaz, president of Murcian Transport Federation FROET, told Efeagro on Thursday that thousands of trucks from Andalusia, Murcia and Valencia that had previously been caught in heavy traffic passing through Catalonia were now stuck on the road between Narbonne and Nîmes in southern France. This is about 80km from Junquera, where around two-thirds of Spain's road-freighted agricultural exports cross the border.

Consignments of citrus, broccoli, lettuce, celery, cucumber, tomato, courgettes, peppers and strawberries bound for Germany, Italy, Belgium and other European markets will not reach their destinations on the scheduled date.

"If this goes on much longer it will impact on trade because many markets are not ready for a shortage of three or four days," Diaz said.

Traffic at Irún, the crossing point for lorries destined for northern France and the UK, is reportedly flowing more smoothly.

Jaime Zaforas of Huelväs Fresón de Palos said on Thursday that the situation was improving.



Retailers could be faced with shortages if the situation continues

"Some of our trucks have been stopped for a while, but it looks like the blockage is beginning to ease a bit and we don't think it will cause us too much harm...or at least we hope not," he told Fruitnet on Thursday afternoon.

Juan Manuel Sierra, the general secretary of the Spanish Association of Refrigerated Haulage, ATFRIE, called on European governments to take the necessary measures to clear roads and ease the traffic congestion.