

Santiago Perea S.L., a history of innovation in the pine nut sector



(c) Santiago Perea S.L.

Keywords

forest nuts

Mediterranean pine nut

eco-labelling

traceability

wild harvested

NWFP

Wild Nuts & Berries

Scale

National



Context

Pine nuts are a product of Mediterranean forests, the quality of which makes them very suitable for human consumption; in fact they are considered a gourmet product. The Santiago Perea S.L. company was created in 1950 with the philosophy of care and respect for this product, and innovation has been a constant throughout its history. Over its 70 years history, the company has adapted with the times and taken advantage of the opportunities afforded by the market. It is currently the only company in Andalusia that handles the entire line from pine cone to pine nut kernel processing, and it was the first Spanish company to develop a certified organic production line.



Objective

The success story of the company Santiago Perea S.L. in the processing of pine nuts in Andalusia (Southern Spain) is presented here. The commitment of this company to innovation since its creation in 1950 has led to its outstanding positioning in the sector. The main milestones in the history of the company and the most notable elements of its business model are described below.



Results

Several initiatives undertaken by Santiago Perea S.L. can be highlighted which reflect its commitment to innovation over time. Shortly after its creation the company designed a pine cone processing line to obtain pine nuts. The line has been adapted with emerging new technologies and is still used today. The process involves tasks ranging from the collection of the pine cones to the sale of pine nut kernels to the final consumer. The company supplies itself with the pine nuts from the Doñana pine forests which are accessed through public tender. This fact guarantees, among other aspects, the traceability of the product toward the market, thus facilitating other types of objectives such as eco-labeling. The latter marks the second turning point, the ecological certification of the product, which has allowed the differentiation of "Piñares de Doñana" in the market.



Recommendations

The history of Santiago Perea S.L. has been linked to the search for efficiency and process improvement, with innovation being a constant. Knowing how to adapt to the times, with the implementation of a constantly adapting pine cone and nut processing chain, and being able to see the possibilities offered by different market tools when it comes to positioning your product prominently in the sector, are among the milestones that have allowed the company to occupy the prominent position they currently have in the sector. The company defends the importance of the quality, traceability and certification of its product as main commitments in its business policy.



Impacts and weaknesses

The commitment to ecological certification of the pine nut and the subsequent creation of the brand "Pinares de Doñana" were a differentiating factor in the history of the company. It is well known that one of the main challenges for the Mediterranean pine nut is to assure its [clear differentiation from other pine nut species from China or Pakistan](#), which the final consumer is not able to distinguish despite the differences in taste, nutritional values and quality. There is also the impact of the recent climate change related decrease in the pine nut kernel yields in the Mediterranean area, where increasing droughts weaken the forests and make them more susceptible to pests and diseases.



Future developments

The main idea of the company in the near future is to make the final consumer aware of different quality of their product. For this purpose, the strategy will consist of tasting sessions at all places where the "Pinares de Doñana" brand is present, allowing the pine nut kernel itself to convince the palate of the consumers. Hence, the client will become aware of its great flavour and characteristics, which are clearly superior to the competition in the market, thus increasing the demand for the brand at the different points of sale.



Mediterranean pine cone. (c) Santiago Perea S.L.

Further information

<https://www.pinaresdedonana.es/>

Author	Rapporteur	Published on
Contact Rocio Perea, info@santiagoperea.com , https://www.pinaresdedonana.es/ Organisation Santiago Perea S.L. Country and region Spain, Andalucia	Name María Pasalodos Tato Organisation Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Tecnología Agraria y Alimentaria (INIA) Email (hidden)	23 June 2020

About INCREDIBLE Project

INCREDIBLE project aims to show how Non-Wood Forest Products (NWFP) can play an important role in supporting sustainable forest management and rural development, by creating networks to share and exchange knowledge and expertise. 'Innovation Networks of Cork, Resins and Edibles in the Mediterranean basin' (INCREDIBLE) promotes cross-sectoral collaboration and innovation to highlight the value and potential of NWFPs in the region.



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