

## Chilean citrus exports soar by 32% in 2018

The Chilean citrus industry notched total exports of 358,570 metric tons (MT) this season, marking an impressive 32 percent year-on-year growth.

Juan Enrique Ortúzar, president of the Chilean Citrus Committee, said the export volume had 2018 a record season.

“It was a season of great contrasts, with a market rarely seen for lemons, but complicated for oranges and for the first time, a market with sufficient supply of mandarins.”

Chilean citrus exports were focused in the U.S., with 87 percent of shipments, followed by the Far East with 7 percent and Europe with 3 percent. The rest was sent to Canada, Latin America and the Middle East.

Breaking down the citrus categories, mandarins made up 30% of exports, followed by oranges with 28 percent, lemons with 25 percent and clementines with 17 percent.

“A key challenge during the whole season was the delay in ripening and harvesting, which generated an initial feeling that the estimated volumes would not be met, but in the end we exceeded our goals,” said Ortúzar.

He added that the frosts that occurred from June onwards “were also an important test, both because of the decrease in the potential supply and because of the need to technical procedures to recognize and segregate the damaged fruit in the field and the packing, preventing it from reaching the market.”

Clementines, which were unaffected by the frosts as the harvests had already wrapped up, surpassed forecasts during the season, rising by 55 percent year-on-year to 63,198MT.

Similarly, lemons had a good season and were largely spared any frost damage and the season had almost wrapped up when the lowest temperatures arrived. Lemon exports rose by 14 percent year-on-year 88,140MT.

Some orange farms were affected by the frosts, but the category still saw a 32% increase to 99,876MT.

For mandarins, which are just completing their harvests now, the season got off to a slow start as cool temperatures had delayed the ripening process. In addition, they suffered the most severe frost



damage, shaving off 15 percent of the fruit volume that would have been exported. But despite that, mandarin exports have so far jumped by 40%, exceeding forecasts and reaching 107,356.

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