

The European Commission won't extend the cold treatment requirement to more South African citrus fruits

The European Commission has decided not to extend the cold treatment requirement to all citrus fruits from South Africa, or those from other nations at risk of pests. Even though Carlos Mazón, president of the Generalitat Valenciana, stated on April 16 that the EU Commissioner of Agriculture, Janusz Wojciechowski, was considering extending this protocol, this measure, which currently applies only to oranges from South Africa, will remain unchanged.

According to sources from the European Commission delegation in Spain, under the new measures requiring cold treatment, there have been no breaches related to the false moth pest in orange shipments from South Africa. Given the low number of non-compliances observed, the Commission has chosen not to impose this treatment on other South African citrus fruits such as mandarins and grapefruits.

The Commission stressed that any future additional restrictions will be based on technical and scientific evidence, and will be decided after bilateral consultations with partner countries. This position contrasts with the expectations created by the Valencian president, who, after meeting with Commissioner Wojciechowski, said there was a willingness to apply the cold treatment to all citrus fruits, regardless of their origin.

The European Commission's response has generated concern among Valencian agricultural organizations, which see the extension of this treatment as a crucial measure to prevent the entry of the false moth pest, which has been intercepted in fruits from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Israel, and Morocco.

The European Commission is willing to increase controls on citrus imports from South Africa regarding the black spot, closely monitoring interceptions and considering strengthening import requirements if necessary. This reflects the EU's commitment to food safety standards, considered among the highest globally.

South Africa has implemented cold treatment since 2022. The measure has affected exports in this campaign, but South African producers continue with plans to grow in the European market.

Source: castellonplaza.com (<https://castellonplaza.com/bruselas-desmiente-a-mazon-y-descarta-ampliar-el-tratamiento-en-frio-en-los-citricos-en-sudafrica>)

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