

World Citrus Organisation launches at Fruit Attraction

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The newly founded World Citrus Organisation (WCO) officially launched at Fruit Attraction in Madrid on Tuesday.

The entity was created to provide the category with a global platform for collaboration - something from which many other fruits have benefited.

FreshFruitPortal.com

The new organization is led by the Spanish Lemon and Grapefruit Interbranch Association (AILIMPO) and the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA). It is also composed of representatives from Argentina, Chile, Italy, Morocco and Peru.

Other countries that were unable to attend the meeting have also committed to the project, and the remaining global producers are invited to join the organization.

The WCO will act as the "global platform for dialogue and action between the citrus-producing countries worldwide", a release said.

The core aim of the WCO is to facilitate member countries to better face common challenges and seize opportunities for the collective benefit of the citrus sector - both fresh and processed categories.

Most recently the sector has been faced with an extensive array of significant issues of global concern including growth in production, overlapping of seasons, changing climate conditions resulting in varied quality and biosecurity challenges, increased competition within the citrus category and between other fruit categories and food products, as well as stagnating fruit consumption.

Specifically, the WCO's mission is to:

- discuss common issues affecting citrus-producing countries
- exchange information on production and market trends to prepare for the next decade to come
- foster dialogue on policy issues of common concern
- identify and promote Research and Innovation projects specific to the citrus sector
- liaise with public and private stakeholders on citrus-related matters to highlight the importance of citrus producers and the need for a fair return
- promote the global consumption of citrus

At the launch, the Counsellor of the Region of Murcia, Antonio Luengo, expressed his support for the new organization.

"It is important that the world citrus community works together to face common challenges and learn from each other," he said.

Freshfel Europe, the Belgium-headquartered European Fresh Produce Association, will coordinate and administer the WCO.

The next meeting, where the formalities for the foundation and future structure of the organization will be formalized, will take place at FruitLogistica 2020 in Berlin.

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