

## Spain: Valencian citrus growers ask Canada not to use Valencia Orange brand

Valencian citrus growers are warning about the threat that may be involved in the use of the brand Valencia Orange by foreign trading companies, following the signing of the free trade agreement between the European Union and Canada (CETA). This bilateral agreement allows Canadian firms to use this label for the sale of oranges, something that has generated different reactions from the sector. According to La Unió de Llauradors, "the case of the Valencia Orange brand is one of the negative effects of the treaty," and the organization has asked "for Valencia not to be used as a trademark in a misleading way."

For its part, the Valencian Farmers Association (AVA) is asking companies "to specify the origin of all citrus fruits" so that, as could happen with Valencia Orange, "there can be no room for confusion." The company, chaired by Cristóbal Aguado, clarified that the label can refer to a variety of oranges, and therefore it is essential to indicate the origin, whether it is Spain, Morocco or South Africa. "We demand the treaty shows respect for the designations of origin," they affirm. With this, the association notes that its intention is not to prevent the use of the name, Valencia Orange, but, as with the rest of citrus fruits, "to ensure that the country of origin is clearly indicated."

The fact is that that same name was registered for use in Europe by the Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) Cítricos Valencianos. In this sense, Nacho Alamar, a lawyer specialised in trademark and patent issues, said that an offense would be committed, "because Valencia Orange is the same as 'Naranjas de Valencia', but in a different language," argued the expert, who said that both the Spanish and EU legislation prohibits the use of identical and/or similar names.

The PGI, which brings together thirty companies, totalling some 14,000 tonnes of citrus per year, has reported that, for now, they are gathering all the information needed to analyse the potential impact of the use of the brand Valencia Orange by Canadian firms.

Regarding the implementation of the bilateral treaty, which is perceived as a prelude to the ambitious agreement with the United States, there still appears to be a long way ahead after seven years of negotiations. The agreement must be ratified by the Spanish Parliament, the rest of the EU Member States and a dozen regional governments.

So far, some agents, such as La Unió de Llauradors, have already expressed their opposition to such agreements on several occasions.