

OVERVIEW GLOBAL LIME MARKET

European traders are concerned about the large volumes of limes shipped to the continent from Mexico and Brazil. In almost all countries there are talks about the volume being excessive for the market. Further to the east, Russia would actually like to receive a greater volume of good quality fruit. The market is actually only interested in green limes and those are difficult to get. In China, the production is limited and in Australia there is hardly any room for imported product. On the other side of the ocean, there is scarcity on the US market, at least as far as the large calibres are concerned.

Brazil expects stable season

The biggest competitors for Brazil are the Mexican exporters, especially in the months when the seasons overlap; at those times, competition may be very tough, with price declines as a result. Nevertheless, the country has a stable position as a supplier in, among others, Europe, the Middle East and Canada. An exporter tells us that they ship between 7 and 8 containers per week. Normally, the Brazilian season peaks in November. Last season, however, it peaked in December. This year began with challenging weather conditions, but since then the weather has remained stable. Traders expect a stable supply until the end of the season in July.

Limes popular in Australia

Limes, together with mandarins, are the most popular citrus fruit. On the Sydney market there was a good demand for limes this week. According to a dealer, the best limes are available between January and April, although the product is available all year round. On average, the retail price stands between 11 and 14 Australian dollars (7.40-9.40 Euro) per kilo. The bulk of the supply comes from domestic producers, but there are also imports available during the off-season. The share of lemons and limes in Australian citrus cultivation is limited to just 5%.

The Netherlands: Good demand for limes, but way too much supply

Limes in the Dutch market come mainly from Brazil and Mexico. The demand for limes is good during this period of the year, but the supply is far too big. In recent weeks, exports have grown by between 50 and 90%; as a result, prices are under pressure, because more is

imported than can be sold. The prospect is that sales will increase, but supply will still be high and importers expect prices to remain low.

Belgium flooded with limes

Currently, limes are imported from Brazil and Mexico. The supply is high. Both countries are supplying excessive volumes to Europe. A retailer explains that in week 15, 102 containers have been shipped from Brazil and 57 from Mexico, which is far too much, because the European market can only absorb 100 containers per week. The high supply is the result of a good start of the season in Mexico. The campaign kicked off with larger volumes than last year. Before week 14 of 2016, the country had only shipped 7 containers, but this year the figure stands at 57. Due to this large supply, prices are under pressure. This declining trend is expected to continue in the coming weeks.

UK: High prices, but changes expected

Four weeks ago, limes were sold for high prices. This was not so much due to there being a small supply, but to the quality of the fruit. The small volumes of good quality fruit got a good price, but these good prices also have a downside, as many traders try to profit from such a situation. A British importer says that the larger supply did not result in a market crash, but because of the weather in Europe, prices have been under pressure. The trader expects exporters who pay at fixed rates to lose money in the coming weeks.

Spain prefers Mexican limes

Spanish importers have better things to say about the quality from Mexico than about that from Brazil. Imports are arriving from both countries. Prices are low and the declining trend will continue in the coming days, despite the fact that demand will rise from this month. The peak in demand is in the summer months, when the country is flooded by tourists seeking the Spanish sun. The demand increases every year.

Domestic cultivation is small compared to other citrus fruits. Most growers are based in the region of Murcia. The harvest takes place between August and September. Production is growing slowly, but with the good profits obtained from lemons, growers are not encouraged to cultivate limes. Limes are harder to grow in the Spanish climate and the season is shorter.

Limes remain a niche product in Italy

Although limes are still perceived as niche products, sales show a rising trend. There is supply mainly from Brazil and Mexico. Due to the low temperatures and the large volumes available, prices are low. Most of the demand comes from the catering industry. Consumers are hardly familiar with the fruit. Limes are available all year round, but the season records a peak in the summer months.

In addition to Mexico and Brazil, there is also supply from Peru, Colombia and Venezuela. According to a trader, the Brazilian limes are juicier and have a more pleasant flavour. Mexican limes, on the other hand, have a better shelf life and stay green for longer. On 28 April, the price for limes on the wholesale market in Rome reached 2.60 Euro. On 4 May, the price in Verona stood at 2.40 Euro.

France

The French currently import limes mostly from Mexico. For Class 1, size 53-67, the price stands at 3.50 Euro.

Russia, a growing market for green limes

The green citrus continues to penetrate the Russian market. Almost every supermarket in the country has made room for limes on the shelves. A trader tells us that sales have been difficult due to some quality problems. "Limes sell well in Russia, but many exporters see Russia as a second-rate market," so the trader says he has had to destroy large volumes because the fruit has arrived too ripe to the Russian ports. The customer, a major retailer, refused the products. If the limes had been green, sales wouldn't have been a problem.

Consumers are becoming increasingly familiar with limes, as shown, among other things, by the changes in the way the fruit is used. Limes have earned a place in the kitchen. While other citrus reach their peak in the winter months, lime prices remain stable. Currently, the retail price stands at 1.90 Euro per kilo.

Chinese cultivation mainly in Taiwan

The production of limes is limited. There are some growers in the province of Sichuan, but the volumes are small compared to those of lemon growers. Most of the production takes place in Taiwan, especially in Pingdong and Taizhong. Some of the main lime varieties are the Four

Season, Perfume and Taiwan. The peak in the campaign is in the summer months, in July and August, as well as in the autumn, between November and December. China imports the citrus fruit from Peru and Australia, and recently it was announced that the borders would open also for Mexican products.

Tight market in the US

The supply is just right to cover the demand. The market has certainly become more difficult for the larger sizes, as the big limes were harvested first. Small calibres are abundant. The bulk of the supply is from Mexico, where the season peaks in July and August. The market is growing.

South Africa, a small player

According to official figures, there is a limited production of limes. The country has about 50 hectares of Bearss and 6 hectares of Tahiti limes. Of the 56 hectares of lime plantations in the country, the majority are to be found in Hoedspruit (42 hectares), the Western Cape (5 hectares) and Senwes (2 hectares); the rest of the acreage is in the Eastern Cape, Boland and Swaziland. Most of the production is intended for the domestic market, with some small volumes also being shipped to Europe and the Middle East.

Lien article : <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/175033/OVERVIEW-GLOBAL-LIME-MARKET>