

## Difficult season for Spanish oranges

There is talk of this being the worst Spanish citrus season in years. According to importer Willem Koole of Frukar this is mainly due to the warm winter across Europe, which has led to a lower consumption. "Cold weather always stimulates the citrus consumption. The prices aren't good, although the price for lemons isn't that bad at an average price of 11/12 Euro per 15 kg. It's a 'normal' season for mandarins with an average price of 9/10 Euro (10 kg) for the better brands."

"Although the oranges are cheaper than in previous years, I have to say that the better brands are still making 'all right' money with prices of around 10 Euro per 15 kg," says the importer. "Of course this isn't all, you have to take the costs of - transport, box, packaging, sorting - for the grower or supplier into consideration. The Navelina season was difficult, with a lot of small sizes, and the Navel Lane Late season still isn't great, even with good sizes. Who knows what the rest of the season will bring?"

### Competition

"There is also a lot of competition from Egypt, Turkey and Morocco this year. These countries usually export a lot to Russia, but due to the crisis and tensions in this country, these countries weren't able to send as much there, which means more is coming to Europe," says Willem. When asked whether this season will have consequences for citrus producers next year, the importer responded: "I think some suppliers in Spain will drop out and I'm afraid the consumption won't improve. The current generation prefers to get their vitamins out of a tub rather than peeling or squeezing an orange at home."

But the importer does believe you can make money with a strong brand: "I believe that you're halfway there with strong brands and continuous quality. Customers will pay more for it because they know it has been good for years, which creates trust."

Frukar is offering the following citrus package at the moment. As far as oranges are concerned Navel Lane Late (to June), Salustiana (up to May) and Valencia Late (until June / July). The importer is also supplying two other Primofiori lemons, the Verna variety until June and lemons from Argentina and Bolivia from week 20/21. As for mandarins, the importer has Fortuna for another two weeks, Ortanique until May and starting week 17, Satsumas from Argentina and Peru.

"We will start with the stonefruit from Italy and Spain in two weeks and will offer melons from Costa Rica and Panama for the next three or four weeks. In short, for fruit all year round, Frukar is the place to be," concludes the importer.

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