

Turkish citrus overview: Lower yields, high prices, new markets

Turkey National Citrus Council's President Kemal Kacmaz announced that Turkey exported 1.230.000 tons of citrus in return of 560 million USD (505 million Euro) in the first 11 months of the year.

The share of citrus in overall fresh fruits and vegetables exports is 36%, said Kacmaz.

Pointing out to the decrease in lemon and orange exports due to weather conditions, president Kacmaz said: "Mandarin exports increased by 7%. Since we have more varieties now; the temporary and early varieties, we can continue exports until the end of March. In the coming months, we will compensate for the current drop in other citrus products."

Most exports are destined to CIS

Kacmaz contended that Turkey has become a global player in citrus due to its quality and shared details on the exports:

"In the period of January-November, 55% of our exports were destined to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), 20% were destined to the EU and 19% to the Middle Eastern countries. 76% of these exports were done through the Mediterranean Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Exporters Union."

According to the Eastern Black Sea Exporters' Association's figures, Russia was the top export market in this period which is followed by Ukraine, Romania and Saudi Arabia. Besides, citrus were exported this year to Israel, Libya, Senegal, Rwanda, Myanmar, Iran, Taiwan and Fiji.

"We target the Far East market"

Emphasising that they wish to expand citrus exports to 12 months, Kacmaz said: "We exported most of our products to Russia, Ukraine, Romania and Poland. We export a majority of our citrus fresh. In the



near future, we will also export value-added products as well. Besides, we work on the expansion of citrus year to throughout the year. We conducted a project on the adaptation of early varieties and the results have so far been positive. We wish to expand our markets to the Far Eastern countries and we continue our promotion activities there."

Lamas lemon harvest in Mersin

Erdemli, Mersin, a city located in southern Turkey, started to harvest Lamas variety of lemons. They are exported mainly to Russia which is followed by Romania, Bulgaria and the Middle Eastern countries.

Erdemli Chamber of Agriculture's Chairman Rasim Sahin said: "This year the yields are 30 to 40% lower than last year. However, prices are high. Lemons in the orchards are sold for 2.50 to 2.80 Turkish Lira (0.39 to 0.43 Euro)".

60% of lemon production in Turkey originates from Erdemli, Mersin and the lemon yield per year in this district is approximately 400.000 tons.

First citrus exports to Uruguay

Erdemli Lamas lemons will be exported to Uruguay for the first time this year. An exporter company in Mersin initiated the agreement with this Latin American country and besides lemons, the first package includes grapefruits and oranges.

Entrepreneur Hasan Bulduk said that they are proud to be the first company to export citrus to Uruguay. Bulduk contended that the product quality is now compatible with advanced countries' and explained: "The quality of products in Turkey is much better compared to the past. We can compete with advanced countries. Our products are comparable with those of Spain, Argentine and Egypt. As long as the state supports us in our ambitions, we will achieve quite a lot."

Hasan Bulduk said that they eye distant markets and continued: "We just started to export to Uruguay. Our products are on the way. We want to prioritise distant markets, because there is a surplus in close markets when it comes to citrus. We need to open up to the world."





The company exports a total of 75 tons citrus to Uruguay until mid-December via sea freight.

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