

US to allow the entry of Argentine lemons

The United States government will allow imports of Argentine lemons, thus putting an end to the restrictions there have been on citrus marketing since 2001.

The agreement was reached during a meeting between Production Minister, Francisco Cabrera, and US Commerce Secretary, Wilbur Ross, as part of Mauricio Macri's visit to Washington.

"There still are a couple of technical issues to be solved, but the decision has already been made," government sources told El Cronista.

At noon, during the meeting held by Macri and Donald Trump at the White House, the American President surprised the press when he told them he was aware of the situation: "I know everything about lemons," he said.

One of the measures taken by Trump's administration in January was that the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) suspended the entry of Argentine lemons to that market for 60 days.

The measure, adopted by the US Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (Aphis), was taken so that the US could review the agreement that Argentina had reached with the administration of Barack Obama, which officially authorized the export of lemons on December 23, in the midst of the transition process of the presidential replacement in the United States, after a negotiation that took almost two years. Argentina hasn't sold fresh lemons to the US since 2001.

The sector was excited, as they could start exporting about 20,000 tons of fresh citrus worth about US \$50 million to the US market in the short term.

Argentina is the main producer of lemons with 1.5 million tons per year and, between January and November last year, it achieved exports of fresh fruit and juices for US \$455 million.

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