

Argentine lemon industry expects first exports to India, Vietnam in 2019

With the Indian and Vietnamese markets set to open for Argentine lemons, the South American country is aiming to achieve long-term success in the two destinations which currently don't consume much of the citrus fruit.

Jose Carbonell, president of citrus growers' association Federcitrus, told FreshFruitPortal.com that the phytosanitary protocols were still being finalized but he expected fruit would be shipped to the new markets during the 2019 campaign.

In addition, Argentina is working to reduce the tariff rate going into India, which currently stands at 30%, Carbonell said.

He did not believe the market would be very important for the Argentine lemon industry to begin with, but said there was good potential in the longer-term.

"Just the fact that it has almost 1.3 billion inhabitants marks it a very attractive market for any food product," he said. He added that it is a developing market for lemons, which are not at all common in India.

"They consume a type of lime, similar to the Tahiti lime," he said. However, he noted that younger consumers were more willing to try new fruits more common in Western countries. Vietnam already has a lower tariff rate for Argentine lemons and although the population is considerably smaller than India's, Carbonell said lemon consumption was more established.

Along with plans to ship lemons to those two markets this year, the Argentine lemon industry is also eager to consolidate its position in the U.S., Mexico and Brazil following the opening of those markets last year.

"Our aim for this year is to go in with greater volumes, that's what we hope," he said. "Neither Mexico nor Brazil are countries that eat a lot of lemons, but it's growing, especially in southern Brazil."

"Meanwhile, the U.S. is a country that has a very strong consumption habit and a production that has been declining for years, so we are confident that it is a market that is going to become very important."





Currently around 60% of Argentine lemons go to Europe, especially the Netherlands and Spain, with much of the rest going to the Far East, Canada, Russia and the Ukraine.

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