

Italy: Recovering orange production

A USDA report explained that, if expectations for the November 2015-October 2016 Italian citrus fruit campaign are confirmed, volumes will increase after a drop during the previous season except for tangerines and clementines.

Oranges

The orange production is expected to reach 1 million 950 thousand tons, a volume similar to the 2013/14 season (1 million 800 thousand tons). The ideal weather conditions, combined with the introduction of new Tristeza-resistant varieties, will enable the recovery from the drop recorded in 2014/15 (1.36 million ton). During the last season, the water shortage and the CTV hit over 32 thousand orange groves in Catania and Siracusa (Sicily).

Sicily will produce 59% of the total production, followed by Calabria with 22%. The main varieties are: Tarocco, Moro, Sanguinello, Naveline and Valencia, while the popularity of Ippolito and Meli is on the rise. Cultivated areas are stable: 86,372 in 2015/16 against the 86,200 of the previous season.

As production recovers, imports will drop - 145 thousand tons against the 220 thousand of the 2014/15 season (Spain is the main supplier). During the previous season, Italy exported little less than 120 thousand tons mainly to Germany, Switzerland, Austria and France.

For what concerns processing and juicing, estimates talk about 345,150 tons of oranges sent to processing plants to obtain 24,160 tons of the final product. During the previous season, 242,100 tons were destined to processing, obtaining almost 17 thousand tons of products.

Tangerines and clementines

Because of the hailstorms that hit Sicily in May, June and August, the USDA believes the clementine and tangerine production will drop this season (-10.8% for clementines to 660 thousand tons and -20.6% for tangerines to 100 thousand tons). During the 2014/15 season, 740 thousand tons of clementines and 126 thousand tons of tangerines were produced.

The main production area is Calabria, followed by Sicily (23% of the total) and Apulia (14%). The main varieties of clementines are Comune, Oroval and Monreal and the main varieties of tangerines are Avana, Tardivo and Ciaculli.

For what concerns imports and exports, in 2013/14 little more than 80 thousand tons were imported, -12% with respect to the previous season, due to lower volumes from Spain. Exports also dropped during that season: -14% (77 thousand tons) due to

lower demand from Poland (-42%) and Romania (-27%), the two main destination markets.

In 2014/15, 97 thousand tons were imported and 100 thousand tons were exported.

Lemons

Lemon production should remain stable - 420 thousand tons against the 429 thousand tons of the previous season. Quality is expected to be better thanks to the fact that there will be no insect and rain problems. Sicily is the main producer, supplying 86% of the total.

Grapefruit

The domestic production should reach 6 thousand tons, so a lot of produce will have to be imported (almost 28 thousand tons) especially from South Africa, Turkey, Israel and Cyprus.

Despite the average production of 2013/14 (7,500 tons), that season Italy exported little more than 3 thousand tons to Slovenia, the Netherlands, Croatia and France.

Source : <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/151768/Italy-Recovering-orange-production>