



## “Early end of South African citrus creates a gap before start of Turkish season”

As there was a lack of rain this year, Turkish citrus is expected to be smaller in sizing this season, says Akin Soyleyen, marketing manager for Turkish exporter Aksun: “Our citrus season is just starting and our expectations remain high, despite the lack of rain this season. While we anticipate the overall sizing to be slightly smaller than last year, the crop appears promising thus far. Demand is on the rise due to an early end to the South African season, creating a gap before the start of the Turkish citrus season. This gap typically results in higher-than-expected demand, especially considering that lemon stocks are currently low.”



Soyleyen emphasizes the issues that climate change is bringing, as Turkish agriculture is hurt by the long periods of drought. “The primary challenge we face, not only this year but in the years to come, is the persistent drought that has

affected large parts of Europe, particularly in recent weeks. It's alarming how it affects the agricultural sector in general and the damage it causes in both the short and long term. Moreover, with heatwaves intensifying annually due to global climate change, the demand for irrigation, pest and disease control, coupled with reduced yields, poses significant challenges. These are just the short-term effects; in the long term, there is a big risk of soil damage, increased energy costs, and altering growing seasons, among many other issues we will all have to face going forward."



Despite the challenges with the climate, Soyleyen expects this season to be better than the previous one. "Nonetheless, following last year's disastrous crop, we maintain hope for a better outcome this year. It's worth noting that it's challenging to assert that competing countries have fared better for us, as the effects of global climate change spares no one. While we've been somewhat more fortunate this year, there's no guarantee that we won't face a situation similar to Spain's current one. This highlights the urgent need for collective efforts to reduce carbon emissions and secure a brighter future."



If the situation doesn't drastically change, a solid Turkish citrus season is expected: "When it comes to the citrus prices, they seem to be more competitive this year, thanks to a larger crop. While overall citrus prices are better, we remain cautious. With unpredictable weather conditions, we can never be certain of what tomorrow will bring. However, if the weather continues to be good, this year can be much better than the last one, and that is always something to be happy about," Soyleyen concludes.

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