



la floración

The importance of flowering

In recent years, climate change has considerably shortened the colder seasons of the year. This could appear to be good news for those who enjoy summer, but it is quite the opposite for the agricultural industry.

To achieve specimen reproduction and fruit production, plants need to flower each year. However, for this stage to occur, generally in spring, the plants must first undergo a period of cold. Considering this, farming in Chile and the world is dependent on the seasonal existence of winter.

It is within this context that Dr. Andrea Miyasaka, researcher for the Center of Plant Biotechnology, Faculty of Biological Sciences at Universidad Andrés Bello, is working on determining the molecular mechanisms that affect flowering in one of the most important species in the national agriculture sector: the sweet cherry tree.

"In recent years, we have had much warmer winters and spring frosts. Cherry crops are most affected by these phenomena as this species requires an average of 1,000 hours of cold in the winter and a warm spring in order to flower," explains Dr. Miyasaka.

Dr. Miyasaka adds that, "Our research aims to define the molecular mechanisms that impact cherry flowering, not only to understand this process but also to help define the characteristics of the most adequate varieties for Chile."

The goal of this project, which is funded by Fondef and INNOVA-CORFO grants, is to support harvest improvement programs by offering tools to optimize the process of obtaining new varieties, thus widening the selection of cherries and overcoming the dependence of this crop on meteorological conditions.

"Our research will collaborate with efforts to reduce losses as a result of spring frosts, to widen the window for cherry production, and to better harvests, all of which will contribute towards obtaining better fruits," concludes Dr. Andrea Miyasaka.