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Frost damage is expected in early-flowering fruit species at the end of February

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During the forthcoming period, agrometeorological conditions will undergo a significant change. The expected below-normal temperatures in the last days of February will restore dormancy in the autumn-sown crops in the southern and southeastern regions of the country. The forecast minimum temperatures down to minus 10°C are above the critical thresholds for the tillered winter cereal crops and for the overwintering oilseed rape stands at the rosette stage. In some locations in Northwestern Bulgaria, the possibility of even lower values, down to minus 15-16°C, cannot be excluded, but in these regions the formation of a protective snow cover over the autumn-sown crops is expected.

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The forecast cold spell at the end of February is expected to cause frost damage of varying severity to the prematurely developed fruit trees. As a result of the above-normal February temperatures, a large part of the early-flowering species in the field areas have entered the budburst stage. In almond, in some locations in Southern Bulgaria (Petrich, Plovdiv, Pazardzhik) and in the eastern regions of the country (Varna), the stages of flower bud and flowering have been recorded nearly a month earlier than the usual dates. Temperatures below minus 2-3°C are critical for the blossoms of fruit trees, and for the flower buds – minus 6-7°C.

During the period, in most parts of the country the conditions will be unsuitable for carrying out seasonal agrotechnical activities – top dressing of winter crops with nitrogen mineral fertilizers, and pre-sowing tillage of the areas designated for sowing early spring crops such as vetch, oats, spring barley, and garden peas.

Source: NIMH