



VOEN Covering Systems was invented by the German cherry grower, Reinhard Vöhringer, 18 years ago. Since then, growers world-wide have experienced the unique benefits of the self-ventilating covers, which are now sold in more than 25 countries including hot climates as Australia, US and Spain. The VOEN covers provide an efficient protection against frost, hail and rain while maintaining an optimal micro-climate resulting in larger and firmer fruits with an optimal shelf life. The flexible design and high wind tolerance make the system applicable in various crops, field layouts and climates. Although initially invented for stone fruit, special constructions and cover layouts have been developed to accommodate the specific needs of berry cultivation. The very good ventilation combined with full insect protection is helping numerous berry growers to ensure a stable, high quality during the hot summer period.

We interviewed Albert Sancho, from Joalsan Fruits, a family business of important depth and tradition in the fruit sector in the province of Tarragona. Joalsan Fruits is mainly dedicated to the cultivation of cherries. After evaluating different cover systems to prevent periodic damage by rain and hail, Joalsan decided to go for the VOEN ventilated cover system. Their satisfaction after the first season has resulted in the extension of the covered area to two more plots, all of them early varieties.

Could you tell us who you are and what you do?

We are a fruit company that grows cherries as our main product. We have 60 hectares of cherry, of which 40 hectares are of early varieties. Thanks to the climate of our area, we are able to focus on early varieties combined with mid-season varieties to serve our customers through a big part of the season. We are opening new sales and distribution channels to European customers who are very demanding in terms of quality, size and fulfillment of commitments in quantity and time. The VOEN system supports the implementation of this strategy, and we plan to increase year by year the area of VOEN covered cherries.

Why did you decide to invest in the VOEN system?

To continuously improve the profitability of our business, we were searching for ways to effectively improve quality and avoid crop losses caused by hail or rain. Especially cherry cracking induced by rain at the moment of ripening

is a big thread, and we have therefore spent many hours investigating the different covering system available on the market. The challenge is to find a system which is providing shelter from the rain, while at the same time is avoiding condensation under the cover, which can be just as devastating. When we were introduced to the Voen covering system, we liked the differentiating element compared to other solutions consisting of ventilation under the roof, by having sewn and glued flaps on an anti-hail mesh that acts as a support. The flaps are overlapping and thereby acts as tiles on a roof, while at the same time enables automatic ventilation. This keeps the crop dry, and it prevents humidity and heat to increase in the covered crop. The optimal climate leads not only to a higher packout rate, but also bigger and firmer cherries. Finally, the Voen system provides flexible solutions for cultivation in areas with more complex orography such as ours, where many of our farms are arranged in terraces with various row distances.

What is your personal experience to date with the VOEN roof system?

Two years ago we decided to try the Voen system. It coincided with a very bad season, with a record rainfall also in our region of Tarragona during spring, combined with a very uneven fruit set according to varieties. We lost practically the entire crop of the earliest varieties, suffering very significant losses in other early varieties.

“It is a pity that we did not cover one more farm as an experiment, because it would have been a complete success. We saved the harvest of the farm that we covered with the VOEN system, avoiding the cracking of the cherries under cover, both by rain and by the effect of condensation, and obtaining firmer and larger cherries (32 mm. on average). The disastrous weather conditions that first season helped us to finally conclude that we found a covering system that guarantees the yield, improves quality and productivity, and allows us to meet our customers’ commitments regardless of the weather conditions during harvest. After the excellent results obtained in the first installation carried out in 2019 as a pilot test, we have decided to continue covering other plots for this season. Our plan is to continue to cover more hectares year after year, even despite the significant investment involved. The positive results and the new perspectives it gives for the future development of our company, fully outbalances the high investment in the covers.

What are the main advantages and benefits?

The advantages are the guarantee of harvest, the improvement of profitability resulting from the improvement of quality and productivity per hectare, which gives you a peace of mind and security that is priceless. You know in advance that after a normal fruit set and pollination you will have a high quality crop, regardless of the weather during ripening and until harvest. It allows you to commit to the most demanding customers, knowing that you will have a

product of the highest quality, which gives you a considerable differential in the selling price of your product. And we clearly see that the differentiated quality we can now offer is being recognized by our clients.

Given the important cost of the investment, in what period of time do you estimate that it will be amortized?

Based on our experience, we estimate that the investment will be amortized in maximum three years. Our challenge is how to accelerate the pace to increase the number of hectares covered in the shortest possible time. Hopefully it won't take too long to have all our farms covered, especially those with early varieties.

We thank Mr. Sancho for his testimony and experience, inviting him to inform us of the new experiences and results for this 2021 campaign, which we will publish in a future issue, together with the testimonies of other customers from different regions.

For more information:
Voen Vöhringer GmbH&Co. KG



+34 628125312 - Partner Spain and Portugal
+49 (0) 7502-97795-0 - Headquarters Germany



www.voen.de