

Spain: Lemons generated 710 million Euro in 2016

Last season, lemons generated a turnover of 710 million Euro, of which 80% corresponded to Murcia, according to the interprofessional organization Ailimpo; that is, 568 million Euro were invoiced in the Region for sales and the processing into juices and essential oils.

The current Fino lemon harvest, which is in its final stages, will come to an end with a production totalling 762,000 tonnes, to which we have to add another 230,000 tonnes of the Verna variety, whose harvest is about to start. Such volumes, 60% of which come from Murcia's plantations, will make it possible to repeat or even improve the results of the 2015/2016 campaign, given the scarce competition on the part of Turkey and Argentina. Current prices range from 30 to 40 cents per kilo, while the cost of production amounts to 14 cents.

The Region of Murcia has 21,662 hectares of lemon trees of the Fino (79%) and Verna (21%) varieties, which is 56% of Spain's total acreage (38,105 hectares). The 5.5 million lemon trees in the Region are mostly to be found in Vega Media del Segura, Guadalentín Valley and Campo de Cartagena, and to a lesser extent in the region of the Mula River. These areas produce 60% of all Spanish lemons.

In the European Union, the acreage devoted to the cultivation of lemons stands at 62,855 hectares. Spain is the Member State with the largest acreage (60.6% of the total), while the Region of Murcia represents 34.4% of the European total. Italy ranks second, with 16,634 hectares, followed by Greece, with only 5,180 hectares.

Of the 710 million Euro invoiced last season, 635 correspond to fresh sales; 40.8 million to concentrated juice and 34.2 million to essential oils. Spain ranks first in the world in terms of fresh lemon marketing, with a 22% market share, and second in terms of citrus juice production, with a 15% share. Murcia controls 80% of both activities in the country.

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