

Citrus fruit: the dynamics between producers and markets

Next week, December will start, which means that we will get to the heart of the Italian citrus fruit campaign. The season has just ended in the southern hemisphere – it was characterised by a tendency to focus on late supplies.

We contacted Salvo Laudani, the Freshfel Europe vice-president, in order to better understand the dynamics involved between the two hemispheres with regard to the citrus fruit market. He gave us a very interesting snapshot of the current situation.

South Africa

“South Africa exports 550-600.000 tons of oranges to the EU – with an increasing trend for the late varieties. Furthermore, South-African late produce is gaining increasingly spaces on the soft citrus market if compared to the Northern hemisphere’s late produce. This trend is destined to grow as 9.000 hectares of new produce have been added over the last 5 years. Therefore, the balance is positive – also considering the small amount of ‘faulty’ produce intercepted in EU”.

The orange situation in the Mediterranean area

“The total expected orange production in Spain, Italy, Egypt, Turkey and Morocco should grow by 5% thus reaching the 11.5 million tons. Although it is expected a smaller yield for Italy than in 2017 (7%, that is 1.5 million tons), the Spanish production is increasing (+13%, that is 3.64 million tons) and especially the Moroccan one (+26%, that is 1.18 million tons). On the other hand, Egypt looks stable (3.2 million tons, the second Mediterranean production) and Turkey is only slightly growing (+ 2%, 1.95 million tons). The data on Turkey and Egypt are just indicative”.

Lemons

“The lemon production is quite ‘healthy’, as the volumes grew by 18% in Spain, Turkey and Italy thus reaching 2.5 million tons. The 7% drop experienced by Italy (400.000 tons expected) is balanced out by the increase both in Turkey (+29%, 800.000 tons) and in Spain (+19%, 1.3 million tons)”.



Lemon production is increasing everywhere, both in the Northern (Spain, Turkey and Italy) and in the Southern hemisphere (South-Africa and Argentina). In 2022/23, there is the possibility that there will be an additional 1.3 million tons of lemon in the world, and only a small part of that will be absorbed by the processing industry”.

Clementines

There is some size-related problem for the clementines. Generally speaking, late soft citrus coming from the Southern hemisphere are taking the market spaces off Northern hemisphere’s early produce. Morocco is experiencing a strong growth: it ships 170.000 tons to the EU – and it is also further improving its varietal calendar. Spain is having a 2 weeks delay because of ripening issues, which have resulted in a price drop in this phase.

Soft Citrus

Laudani continued, “Spain will grow by 15% and Turkey by 7% (indicative data). Spain should reach a production of 2.229 million tons, Morocco of 1.374 million tons, which is very similar to Turkey (1.4 million tons, indicatively). They are followed by Italy (800.000 tons) and Israel (223.000 tons). The Mediterranean soft citrus production is growing more than in the last season – the total production is 6 million tons (+18%). Additionally, Italy, Israel (37%) and Morocco (+35%) are experiencing a strong growth, as well.

Grapefruits

Finally, the grapefruit: after the awful situation last year, things have not much improved yet in Europe (-15%, with a total production of 414.000 tons in Turkey, Israel and Spain). The reason can be found in the drop experienced by Turkey (-29%, 190.000 tons). Israeli and Spanish productions are quite stable (76.000 tons, like last season). The situation in the US is improving: the production in Florida is expected to increase by 44% and by 29% in Texas – for a total of 483.000 tons.

“The Turkish lira will be more competitive as a consequence of its devaluation”. Laudani concluded, “The information we gathered on the international dynamics showed that Italy can remain strong in the



agricultural sector only by focusing on the premium produce. This implies constant investments in innovations – both for short- or long-term projects”.

The data collected by Cirad Market News Service has been provided by: Ailimpo, GVA, Junta Andalucia, CMBI Maroc Citrus, ISTAT and USDA.

Lien article : <https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9048206/citrus-fruit-the-dynamics-between-producers-and-markets/>

