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Chilean citrus seeing dip for oranges, but big jump for lemons

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The Chilean Citrus Committee estimates that global citrus exports from Chile will reach 383,000 tons this season, a 4 percent decline from 2023. According to the figures provided by the committee, clementine and mandarin volumes will decline by 35 percent and 9 percent respectively. Oranges will decrease by 2 percent, with lemons increasing by 33 percent.

The committee forecasts clementine volume of 40,000 tons, which is 35 percent less than the 2023 season. "This is a result of water restrictions in the main clementine-producing areas of the Coquimbo region (Region IV)," said Monserrat Valenzuela, manager of the Citrus Committee. Of the 4,000 hectares of clementines planted in Chile, 70 percent of them are concentrated in Region IV.

Meanwhile, mandarin volume is expected to reach 160,000 tons, a decrease of 9 percent from last year. Orange volume will be similar to 2023, with a 2 percent decrease to 93,000 tons. The only category with anticipated growth is lemons, which is expected to grow by 33 percent to 90,000 tons.

Regarding the overall anticipated decrease of 4 percent for Chilean citrus exports this season, the president of the Citrus Committee, Juan Ortúzar, said, "We are building an industry better adapted to climate change, with a strategy aimed at facing new production challenges, and with a focus on more sustainable production."

There are 27,813 hectares of citrus orchards in Chile, distributed between the Atacama and O'Higgins regions. The metropolitan region has the largest planted area, reaching 8,361 hectares. As for the total planted area, lemons lead with 9,199 hectares nationwide, followed by mandarins with 7,800 hectares and oranges with 6,600.

Citrus promotions in the U.S. will commence in June and continue through October.

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