

## Georgia prepares for bumper orange harvest

Georgia is getting ready for a rich, high quality orange season in northwestern Adjara region.

The typical citrus season runs from November to January and in these months about 60,000 tonnes of citrus fruit was expected to be picked in Adjara and around the country.

The majority of the harvested fruit will be exported abroad while the about 10,000 tonnes will be sent for industrial processing.

The Government of Georgia was working hard to diversify its the export markets and sell Georgian citrus further afield.

Latvia and Uzbekistan were among the new markets that were interested in importing Georgian citrus fruit, announced Georgia's Ministry of Agriculture.

Last year Georgia exported more than 26,000 tonnes of citrus fruit to Russia, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Belarus and other nations.

As a way to increase awareness and export potential of Georgian citrus abroad, a special forum was planned in Adjara for later this month where representatives from large citrus exporter countries were invited.

Like previous years the Government will help farmers and industry players by opening special coordination centres or launch a hotline where they can get a range of support and information.

Georgia's Agriculture Ministry said a special electronic database will be created where all harvested citrus will be registered and people will be able to get updated information about this year's harvest online.

Looking forward the Ministry will analyse the local market and after this it will decide whether or not to subsidise this year's orange harvest.

Citrus are also being grown in Georgia's western Guria region, which is rich with citrus plantations.