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WCO reveals SH citrus forecast

Overall Southern Hemisphere production is forecast to drop 3 per cent year-on-year

The World Citrus Organisation (WCO) secretariat has collected and released the first crop production and export forecast for the 2020 Southern Hemisphere citrus season.

According to the preliminary forecast, the 2020 Southern Hemisphere citrus crop is expected to reach 8.39m tonnes, which represents a small decrease of 3 per cent compared with the 2019 crop.

Exports are expected to increase by 12 per cent to 3.49m tonnes, attributed partly to consumers' higher demand for citrus in Covid-19 times, thanks to the nutritional benefits associated with the fruit and greater home consumption.

By category, the soft citrus and lemon and lime markets show stable figures, with similar production volumes compared to 2019, whereas orange showed a small decrease (-6 per cent), and grapefruit production increased by 3 per cent compared to the previous year.

Expected export volumes show increases across all categories, with lemon and lime projecting the greatest increase, by 32 per cent year-on-year.

"WCO is now fully operational with a complete agenda of activities for 2020," the organisation confirmed. "In July, a meeting of the membership will review the state of the industry and take stock of the latest consumer trends and producing countries' experiences in the midst of the coronavirus crisis. Indeed, in the past months, citrus has been highlighted as one of the most attractive fruit categories for consumers, given their health properties. Consequently, the issue of nutrition and promotion of citrus consumption will also be discussed with members in the upcoming meeting."

The preliminary forecast is collected from industry associations in Argentina, Australia, Chile, Peru, South Africa, and Uruguay, while the secretariat is "working closely" with Brazil and Bolivia to include their data in the forecast.

All Southern Hemisphere citrus

2020 production forecast: 8.387m tonnes

2019 production: 8.616m tonnes

Production change: -3 per cent

For export: 3.486m tonnes

Export change: +12 per cent

By category - Oranges

2020 production forecast: 3.584m tonnes

2019 production: 3.834m tonnes

Production change: -6 per cent

For export: 1.497m tonnes

Export change: +3 per cent

Lemons

2020 production forecast: 2.595m tonnes

2019 production: 2.589m tonnes

Production change: +0.2 per cent

For export: 905,376 tonnes

Export change: +32 per cent

Soft citrus

2020 production forecast: 1.685m tonnes

2019 production: 1.686m tonnes

Production change: +0.06 per cent

For export: 823,101 tonnes

Export change: +14 per cent

Grapefruit

2020 production forecast: 521,542 tonnes

2019 production: 506,098 tonnes



Production change: +3 per cent

For export: 260,457 tonnes

Export change: +9 per cent

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