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Citrus season begins in the northern hemisphere: the “King of Lemons” returns to the markets



Madrid (ots) -

- With the arrival of autumn in the northern hemisphere, the citrus harvest campaign begins, where the lemon is becoming more and more important due to the increase of its consumption
- European lemon has become the “King of Lemons,” since 2 out of every 10 lemons produced in the world come from the European Union, whose seal is synonymous with quality

Lemon is in fashion. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), its production worldwide reached **9,749,000 tons throughout the 2021/22 season**, 6.5% more than the harvest obtained the previous year. Therefore, the growth of this citrus fruit, which averaged around 5,700,000 tons from 2010 to 2018, is consolidated. Much of the increase comes from the European Union, the largest producer of this fruit, as fresh, and second in the world ranking of processors, situation that makes the **European lemon the “King of lemons.”**

Specifically, **lemon from Europe achieved a share of more than 16% of world lemon production during the 2021/22 season**, with a total of 1,571,000 tons, according to the USDA. This product is well known in Canada, as it was the third largest importer of fresh European lemons in 2021 (8,753 tons), behind only to the United Kingdom and Switzerland. In addition, that same year, **Canadian imports of European lemons increased by 17%** compared to 2020.

Spain, which begins the campaign in autumn, is the leading producer of lemon in Europe, with an average of about 1,000,000 tons. This outlook has also allowed it to **take the lead in the cultivation of organic lemon**, exceeding 210,000 tons this last season.

Much more than data

However, the lemon produced in the European Union is much more than just data. Behind this golden-colored fruit there is a policy of economic and social sustainability that, led by the Interprofessional **Association of Lemon and Grapefruit of Spain (AILIMPO)**, has been implemented through standard contracts, a very effective instrument with which it has managed **to set fairer prices for the entire lemon production chain**. In fact, the entity has made a new tool available to producers on its website so that they can **calculate production costs and do their accounting before starting the campaign**.

The policy of economic and social sustainability is also accompanied by **respect for the environment**. This is because the European lemon has positioned itself as one of the great allies in the fight against climate change, **by capturing 360,000 net tons of CO2 per year**, a figure equivalent to the pollution caused by some 148,000 diesel cars traveling around 20,000 km. Likewise,

it is a **reference in the use of water**, since it has managed to increase productivity on farms by 274%, obtaining higher production without increasing the amount of water used per hectare.

Nutritional properties

In addition, lemon has a wide range of **properties and nutritional benefits**, as it is a **natural food, fat-free and perfect for a healthy lifestyle**. It is also an **important source of vitamin C**, a nutrient that contributes to normal collagen formation, the regeneration of the reduced form of vitamin E, reduces fatigue and optimizes iron absorption; **attributes highly appreciated by health professionals**.

These characteristics of the lemon with European origin are disseminated by **AILIMPO** in the information campaign **Welcome to the Lemon Age**, with the support of the European Union, with the aim of promoting its consumption among the new generations of U.S. and Canadian consumers; and that they value and appreciate more differentiating properties, for example, its **quality, freshness, sustainability, traceability and food safety** compared to non-EU lemons.

About AILIMPO A

ILIMPO is a Spanish interprofessional, based in Murcia, officially recognized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of Spain and the European Commission, which represents the economic interests of producers, cooperatives, exporters and the industry of lemon and grapefruit. A sector in which Spain is the world leader in fresh exports and ranks second as a processing country, with an annual turnover of 700 million euros, generating 20,000 direct jobs and transferring more than 250 million euros to ancillary industries.

More information at www.thelemonage.com

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