

2021 citrus Southern Hemisphere crop is expected to reach 22.7 million tons

On 12 May 2021, the World Citrus Organisation celebrated its first Annual Meeting online, following the official creation of the organisation last year. During the AGM, the WCO Secretariat presented the consolidation of the production and export forecasts for the forthcoming Southern Hemisphere citrus season 2021. This preliminary forecast is collected from member industry associations in Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Peru, South Africa, and Uruguay.

The WCO held its Annual meeting ending a first year of activities. The Co-chairs of the association, Jose Antonio Garcia (Ailimpo) and Justin Chadwick (CGA) agreed to state: “The full first year of operation allowed the organisation to quickly build a representative association and provide the benefits and value to the members”.

During the meeting, the preliminary forecast presented shows that the 2021 citrus Southern Hemisphere crops is expected to reach 22.7 million tons, which represents an increase of 3.18% compared to the 2020 crop. Export is expected to increase by 12.72% to 3.8 million tons. Philippe Binard, Secretary General of WCO stated while presenting the data : “Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, a positive trend of consumers’ demand for fruit and veg was noted, in particular for citrus fruit, widely recognised for its high nutritional value, notably in terms of vitamin C content. The large volume available is positive news as it will meet the increased demand”. On the processing side, a total of 13.4 million tonnes of citrus are expected to be destined to the juice market, which constitutes a slight increase of 1.26% compared to the previous year.

Soft citrus	%2021/2020	2021	2020
TOTAL PRODUCTION	10,57%	3.013.723	2.725.596
Destined to export	20,38%	1.005.045	834.894
Destined to processing	15,44%	186.456	161.511
Destined to domestic market	19,61%	872.222	729.191

Orange	%2021/2020	2021	2020
TOTAL PRODUCTION	1,93%	14.995.730	14.712.363
Destined to export	11,55%	1.723.403	1.544.894
Destined to processing	0,03%	11.759.543	11.756.132
Destined to domestic market	3,79%	1.464.784	1.411.337

It's worth noting that Brazil's data provided for the forecast remains preliminary, with the official Brazilian data expected to be confirmed in the coming weeks. By citrus categories, the soft citrus showed the greatest increase in production, by 10.57%, with a significant increase in export volumes of over 20% to 1 million tonnes of export. Orange production remained broadly stable (+1.93%), whilst lemon (+2.37%) and grapefruit (+6.44%) showed greater increases.

Exports are also expected to increase for all varieties, orange (+11.55%), lemon (+7.20%) and grapefruit (+9.56%). Eric Imbert (CIRAD- Technical Secretariat of WCO) indicated: "The Southern Hemisphere citrus export continues to grow in particular for lemons and easy peelers. The Southern Hemisphere today represents 27% of the global citrus market." During WCO's AGM, members also reviewed the past season's results with a focus on the impact of the covid pandemic, and analysed the estimations for the current season.

Lemon	%2021/2020	2021	2020
TOTAL PRODUCTION	2,37%	4.199.575	4.102.325
Destined to export	7,20%	852.537	795.241
Destined to processing	-3,34%	1.306.571	1.351.739
Destined to domestic market	15,33%	640.467	555.346

Grapefruit	%2021/2020	2021	2020
TOTAL PRODUCTION	6,44%	546.639	513.578
Destined to export	9,56%	284.719	259.883
Destined to processing	2,10%	202.255	198.096
Destined to domestic market	8,85%	59.865	54.999

ALL CITRUSES	%2021/2020	2021	2020
TOTAL PRODUCTION	3,18%	22.755.668	22.053.863
Destined to export	12,72%	3.865.705	3.429.344
Destined to processing	1,26%	13.454.826	13.287.479
Destined to domestic market	-39,71%	3.037.337	5.037.985

In addition, during the meeting, Natalia Santos, Deputy Secretary General of WCO announced: "Members decided to set-up a formal working group on health & nutrition. This will enable better knowledge exchange among members on citrus nutritional assets and will also contribute towards a better understanding of the health attributes of citrus. The first meeting of the focus group will take place in the second semester of 2021", she added.

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