

Georgian citrus harvest: 20,000 mandarins exported

Georgia is only halfway through its orange harvest this season, yet by processing thousands of tons of lower quality mandarins into fruit juice and other products, Georgian farmers collectively have already earned almost one million GEL. The country's government is supporting the sector with a number of initiatives.

As of today more than 20,000 tonnes of standard mandarins have been exported abroad and about 5,000 tonnes of citrus fruit has been processed, revealed the Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia.

Standard mandarins were mainly exported to:

Russia – 16,549 tonnes (80 percent);
Ukraine – 2,690 tonnes (13 percent);
Armenia – 574 tonnes (2.8 percent);
Kazakhstan - 407 tonnes (1.97 percent);
Belarus – 161 tonnes (1.15 percent);
Azerbaijan - 205 tonnes (0.99 percent); and
Other countries - 74 tonnes (0.35 percent).

Georgia's Agriculture Minister Otar Danelia said the Government allocated two million GEL to support the export of Georgian mandarins abroad. This money was used to add extra transport vehicles to the current fleet, meaning export of Georgian citrus would reach its destination in more "favourable conditions" and fund the operation of storage facilities.

Income generated from processing tangerines for juice or other uses reached 990,000 GEL, said Danelia. Of this amount the state subsidy was about 494,000 GEL.

This orange harvest season the Government of Georgia offered farmers and industry players a helping hand by implementing several initiatives to support the sector.

Georgia's Agriculture Ministry announced companies that paid 0.2 GEL for every kilogram of lower quality mandarins, to be processed and not sold as fruit, would receive a subsidy of 0.10 GEL from the state. These companies would also benefit from the Preferential Agro-Credit project.

About 40 processing plants were involved in the citrus harvest process this year.

Source : www.freshplaza.com/ 30/12/2015