

Citrus costs in the Valencian Community have increased by 70% in 30 years

The Valencian Association of Farmers (AVA-ASAJA) stated that according to data from the 'The Valencian citrus industry, the evolution of its production costs and inputs' study published by Maria Angeles Fernandez-Zamudio of the Valencian Research Institute Agrarias (IVIA) the production costs of citrus fruits in the Valencian Community have increased by 70% during the last 30 years (1992-2020).

Producing one hectare of oranges in 2020 cost a total of 6,826 euro, i.e. 70% more than in 1992, and 15% more than a decade before. Producing a hectare of mandarins cost 7,589 euro in 2020, i.e. 69% more than in 1992 and 16% more than in 2010. Lemon is the citrus species that had the highest increase in costs, as producing a hectare in 2020 cost 6,890 euro, i.e. 74% more than in 1992 and 25% than in 2010.

According to the new IVIA report, labor continues to be the main input in citrus costs, accounting for 21 to 25% of total expenses, depending on the crop. Irrigation water, however, is the cost that has increased the most and already accounts for nearly 20% of the total, a percentage that increases by an additional 5% if we take into account the amortization of irrigation facilities. The phytosanitary and fertilizer costs remain at 15 and 10% respectively. However, it's worth noting that the study didn't take into account the increase in the number of treatments that farmers are forced to undertake to combat pests and diseases due to the lower efficiency of the authorized substances.





Costes de producción de los cítricos en la C. Valenciana (euros por hectárea):

Cultivo	1992	2010	2020	Var. 1992-2020
Naranja	4.001	5.900	6.826	+ 70%
Mandarina	4.475	6.502	7.589	+ 69%
Limón	3.952	5.494	6.890	+ 74%

Principales insumos de los cítricos (porcentaje sobre los costes totales):

Insumo	Naranja	Mandarina	Limón
Mano de obra	21,25%	22,96%	25,26%
Agua de riego	21,20%	19,27%	23,72%
Fitosanitarios	12,62%	14,57%	8,45%
Abonos	10,10%	9,94%	9,74%
Amort. plantación	9,22%	8,78%	7,17%
Maquinaria	6,38%	6,42%	8,12%
Otros	19,23%	18,06%	17,54%

Fuente: AVA-ASAJA a partir de un estudio de María Ángeles Fernández-Zamudio (IVIA)

Ava-Asaja said that this escalation of expenses per hectare contrasted with the stagnation of average prices at source –especially in the majority varieties of Navelina orange and Clemenules mandarin– which highlights the profitability crisis that affects Valencian citrus growers and that has resulted in the abandonment of more than 30,000 hectares (going from 190,024 hectares in 2002 to 160,356 in 2020).

The organization calls on the administrations to support measures for the producer sector both to reduce production costs and to favor obtaining decent prices. Ava-Asaja denounced that the continuous regulations imposed on labor, water, phytosanitary, and environmental matters have increased the costs of the agricultural activity and made it harder. They demand the Government corrects the electricity tariff changes it's going to enforce on June 1, and request more research on economic, sustainable, and effective solutions to deal with pests and diseases.

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