

LIVESEED Cross-Visit Netherlands

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Organic seed potato production in Spain:
Visions, worries, perspectives and necessities

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SEAE – Spanish Society for Organic Agriculture / Agroecology

- A seed sector very deeply regulated in all the EU
- Very few and small areas in Spain authorised to produce seed potato



- The regional authorities are in charge of the control and certification of seed potatoes
- Rules in every region are different

Castilla y León (Área Oeste) y Cantabria

Castilia and Leon (Western areas) and Cantabria



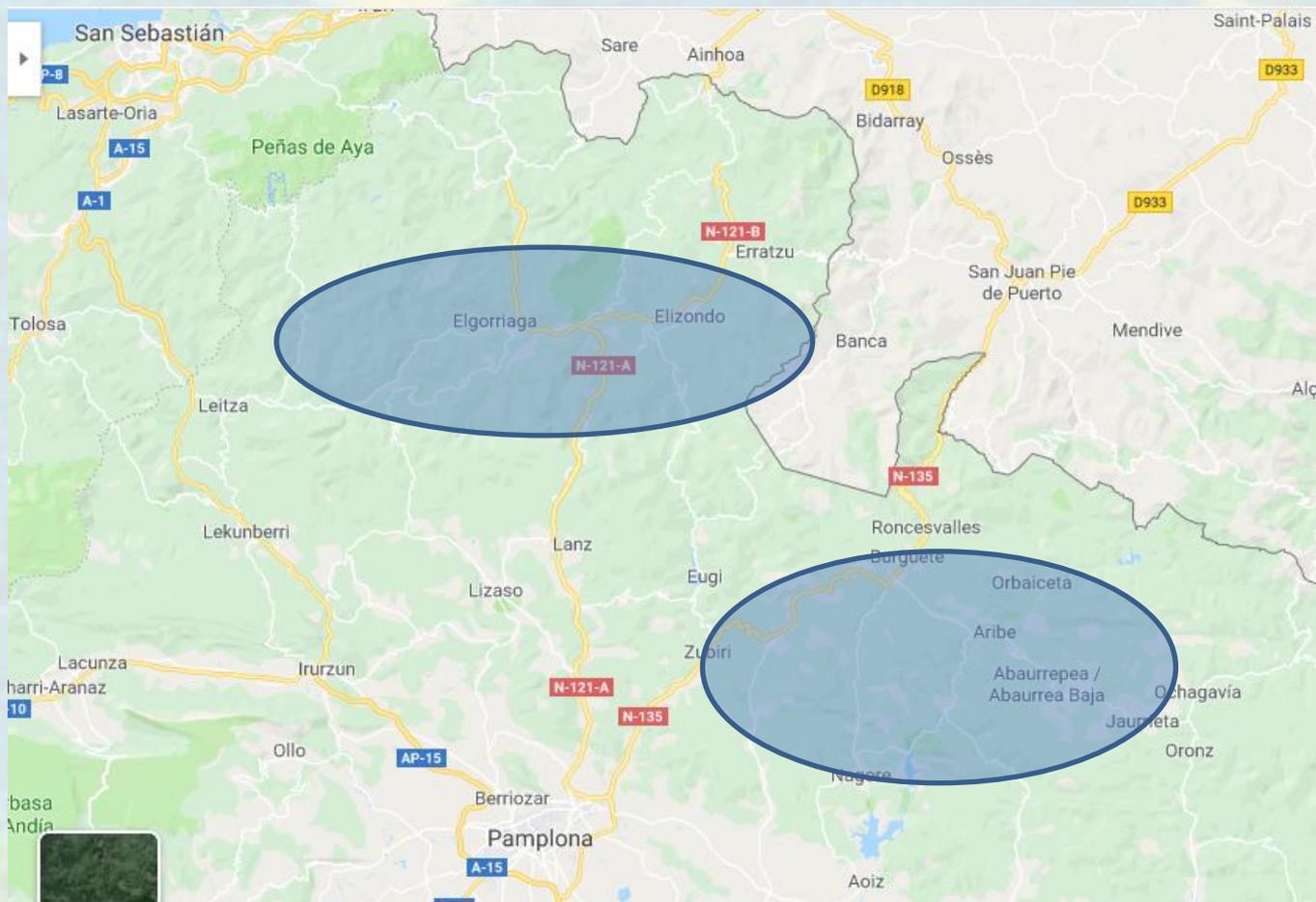
Castilla y León (Área Este) y País Vasco

Castilia and Leon (Eastern areas) and Basque Country



Navarra

Navarre



Small areas means (figures are approximate) about 43 ha of organic seed potato in Spain now (less than 2% of total seed potato crop area)

<i>REGION</i>	CONVENTIONAL SEED POTATO		ORGANIC SEED POTATO	
	<i>AREA (HA)</i>	<i>PRODUCTION (KG)</i>	<i>AREA (HA)</i>	<i>PRODUCTION (KG)</i>
CANTABRIA	1	2,165	0	0
CASTILLA Y LEÓN	1,747	21,879,251	5	100,000
CATALUÑA	1	7,500	0	0
NAVARRA	50	100,000	18	360,000
PAÍS VASCO	490	8,568,638	20	400,000
TOTAL	2,289	30,557,554	43	860,000

Past May, a meeting proposed by SEAE on the new situation of organic seeds in NEIKER, brought together a group of small seed producers, growers, advisors and scientists. Among other conclusions, the concern for the availability of organic seed of most utilized varieties was very important, as were the impediments for seed production and the use of old local varieties – both, from vegetables and also from crops such as wheat - due to legal restrictions that apply in our country.

- Other specific concerns on seed potato production were:
 - Lack of organic seed of high grades of seed potatoes from varieties most cropped in our country.
 - Lack of homogeneous regulations: e.g. differences between technical rules of seed potato production and organic regulations.
 - Lack of coherence between regulations: environment and rural development aids are greater than that for organic production.
 - No clear definition of ‘Heterogeneous Organic Materials’ as PRM, so difficult application of regulations.



The fact that regulations for producing seed potato are different between regions, doesn't help due to the lack of clarity:

- Double label ('organic' and 'official seed potato') generates big concerns for some public organic certifiers.
- The regulations require a seed company to market the farmer's product.
- Technical standards that are difficult to comply with, e.g.: finishing of seed crop cultivation with burners, not allowed due to fire hazard.
- In almost all regions, lack of technical staff to inform and advise on crop management.

In summary: a complex crop but it is possible to do it in our conditions: main difficulties: control of PVY, need for irrigation. Blight (*Phytophthora infestans*) is not a serious problem (some difficulties depending on the campaign and the time when storms occur), much more important could be early blight (*Alternaria sp.*) due to mild temperatures, and *Rhizoctonia solani* due to the use of organic fertilizers.

THANK YOU TO ALL OF YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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