

Mercasetas/Mercatrufas: Linking producers with consumers.



Tuber melanosporum production area. Source: CESEFOR

Keywords

wild mushroom picking

truffles

edible mushrooms

marketing

gastronomy

mycological tourism

NWFP

Wild Mushrooms & Truffles

Scale

National



Context

When these markets are held, spaces are set up where local pickers and truffle growers can sell fresh mushrooms and truffles from the area with all the legal guarantees, ensuring the quality and traceability of the product.

In the case of Mercasetas, this space is managed by one of the companies of the guarantee label *Setas Castilla y León*, chosen in a public tender. Once selected, controlled and labelled, the mushrooms and truffles are put on sale in promotional formats for consumption.

The market is held annually, during the Christmas period. Mercasetas are held two or three times a year in different parts of the region of Castilla y León and always during the wild mushroom season. In both events, companies, producers and collectors are invited to participate and they are open to the general public.



Objective

MERCASETAS and MERCATRUFAS are fundamentally tools for the promotion and commercialization of the mycological resource and an opportunity to approach and encourage the consumption of these products among the attending public.

MERCATRUFAS is a market for Black Truffles (*Tuber melanosporum*) with a mycological character, being the meeting point between the truffle grower and the final consumer, who is guaranteed about the origin and quality of all the truffles with strict quality controls.

MERCASETAS is a new concept of market of mycological products, mainly oriented to the tourism whose objective is to dynamize the commercial activity of the sector, guaranteeing the origin, the traceability and the quality of the product, promoting the agro-alimentary innovation, improving the environmental and gastronomic education of the consumer.

✓ Results

These markets have been held since 2015 in different locations in Castile and Leon; in total: 10 events in the case of *Mercasetas* and 4 *Mercatrufas*. The average attendance at these events is around 5,000 visitors, with a significant impact on the local and national media. The informative activities in these events have contributed to the increase of general knowledge about species, qualities, and ways of consumption of these products. These events always include tastings and performances by relevant chefs, making known the culinary characteristics of these products.

💡 Recommendations

The intervention through the control of the quality and traceability of the product, carried out by an entity or expert external to the event, favors the confidence of the consumer in front of the unknown of most of the offered products, being this type of visible and continuous interventions in the space where the event takes place.

The demonstrations of manipulation, conservation and elaboration of the different versions of the mycological products promote the consumption of them, as well as show the different stages or processes to which the fresh wild mushrooms are submitted, previous to the commercialization of the same ones.

⚠️ Impacts and weaknesses

These are events with an important impact and a great repercussion in local and national media. They have a limited duration, concentrating all activities and product sales during a weekend. One of its weaknesses is the seasonality of production, which does not allow the organization of regular markets during the campaign. The development of these events is located in the producing areas, promoting local products among the existing mycotourists in the area.

➔ Future developments

The main goal is to expand these events, outside the producing areas, bringing the product closer to large consumer cities. One specific objective is to develop these specific events, (developed in the producing areas), into regular stable markets during the production campaigns, being the meeting point between producer, consumer, trader, restaurant and industry.



Local and promotional market for mycological products. Source: CESEFOR

Further information

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

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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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