

## Greek fruit and veg exports may break new records this year

According to ELSTAT, in the first nine months of 2018, Greek fresh fruit and vegetable exports increased by 12.4% in terms of value compared to 2017, reaching 794.4 million Euro, while the volume grew by 5.8% and amounted to 1,140,665 tonnes.

Based on the development of Greek fruit and vegetable exports between January and September 2018, the Association of Greek Exporters of Fruits and Vegetables "Incofruit Hellas" expects the total volume to "exceed 1.6 million tons. The conditions would thus be right for a new record in terms of value, with the latest having been achieved in 2016."

"This achievement with our exports has been possible, on the one hand, thanks to the improvements introduced by our producers over the last twenty years. They have adopted and applied all the modern cultivation methods. On the other hand, it is also the result of the use of modernized marketing enriched with knowledge and expertise," said Giorgos Polichronakis, head of Incofruit Hellas.

Polichronakis said that another positive factor has been the redefinition of export destinations for Greek products. "There has been an expansion in the traditional markets, but also the opening of new ones coinciding with a low consumption in the domestic market."

Meanwhile, imports of fruit and vegetables in the first 9 months this year amounted to 497,215 tons, marginally more (+ 0.9%) than in the same period last year.

Kiwifruit exports increased by 76.28% in terms of value compared to the 2016/17 season and reached 151.2 million Euro. They also recorded a 41.31% increase in terms of volume, reaching 154,843 tons. Both the value and volume have broken records.

As a result, Greece is now a big player in global kiwifruit trade (3rd to 4th in the ranking).

For oranges, exports increased by 8.24% in terms of value compared to the 2016/17 season and amounted to 132.4 million Euro. Their volume grew by 3.88%, reaching 308,651 tons.

As for mandarins, the increase in exports was of 17.42% in terms of value compared to 2016/17 (50.2 million Euro) and by 8.95% in terms of volume (102,933 tons).



Lemons have seen their value grow by 143.25% compared to the 2016/17 season (9.1 million Euro), while the volume has increased by 153.36% (14,525 tons).

For cucumbers, exports grew by 8.36% in terms of value compared to 2016/17 and amounted to 30.848 million Euro. They also increased by 36.91% in terms of volume, reaching 41,172 tons.

Lastly, summer fruits and vegetables show an increase of 18.8% in terms of value compared to 2017. Noteworthy are the 18.63% growth of nectarines, the 23,99% increase of apricots, the 5.89% rise recorded by strawberries and the 9.57% increase achieved by tomatoes. Meanwhile, peach exports were 1.32% lower,, cherries recorded a 5.57% drop, table grapes fell by 19.51% and peppers saw prices fall by 2.19%.

Mr. Polychronakis stressed that "in order to maintain the presence of our products in traditional and new consumer markets, Greek fruit and vegetables should offer added value to the consumer, not only in terms of size, but also with the introduction of new varieties with a good post-harvest shelf life. The key goal is for the country's competitiveness to improve.

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