

## **"The new global citrus lobby should not facilitate the entry of more citrus from South Africa"**

The Valencian Association of Agricultural Producers (AVA-ASAJA) considers it "immoral" for South Africa to avoid introducing its oranges and mandarins into the European Union (EU) through the ports that carry out the most professional and rigorous phytosanitary controls. The agrarian organization has thus reacted to the economic sanctions that the South African citrus lobby, the Citrus Growers Association (CGA), has imposed on companies in its country for exporting citrus fruits via Spanish ports.

According to official data from the EU and the CGA, port technicians in Spain detect the *Phyllosticta citricarpa* (the fungus that causes Citrus Black Spot) in 1 out of every 40 inspected shipments from South Africa. This figure contrasts with that of the ports in the Netherlands, where 1 case of CBS is detected for every 966 inspections, or the United Kingdom, which needs 2,765.

Despite the fact that more and more shipments are bound to the latter two countries, Europhyt data up until October revealed that South Africa already accumulates a total of 29 detections of the aforementioned CBS and of *Thaumatotibia leucotreta* (or false codling moth) so far this year, which more than doubles the 12 cases registered in all of 2018.

The president of AVA-ASAJA, Cristóbal Aguado, said that "South Africa's strategy to increase its citrus exports to Europe lacks ethical grounding. Instead of striving to ensure the phytosanitary safety of its citrus fruits and thus minimize the risk of these quarantine pests reaching our citrus industry, what South Africa is doing is running away from proper inspections and taking advantage of the permissiveness of other points of entry. It seems to be putting its eagerness to gain market share above any other consideration."

That is why the agrarian leader has warned the EU and the European members participating in the Citrus World Alliance (CWA) "not to allow



South Africa to turn this new global citrus lobby into an instrument to further facilitate the introduction of its citrus fruits, whether they are contaminated or not.”

AVA-ASAJA has asked for phytosanitary inspections at the ports of entry to be regulated by the EU, and not, as it's the case now, by individual countries or private entities. The association has also asked for the EU to follow the example of the United States and designate a few ports for the entry of foreign citrus and have them equipped with very professional inspection teams. It has also asked for the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to decide the treatments that the fruit from third countries with a high number of interceptions will have to undergo for it to be shipped to the EU.

**Lien article :**

<https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9169155/the-new-global-citrus-lobby-should-not-facilitate-the-entry-of-more-citrus-from-south-africa/>

