

Peru seeks to improve the access of its mandarins to the US

Peru wants to improve the access of its mandarins to the United States. Currently, Peru can only dispatch this fruit to continental the United States, so it is conducting studies to expand that access to its islands and new territories.

This was stated by the manager of the Association of Producers of Citrus of Peru (ProCitrus), Sergio del Castillo Valderrama, who noted that Peru can not send their citrus directly to Hawaii or Puerto Rico, among other places, but that they had to first dispatch it to the continental US from where they had to forward it to these other destinations, which decreases their competitiveness.

The country is also working on the extension of the cold treatment schedule. Currently, to send mandarin to the United States, US authorities require that the fruit be at 1 degree for 15 days or at 1.5 degrees for 17 days.

"These temperatures can cause cold damage to citrus. In addition, it gives exporters a very small range of variability so the treatment can be interrupted very easily and therefore must be performed again when the containers arrive at their destination, which increases costs and harms the product (as the cold damages the fruit's skin, the fruit softens, it shortens it's shelf life, and can produce other physiological disorders)," he said.

Sergio del Castillo said they wanted their cold treatment to have a range of up to 3 degrees, as is required in shipments to Japan, as the damage to the fruit is lower than when the cold treatment has to be repeated.

"We want them to allow us to dispatch the fruit with a cold chain that ranges between 1 degree for 15 days to 3 degrees for 21 days, which would allow exporters to choose the temperature and time but also grant them a wide margin so that they may avoid the problems they currently have and don't have to repeat the cold treatment at the destination" he said.