

Lemons to drive Southern Hemisphere citrus growth in 2022

Lemons and oranges are due to drive citrus growth from the Southern Hemisphere this year, with grapefruit and soft citrus production expected to remain flat.



According to data presented by the World Citrus Organization in its annual general meeting on June 1, citrus production is expected to increase by 4.9 percent compared to 2021 to reach 24.8 million tons. Exports are also projected to increase to 4.1 million tons, 4.9 percent up from the previous season.

Eric Imbert, CIRAD - Technical Secretariat of WCO, indicated, "The Southern Hemisphere citrus export continues to grow, especially lemons and easy peelers. The Southern Hemisphere today represents 27 percent of the global citrus market."

On one hand, lemon production is projected to grow by 8.3 percent to reach 4.7 million tons in total. Similarly, orange production is forecasted to increase by 5 percent compared to 2021, reaching 16.6 million tons.

On the other hand, soft citrus production is expected to remain stable (-0.1 percent, 3 million tons in total), while grapefruit production should decrease slightly (-0.6 percent compared to 2021, down to 436,000 tons).

Furthermore, a total of 13.2 million tons of citrus are expected to be destined to the juice market, which is an 8.3 percent increase compared to last year.

This preliminary forecast is based on information provided from member industry associations in Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Peru, South Africa, and Uruguay.

Along with citrus market development updates, the AGM also saw the re-election of both South Africa, represented by the Citrus Growers' Association, and Spain, represented by Ailimpo, to head the organization for a second mandate of two years.

In the meeting, Philippe Binard, WCO Secretary General, pointed out, "Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, a positive trend of consumers' demand for fruit and vegetables 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 this increased demand."