

Chile declares agricultural emergency in Valparaiso due to water shortage

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On 8 August 2019, Mr. Antonio Walker, the Minister of Agriculture of Chile, announced that the government had decided to declare an agricultural emergency in the Region of Valparaiso, in the Central part of the country, due to the water shortage that affects the area. He said that the region is experiencing a very complicated situation due to a 75% precipitation deficit.



According to Walker, Valparaiso is experiencing a very complicated situation due to a 75% precipitation deficit, considered as one of the most complicated years of the last 60 years. In addition, he added that 50 thousand animals have been affected by the drought. This region has one hundred thousand hectares under irrigation. It is one of the country's most important exporting agricultural regions and the government has to see how to ensure the irrigation of an important part of these one hundred thousand hectares eventhough the reservoirs are at a 50% capacity. So, the central government and the members of parliament will cooperate with the regional government to seek the resources and to be able to alleviate in the best possible way this drought that affects the region, under this agricultural emergency measure.

The Minister also added that the government will not going to leave the farmers alone and will support them to the extent of their resources. He thinks that this is a very important action where the government recognizes that there is a water scarcity issue here, there is an agricultural emergency and the Government must do something about it.

Mr. Walker explained that the budget for the region was originally 5 billion Chilean pesos, but with this emergency measure, the government will increase the budget in this area. And for this reason, the government is conducting a cadastre in all parts of Valparaíso and going to help the people in need. The first thing that the government has to act on is water for human consumption, followed by water for animals, and the third is the area of one hundred

thousand hectares. The agricultural emergency in the region will last until the 31 December and there will be a meeting with the fruit producers in the Los Andes area. He added that it is still very difficult

to quantify the level of losses Chile can have in agriculture in the Valparaiso Region. The government has to carry out a very thorough cadastre, which will start today, to find out the economic consequences that not having significant rainfall in the next three months might have.

Previously, the Chilean government had also declared an agricultural emergency for the region of Coquimbo given the harsh effects of the drought in that area.

Source: <https://www.simfruit.cl/cambio-climatico-gobierno-decreta-emergencia-agricola-en-la-region-de-valparaiso-por-escasez-hidrica/>

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