

Albania could become a major exporter of oranges

According to Eurostat, in 2018 Albania had the seventh largest acreage devoted to orange orchards in Europe. In just a year, the country's acreage grew by 50% and reached 300 hectares. Of course, 300 hectares is a small area when compared with the leaders of the European Union: Spain, Italy, Greece and Portugal. In Spain, for example, the acreage devoted to orange orchards exceeds 140 thousand hectares, according to EastFruit. Nevertheless, in 2018, Albania already harvested 10.8 thousand tons of oranges, and the production volume will only continue to grow, given the active expansion of the acreage, a favorable climate and geographical proximity to its largest market: the EU countries. The possibility of delivering products to Russia, which EU countries are currently unable to do, cannot be ignored either.

Market participants believe that the expansion of the acreage will accelerate in the future, as growing citrus in this country is quite profitable right now. This entails that the production and export of oranges from Albania will increase in the coming years.

According to Albanian Daily News , in Europe there are only 10 countries that produce oranges. In 2018, Albania produced more oranges than, for example, France.

According to Eurostat, EU countries harvested 6.5 million tons of oranges in 2018. This was the highest level of production since 2010 due to a record crop in Spain (3.6 million tons of oranges, or 56 percent of the total). In addition to Spain, other major producing countries were Italy (1.6 million tons, or 24 percent of the EU's total) and Greece (0.9 million tons, or 14 percent of the total).

As for non-EU countries, the only orange producers in the region are Albania and Turkey, with the latter producing 1.9 million tons in 2018. The European Union is the largest importer of fresh oranges. According to the same source, about three quarters of oranges imported into the EU came from South Africa and Egypt.

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