

Italy: Good start for blood oranges

"The sale of Tarocco and Moro oranges started a week ago. Prices are satisfactory but quantities are still too small to make a real assessment. Export peaks will be recorded from December onwards, when all retail chains will start stocking the Moro variety."

"As regards blond oranges, the Navelino season started well but prices dropped when produce from other regions arrived on the market. We are also being affected by competition from Spain and clementines, so much so that prices in Italy and Europe hover around €0.50-0.60/kg."

"The situation is different for lemons: quality is good and prices are satisfactory, especially for the organic varieties, which are less affected by the Spanish and Turkish produce."

APAL lemons are available the whole year round except for August and September.

The problems the sector will have to deal with this year are the usual, starting with scarce aggregation and organisation, which makes Sicily less competitive on the market.

"This year, there is 30% less produce available than a normal year and production prices are quite high. This means the blood orange market will not only depend on the consumption trend, but also on our capability of maintaining prices. From late January onwards, prices will increase due to the fact that there will be less Navel and clementines available, so we are hoping things will turn out to be better than the previous season."

APAL gathers around 100 citrus growers producing around 20,000 tons of oranges, lemons, tangerines and clementines per year. The PO covers the entire sales season between November and June. It holds the GlobalGAP, Tesco Nurture, BRC - British Retail Consortium Version 6 and HACCP certifications and its main clients are domestic and foreign retailers.