

Kinnow exports begin; target set at 300,000 tons

Kinnow exports have started and traders have set a target to export 300,000 tons this season, expecting to fetch \$19.5 million in foreign exchange, industry sources said on Saturday.

This year's target is lower by 50,000 tons compared to the exports of last year.

Waheed Ahmed, patron-in-chief, All Pakistan Fruit and Vegetable Exporters, Importers and Merchants Association (PFVA), said around 15 to 20 percent fruit exports were expected from a production of nearly 2.2 million tons.

“Keeping the huge losses sustained by the kinnow exporters in the Russian market during the previous season, the export target for the current year has been kept 50,000 tons less compared to last year.”

Due to stiff competition in the Russian market, the exporters had to export kinnow to this international market at lower cost than its actual cost of shipments leading to huge financial losses of around \$6 million in the previous season.

Ahmed stressed that to attain the export target of 300,000 tons, it was imperative to have close co-ordination and co-operation among the shipping companies, concerned ministries and departments.

“If we don't encounter any disturbances in supply or issues related to transportation, we will leave no stone unturned to even go above the set export target,” Waheed assured.

Since the existing kinnow orchards have already completed their life cycle and don't have adequate resistance to against effects of climatic changes and diseases, “thus we are now confronted with issue of quality, hence its need of the hour to harvest new varieties of the citrus



fruits,” he said. “The season of citrus fruits is limited to a period of four months; however, with the production of new varieties, this period can be extended to eight months.”

If new orchards with new varieties were not established, the existing export of citrus fruits would be badly affected, the PFVA chief said.

Due to serious issues of quality, the association has “self-imposed” ban since year 2014 on export of kinnow to Europe.

Europe is a huge international market for Pakistani kinnow, and can easily accommodate around 1,000 containers.

However, Waheed said, to avert any possibility of a ban by the Europe Union, Pakistani exporters have stopped the export of kinnow to the European market.

The European market offers better price for the Pakistani kinnow compared to other conventional international markets and had exports of kinnow continued to this market, total exports would have enhanced by 50 percent, he shared.

“While putting great emphasis on improvement of quality and exploration of new varieties to tap the European market, we also have to pay attention to getting access to the international markets which are currently inaccessible since Pakistan does not have ‘quarantine protocols’ signed with these markets,” he said.

“Otherwise, future of the citrus industry, providing employment to three million people, would be bleak.”

Kinnow export to Iran remains discontinued for nine years, which meant a yearly loss of about \$40 million for Pakistan.

“We can export around 80,000-90,000 tons of kinnow. It is a concern that if Iran exports tomatoes and other fruits and vegetables to the Pakistani market, why Pakistan cannot get the same opportunity to export kinnow?” he asked.





The PFVA chief stressed upon the Federal Ministry of National Food Security and

Research and the provincial governments to initiate the process of R&D in the horticulture sector so food security concerns could promptly be addressed.

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<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/580099-kinnow-exports-begin-target-set-at-300-000-tons>

