

Russian market is vital for the Moroccan easy peelers

(...) the Moroccan government decided to protect and regulate the export to the vital market of Russia. Russia absorbs more than 60% of the Moroccan clementine dedicated to export. During the last 10 years, excluding 2013-14, Morocco shipped 120 000 tons on average per year to St Petersburg. This amount was increased by 52% during 2013-14. In addition, the export started too early which meant fruits not correctly matured were shipped. Therefore, the market was flooded with clementines from beginning of October till the end of January. This rise was unexpected by the major importers and the market did not react positively.

Therefore, the Moroccan-Russian General affairs Council, Maroc citrus organisation, EACCE (Establishment of Control and Coordination of Exportation) as well as the association of Citrus Exporters have had multiple meetings since last July with the aim of finding better solutions for both sides: Protect Moroccan growers and exporters and Protect Russian importers.

The solutions which all parties find wise are:

- Regulate the export weekly so the volume shipped will be in relation with the market capacity
- Organise the transport smoothly. There will be a departure every day calling at St Petersburg, while last season only one day of departure per week was possible. This way, fruits will be sent little by little with fresh guaranty instead of shipping in one shot.
- EACCE will manage the quality control previous to shipping. Only fruits corresponding to the category 1 as per the international specification will receive the authorization of export.
- EACCE will control the regulation of quantity according to market situation

"The Green Morocco Plan aims from now on to focus on the marketing side of our business," explains Ms Charrat. "The previous aim was to increase citrus production to 2.9 million tons by 2018. Today the aim is to boost the export. Of course Russia is the number 1 citrus client taking 60%. North America is important too especially in the first period (Oct and Nov) taking 15%. EU represents some 20%. Other markets are worthy of note like UAE and Arabia Saudi and Asia in general

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