

Uruguay's citrus sector is only viable if it exports

Uruguay's citrus exports (orange, lemon, mandarin, and grapefruit) amounted to US \$ 62.4 million during 2018, i.e. 22% less than the US \$ 80 million achieved in 2017 and 47% less than the US \$ 91.7 million achieved in 2014.

Marcos Soto, a member of Cibils-Soto Consultores said that there had been a pronounced fall in volumes and in agreed average prices. The export volume fell by 14.6% from 97,110 tons in 2017 to 83,350 tons in 2018, a volume that is far from the historical highs. Meanwhile, the agreed average prices decreased by 9.5%, going from US \$ 827 per ton since 2007 to US \$ 748 per ton in 2018.

Three markets accounted for 85% of placements during 2018: the European Union with 37%, the US with 35% and Brazil with 12%.

Soto said that they had achieved opening the US market in 2013, and that they had lost preferential access to the European Union, which led to an increase in entry fees.

"The citrus sector is only viable if it exports. That's why we must go out to look for markets and make the best in those where we have potential. To achieve this, it's fundamental we reach agreements because these are sensitive products," he stated.

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