

Spain: Mapama expects 11% fewer oranges and 2.8% fewer lemons

According to the latest Report on the Development of Acreage and Agricultural Productions published by the Mapama, with data up to August, the production volumes in 2016/17 stood at 3.65 million tonnes for oranges and 995,900 tonnes for lemons, compared to 3.08 million and 775,800 tonnes, respectively, in the 2015/16 campaign.

The forecast of Andalusia's citrus production for the 2017/2018 campaign published by the Government of Andalusia on 6 October estimated it at 2.01 million tonnes; a similar figure compared to 2016/2017 and 1.6 % above the average for the last four seasons.

On 29 September, the Interprofessional Association of Lemon and Grapefruit (Ailimpo) reported that it expected Spain to produce 1.11 million tonnes of lemons (-3.7% compared to 2016/17). The reduction affecting grapefruit, announced a few days later (3 October) is much greater, with 80,700 tonnes (-24%).

Ten days earlier, the Councillor for Agriculture of the Region of Valencia, Elena Cebrián, announced the citrus production forecast of the number one Spanish producer at 3.14 million tonnes; a 20% drop compared to the 2016/2017 campaign.

Cebrián stressed that the lower fruit production expected has made the markets appear more lively than in the previous season and added that if good quality levels are maintained, "the prices will also be good."

"If the forecasts are met, this season's harvest in the Region of Valencia will be similar to that of 2015/2016, but with higher yields," she affirmed.

The Councillor pointed out that, in general terms, the reduction forecast is mainly due to the natural alternation of citrus crops, to the decline in the acreage devoted to their cultivation and to the expansion of other crops, such as kakis.

Another reason for the lower production, she added, is the impact of the weather, namely the abundant rains recorded at the end of 2016 and the high temperatures of May, which affected the fruit setting, which in some areas was sparse and irregular.

In her opinion, the citrus sector expects good quality and good calibres, since the rains of late August and early September have been beneficial to the sector.

Drop in satsuma mandarin and clementine production

The data for the Region of Valencia reveal a 24.1% reduction affecting all mandarin varieties (about 427,970 tonnes less in total), with a strong decrease in the case of satsumas (-31%) and clementines (-29.3%).

In the case of oranges, the Region of Valencia expects a 17.6% drop in the production volume

compared to the previous season, with the early Navel subgroup being the most affected.

As for Valencian lemons, the Councillor pointed out that the production would fall by 16% (246,150 tonnes) and that the Verna will record the most severe drop (-48.7%), which is 42,624 tonnes less than in 2016/17. For grapefruit, the prospect is to reach 25,684 tonnes (+15.4%), and this with higher yields.

For its part, the Region of Murcia, through its General Directorate of Productions and Agro-Food Markets, estimated (also on 19 September) that the 2017/2018 citrus season would close with a volume totalling 863,500 tonnes, 2% less than in the previous one, when 881,000 tonnes were harvested.

More Fino lemon and less Verna
Of that volume, 580,000 tonnes would correspond to lemons (+0.9%), with an increase of the Fino variety, to the detriment of the Verna variety.

Murcia's Government explained that the orange harvest is expected to fall 8% below that of the previous season, mostly due to the gradual regrafting of plots to lemons or later orange varieties, with the consequent acreage reduction.

Thus, traditional varieties such as the Navelina, Navel and Lane late record declines in their productions of about 20%, largely because of the impact of the May and June heat on the flowering.

On the other side of the scale, Murcia expects increases of around 10% in the later varieties (Powell and Valencia late), which are more popular in the current markets.

Source <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/183648/Spain-Mapama-expects-11-procent-fewer-oranges-and-2.8-procent-fewer-lemons>