



Turkey: Record increase in citrus fruit production

The Aegean region in Turkey is surpassing all expectations for citrus fruit production so far. The production had been estimated at around 428,000 tons, however current numbers indicate a much higher production volume.

As a result, growers and wholesalers are already looking to establish a better position in export markets, setting the goal to export citrus fruits worth 850 million USD in 2017 – 2018 and 1 billion USD in 2018 – 2019.

According to current figures, Mugla tops the list of cities in Aegean region with the largest production, at 411,00 tons, followed by Izmir with 170,000 tons and Aydin with 96,000 tons.

Among citrus fruits, the production volume of oranges increased from 272,000 to 370,000 tons. Mugla is the city mainly responsible for this dramatic increase in production, having had a 36 % increase this season, while producing almost 85 % of the entire orange production in the region, with a 310,000 ton production volume.

Mandarin production went through a steep decline last season but is now showing signs of recovery. Mandarin production this season has increased by 132 % from 102,000 tons to 238,000 tons.

Lemon production also increased from 50,000 tons to 74,000 tons. Grapefruit production also more than doubled, increasing from 2,500 tons to 5,500 tons. Growers remarked that due to weather conditions, the products arrived about 2 weeks earlier and the quality of the products have been remarkable so far. The Ministry of Agriculture is providing help to growers to battle Mediterranean fruit fly to ensure good quality and to minimize losses in production.

Mandarin was the top exporting product in Turkey among citrus fruits with 335 million USD worth of export value. Turkey's export numbers in citrus fruits actually showed a 3 % decline in 2017, dropping to 850 million USD from 880 million USD. The export volume for lemon was 295 million USD, followed by oranges with 151 million USD and grapefruit with 69 million USD.

On the other hand, the lemon harvest continues in the country's most important lemon production regions Adana and Mersin, two cities located in southern Turkey. A representative of the Mersin Chamber of Agriculture, Mahmut Sakalli, noted that they expect 10 % - 15 % more products from this year's harvest.



Adana and Mersin cover 70 % of the lemon production in Turkey. The expected volume from Mersin for this season is around 800,000 tons. Growers also noted that, due to climate conditions, products matured much quickly and harvesting started around 1 month earlier than usual and that they have already started exporting.

The harvest season has started for the “mayer” variety of lemons which will be soon followed by the “enterdonat” variety. Citrus fruits make up almost half of Turkish fresh produce exports and Turkey is the 8th biggest production country and 2nd biggest exporting country in the world. The growers are also still actively looking to expand their share in the export market, exploring opportunities in Japan and China. The goal is to export 1 billion USD worth of citrus fruits.

The growers expect that, due to the decline in value of the Turkish currency, most of the products will be exported to get better value, which in turn may cause a shortage of supply in the domestic market. Consequently growers predict that lemon prices in the domestic market will increase.

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