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Argentina

Citrus Semi-annual

Lemons, Oranges and Tangerines

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Report Highlights:

Production of fresh lemons in MY 2015/2016 is forecast to rebound to normal levels of 1.5 MMT as a result of favorable weather conditions. Fresh orange production is projected to decrease to 800,000 MT and fresh tangerine production will go down to 350,000 MT, compared tp official USDA estimates, due to severe floods in the main sweet citrus growing region of Argentina. Lemon exports are projected to remain stable at 230,000 MT from official estimates. Orange exports are estimated to decrease to 60,000 MT, and tangerine exports are expected to remain unchanged at 50,000 MT, as a result of decreased export competitiveness in international markets. Lemon domestic consumption will remain stable at 70,000 MT. Orange and tangerine consumption is estimated to decrease to 470,000 MT and 190,000 MT, respectively, due to lower production.

Executive Summary:

For MY 2015/2016, production of lemons is forecast at 1.5 MMT, slightly greater compared to official USDA estimates, due to favorable weather conditions and the full recuperation of plants that have been previously affected by frosts and droughts. Production of oranges and tangerines is estimated to decrease to 800,000 MT and 350,000 MT, respectively, due to severe floods in the north east of Argentina, which is the country's main sweet citrus growing region.

Lemon exports are projected to remain unchanged at 230,000 MT compared to official estimates. Orange exports are expected to go down to 60,000 MT, and tangerine exports will remain stable at 50,000 MT. Exports of both sweet citrus fruit are still being affected by the lack of competitiveness in export markets.

Lemon domestic consumption will remain stable at 70,000 MT, and orange and tangerine consumption is forecast to decrease to 470,000 MT and 190,000 MT as a result of a decrease in production.

Commodities:

Lemons, Fresh Oranges, Fresh Tangerines/Mandarins, Fresh

Production

Lemons

Fresh lemon production in MY 2015/2016 is estimated to increase from 1.45 MMT to 1.5 MMT, compared to USDA official estimates, due to relatively favorable weather conditions. Excess rains towards the end of summer and autumn did not affect fruit volumes and only marginally affected quality; however it delayed the harvest about a month.

For MY 2014/2015, lemon production was revised upwards to 1.45 MMT, 150,000 MT above official USDA estimates, as plants recuperated well from the winter frosts of 2012/2013 and a severe drought that affected the main lemon producing area. This recuperation still occurred in the face of excess rain during the summer of 2015 delayed the harvest about a month, affected the fruit quality and reduced the fruit pack-out yield from about 45 percent to 30 percent.

The lemon sector has managed to cover production costs and remain competitive due to relatively high international prices due to lower fruit supplies in the Northern Hemisphere countries, and the excellent work done by ALL LEMON in carrying out audits to select the best-quality fruit to supply export markets (See Marketing Section – Promotion).

The main lemon varieties grown in Argentina are Genova and Eureka.

Oranges and Tangerines

For MY 2015/2016, fresh orange and tangerine production is expected to decrease to 800,000 MT (for oranges), and 350,000 MT (for tangerines), from official USDA estimates as a result of severe floods in the main sweet citrus growing region of Argentina.

Post revised fresh orange production for MY 2014/2015 downward from 1 MMT to 800,000 MT and fresh tangerine production was decreased from 450,000 MT to 350,000 MT, in line with latest revisions from the private sector, as plants did not fully recuperate from the effects of the frost that affected the main sweet citrus growing region in June 2012.

The main orange varieties grown in Argentina are: Navetina, Salustiana, Washington Navel, Navel Late, Valencia Seedless, and Valencia Late. Main tangerine varieties are: Clementina, Clemenvilla, Ellendale, Malvasio, Montenegrina, Murcott, and Ortanique (Source: Federcitrus).

Overall, the citrus sweet varieties that have been expanded the fastest are seedless varieties, such as Tango for oranges, and Clementines and Clemenules for tangerines.

One of the main issues affecting the citrus sector in Argentina continues to be increasing production costs (primarily, labor, inputs, energy, inland and ocean freight) as a result of a relatively uncompetitive

peso and high inflation rates (between 20-38 percent during the past few years and estimated at about 40 percent for CY 2016) resulting in a significant loss of competitiveness for local exporters, especially in the sweet citrus sector.

As of December 2015, local citrus producers have become more competitive in international markets as a result of the new economic measures taken by the new Macri Administration – a 2.5 percent export tax elimination and devaluation of the Argentine peso. However, during the past few months, part of this competitiveness was lost to high inflation rates resulting in significant cost increases.

Area Planted

For 2014/2015, area planted to lemons is forecast to increase to 48,000 hectares, according to latest revisions by the private sector, and area planted for 2015/2016 is expected to remain unchanged from the previous year. Replacement of old plants for new ones is expected to increase the plant per hectare ratio and improve yields.

Lemon producers have invested in plant replacement to overcome the effects of frosts, and have only marginally invested in new land. Lemon production competes with sugar cane production and urban expansion in the Province of Tucuman. According to private sources, the Argentine lemon sector is not expected to expand significantly through area expansion but through the incorporation of new genetic material, which would improve yields.

For 2014/2015 and 2015/2016, area planted to oranges and tangerines remained unchanged at 42,000 hectares for oranges, and 31,000 hectares for tangerines.

Processing

Lemons

Fresh lemon for processing in MY 2015/2016 is forecast to increase to 1.2 MMT, up by 5 percent from official estimates, following the production increase. Moreover, higher volumes of fruit will be devoted for processing due to relatively high prices paid for lemon by-products.

For MY 2014/2015, fresh lemon for processing is revised up to 1.195 MMT, up by 14 percent from official USDA estimates, as a result of an increase in production. Also, due to relatively high volume of fruit with quality defects as a result of excess rains.

Following the practice carried out in the past few years, relatively high volumes of fruit are being devoted for processing as a result of the decision made by the industry to export only fresh lemons meeting higher quality standards, thus restricting the export supply and preventing a steep decrease of international prices. This market strategy is working very well and is expected to continue.

Oranges and Tangerines

For MY 2015/2016, fresh orange and tangerine for processing are estimated to decrease to 270,000 MT and 110,000 MT, respectively, compared to official estimates, due to smaller production.

Post's estimates for fresh orange for processing in MY 2014/2015 was decreased to 278,000 MT (for oranges), down 72,000 MT from official estimates. Tangerine for processing was decreased from 147,000 MT to 97,000 MT. Overall, the decrease in volumes for processing of both fruit is due to the decrease in production.

Investment

While still recuperating from the severe effects of 2013 frosts in the main lemon growing region, investment in area expansion for lemon production is expected to continue to expand only marginally, specifically in the Provinces of Salta and Jujuy. In addition to these investments, the Argentine lemon industry continues to invest in processing and packing facilities, irrigation equipment, and research and development projects. Investment is mainly in preparation of a potential opening of significant export markets, such as the United States and China, for fresh lemons. In addition, larger producers continue to invest in new lemon plants to replace old plants, and genetic materials with the objective of improving yields.

Consumption

Lemons

Fresh lemon domestic demand tends to be inelastic and consumption does not typically vary much over time, unlike oranges and tangerines, which are often substituted by other types of fruit depending on the price.

Fresh lemon domestic consumption for MY 2015/2016 and MY 2014/2015 is forecast to remain unchanged at 70,000 MT, in line with USDA official estimates.

Oranges and Tangerines

For MY 2015/2016, fresh orange and tangerine domestic consumption is estimated to decrease from 572,000 MT to 470,000 MT (for oranges) and from 250,000 MT to 190,000 MT (for tangerines) from USDA estimates. The decrease for both fruit is due to smaller production.

Orange domestic consumption for MY 2014/2015 was revised downwards from 573,000 MT to 470,000 MT, and tangerine consumption was decreased from 250,000 MT to 200,000 MT, from official estimates, due to smaller production.

Trade

Exports

Lemons

For MY 2015/2016, fresh lemon exports are projected to remain unchanged at 230,000 MT in line with official estimates. Exports will still remain lower than normal levels of 270,000-300,000 MT) primarily due to the delay in the harvest.

Lemon exports for MY 2014/2015 remained stable at 185,000 MT, compared to official estimates. Exports were down from normal levels due to a delay in the harvest and large fruit volumes in the Northern Hemisphere.

Compared to other regional economies in Argentina (which have decreased competitiveness), the fresh lemon export business is still attractive despite high costs. In addition, the ALL LEMON certification seal that has been developed by the Argentine lemon sector (see Marketing Section/Promotion) regulates the volume of fresh lemons for export, based on quality, to avoid steep price decreases.

Argentina does not export fresh organic lemons, given that fruit undergoes a bleaching process which is not allowed under organic certification standards.

Oranges and Tangerines

Fresh orange exports in MY 2015/2016 are estimated to decrease to 60,000 MT, and tangerine exports are forecast to remain unchanged at 50,000 MT from official estimates. Exports for both fruit will be significantly lower from the historic levels of around 150,000 MT for oranges and 100,000 MT for tangerines. This is due to the lack of competitiveness of exporters in international markets.

For MY 2014/2015, fresh orange exports are revised down slightly from 77,000 MT to 72,000 MT from USDA estimates. Tangerine exports remained stable at 53,000 MT. Due to decreased competitiveness in international citrus markets, it has become very difficult for local exporters to compete with other producing countries in the Southern Hemisphere, primarily South Africa. Exports for both citrus fruit have been decreasing in the past couple of years as a result of the difficult economic situation affecting citrus exporters.

Export Destinations

Argentine fresh citrus fruit are exported to about 60 markets. The main export destinations (market share by volume) in CY 2014 and CY 2015 were as follows:

Fresh Citrus Fruit	Destination	Market Share	
		9 2014	% 2015
		2014	2015

Lemons	EU	72	72
	Russia	15	16
Oranges	EU	59	53
	Paraguay (*)	36	42
Tangerines	Russia	53	54
	EU	14	8

Source: FAS Buenos Aires, based on data from the Global Trade Atlas (GTIS)

(*) Market share by value was 7 percent in CY 2014 and 17 percent in CY 2015, while EU market share by value in CY 2015 was 75 percent.

For MY 2015/2016, no major export market diversification is expected for citrus fruit. The EU and Russian markets are not expected to expand significantly, thus, demand is forecast to remain relatively stable, although the citrus fruit supply is expected to be lower in the Northern Hemisphere. Fresh lemon exports to non-traditional markets have been increasing in the past few years. Although South Africa is a significant challenge for Argentine exporters since it can reach Asia and the Middle East with more competitive prices, Argentine lemon companies are still focusing on expanding exports to those non-traditional markets.

Argentine sweet citrus exporters are highly concerned about their decrease of competitiveness in the Russian market as a consequence of the steep devaluation of the ruble during the past year.

During CY 2015, the EU remained the largest export market for most types of Argentine citrus fruit: lemons (72 percent market share), oranges (53 percent, down from 59 percent in 2014), and the second largest market for fresh tangerines (8 percent, down from 14 percent the previous year). In addition, Russia was the largest market for tangerines accounting for 54 percent of total Argentine tangerine exports, and the second largest market for lemons with 16 percent market share. Paraguay was the second largest export destination by volume for oranges, accounting for 42 percent share (although, by value it accounted by only 17 percent share).

Imports

Citrus imports are expected to remain negligible in MY 2015/2016. This trend is forecast to continue in the future as Argentina is a net citrus fruit exporting country. Fruit import volumes will remain limited as local fruit production is sufficient to supply the domestic market.

During January-March 2016, 3,380 MT of oranges were imported into Argentina (91 percent from Spain, 5 percent from Mexico, and 4 percent from Chile) as a result of the decrease in CY 2016 production which increased domestic prices.

Policy

Import and Export Regulations

In December 2015, the new government lifted export taxes on all fruits and other commodities. Export rebates remained the same for lemons, oranges, and tangerines, and they depend on the size of the container.

Export and import tariffs for all citrus types are as follows:

Export and Import Tariffs All Citrus Fruit (HTS codes: 080510, 080520, and 080550)				
For countries outside MERCOSUR AREA	%			
Import Tariff	10.00			
Statistical Tax	0.50			
Export Tax	0			
Export Rebate for cases containing less than 16 kg.	5.00			
Export Rebate for cases containing 16–20 kg.	4.05			
Export Rebate for cases containing more than 20 kg.	2.70			
For countries within MERCOSUR AREA				
Import Tariff	0.00			
Statistical Tax	0.50			
Export Tax	0			
Export Rebate for cases containing less than 16 kg.	5.00			
Export Rebate for cases containing 16–20 kg.	4.05			
Export Rebate for cases containing more than 20 kg.	2.70			

Source: FAS Buenos Aires based on data from Tarifar

In 2010, the GOA began implementing an import substitution policy which focused on reducing imports and supporting domestic production of goods. Under this policy, it has been difficult for producers to obtain imported inputs, such as agrochemicals, and agricultural machinery and equipment, which necessitated the purchase of locally-manufactured products (when available) often at higher costs. With the new government administration, imports have returned to previous levels.

Phytosanitary Issues

Argentine phytosanitary authorities continue negotiations with China to reopen the market for Argentine fresh lemons. Trade was interrupted in 2005 when China established cold treatment for all citrus fruit, a process which typically reduces fruit quality. Currently, the Chinese market is open to fresh "sweet" citrus varieties. Negotiations are also being carried out with India.

In addition to Fruit fly, Citrus canker, Citrus scab and some mites occurrence in Argentina, two citrus diseases are still of concern for APHIS and the U.S. citrus industry: *Citrus Variegated Chlorosis* (CVC) and *Citrus Greening Disease (Huanglongbing* or *HLB)*. Following a peer-reviewed article on CVC transmission by Argentine and Brazilian scientists, APHIS developed a Pest Risk Assessment (PRA) and a

set of risk mitigation measures to allow the United States to safely import lemons from northwest Argentina, including Tucumán. On May 10, 2016, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) published in the Federal Register, for public comment, a proposed rule that would amend the regulations to allow the importation of fresh lemon fruit from northwest Argentina into the continental United States. Comments will be due by July 11, 2016.

Citrus Greening: In July 2014, a non-commercial case of HLB was found in Mocoreta, Province of Corrientes (Northeastern region of Argentina – close to the border with Uruguay). SENASA immediately implemented its monitoring system in the area, as per the National HLB Prevention Program (Law No. 26.888 of October 2, 2013), and found no other signs of the disease. Based on the above, Argentina continues to maintain its HLB-free status.

On July 4, 2012, APHIS was officially informed that a case of HLB was reported in one infected tangerine tree in Puerto Deseado, Province of Misiones (Northeastern region of Argentina – close to the border with Brazil). The infected tree was destroyed as a precautionary action. In addition, SENASA intensified the surveillance for citrus species in the area with sampling in 150 premises with negative results for both: the symptoms and vector (*Diaphorina citri*) of the disease. SENASA stated that, since the location is not a citrus commercial area, and it is surrounded by national parks, it is likely that this was an illegal introduction from outside the country. Despite this, *Diaphorina citri* was reported in other areas of Argentina. A few additional cases were recently detected in Misiones Province and, for the first time, in citrus commercial areas (i.e. vector presence, no disease).

Marketing

Prices

International (FOB) Prices for Fresh Citrus Fruit

During 2015, FOB prices for lemons were lower than the previous year due to large fruit supply in the Northern Hemisphere. Orange and tangerine FOB prices were lower during the same period primarily due to strong competition from South Africa. The highest FOB price for lemons during 2015 was \$911/MT (August); for oranges, \$416/MT (August); and for tangerines, \$832/MT (July).

Lemon	FOB Prices (US\$/MT)			
	2013	2014	2015	
January			561	
February			459	
March	927		766	
April	834	935	850	
May	807	896	878	
June	817	912	896	
July	794	951	902	

August	781	947	911
September	731	1,055	855
October		944	
November		909	
December		789	
Average	813	926	786

Orange	FOB Pri	ices (US	6\$/MT)
	2013	2014	2015
January			
February			199
March			195
April			103
May	159	132	172
June	437	455	410
July	412	466	411
August	409	469	416
September	427	463	356
October			105
November			97
December			97
Average	369	397	233

Tangerine	FOB Prices (US\$/MT)			
	2013	2014	2015	
January				
February	816	900	830	
March	813	809	790	
April	837	811	816	
May	830	825	812	
June	857	846	794	
July	869	852	832	
August	852	854	805	
September	845	833	727	
October	266	311	507	
November			172	
December		356		
Average	776	740	709	

FAS Buenos Aires based on GTIS trade data

Wholesale Prices for Fresh Citrus Fruit

Lemon	Domestic Wholesale Prices (US\$/MT)			
		2013	2014	2015
January		1,203	1,062	658
February		973	1,054	616
March		867	911	636
April		572	734	664
Мау		480	675	643
June		411	645	609
July		405	657	551
August		431	768	610
September		477	955	637
October		530	895	464
November		800	870	607
December		1,080	761	653
Average		686	832	612

Orange	Dor	Domestic Wholesale Prices (US\$/MT)		
		2013	2014	2015
January		383	353	366
February		363	385	347
March		411	430	319
April		436	604	461
Мау		441	618	445
June		453	589	366
July		456	468	353
August		420	429	360
September		422	391	362
October		340	380	274
November		340	396	291
December		370	396	352
Average		403	453	358

Tangerine	Domestic Wholesale Prices (US\$/MT)			
		2013	2014	2015
January		445	742	438
February		469		365

March	427	292	292
April	378	383	399
Мау	403	450	382
June	444	461	378
July	444	461	367
August	445	455	374
September	423	402	428
October	390	379	349
November	540	463	381
December	560	473	379
Average	447	451	378

Source: Buenos Aires Central Market

Domestic Retail Prices for Fresh Citrus Fruit

Citrus Fruit	US\$/kg
Lemon	2.15
Orange (Navel)	1.72
Orange (Valencia – Premium)	1.43
Tangerine (Murcott)	1.14
US\$1 = AR\$13.93 (June 15,2016)	

Source: FAS Buenos Aires based on supermarket prices

Promotion

"ALL LEMON Tested & Certified for Export" is the Argentine quality seal which certifies the quality of about 80 percent of Argentina's total lemon production. Currently, this program, created in 2009, carries out audits of the 14 leading lemon producers and exporters in Argentina. Its primary goal is to develop and establish quality standards to be applied by lemon companies, which are committed to export a strictly selected product.

Lemons identified under ALL LEMON parameters must comply with:

- High juice content
- Resistance and durability

- Firmness
- Freshness
- Uniform format
- Balanced color
- Skin in optimal condition
- Traceability and safety.

In January 2015, ALL LEMON officially launched *Think Lemon*, a worldwide marketing campaign, which includes a thorough digital source of information about lemons. Its main objective is improving consumers' life quality by informing them of the uses and applications, and nutritional virtues, of fresh lemons.

Lemons/Limes, Fresh	2013/2	2013/2014		2014/2015		016
Market Begin Year	Jan 2014		Jan 2015		Jan 2016	
Argentina	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Area Planted	45000	45000	45000	48000	45000	48000
Area Harvested	41000	41000	41000	45000	41000	45000
Bearing Trees	13200	13200	13200	14000	13200	14000
Non-Bearing Trees	900	900	900	900	900	900
Total No. Of Trees	14100	14100	14100	14900	14100	14900
Production	780	780	1300	1450	1450	1500
Imports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Supply	780	780	1300	1450	1450	1500
Exports	150	150	185	185	230	230
Fresh Dom. Consumption	60	60	70	70	70	70
For Processing	570	570	1045	1195	1150	1200
Total Distribution	780	780	1300	1450	1450	1500
(HECTARES) (1000 TREES	(1000 MT)					

(HECTARES) ,(1000 TREES) ,(1000 MT)

Oranges, Fresh	2013/2014 Jan 2014		2014/2015 Jan 2014		2015/2016 Jan 2015	
Market Begin Year						
Argentina	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Area Planted	42000	42000	42000	42000	42000	42000
Area Harvested	40000	40000	40000	40000	40000	40000
Bearing Trees	19700	19700	19700	19700	19700	19700
Non-Bearing Trees	1670	1670	1670	1670	1670	1670
Total No. Of Trees	21370	21370	21370	21370	21370	21370
Production	800	800	1000	800	1000	800
Imports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Supply	800	800	1000	800	1000	800
Exports	76	76	77	72	78	60
Fresh Dom. Consumption	524	524	573	450	572	470
For Processing	200	200	350	278	350	270
Total Distribution	800	800	1000	800	1000	800
(HECTARES),(1000 TREES)	,(1000 MT)			-	•	

(HECTARES) ,(1000 TREES) ,(1000 MT)

Tangerines/Mandarins, Fresh	2013/2014 Apr 2014		2014/2015 Apr 2015		2015/2016 Apr 2016	
Market Begin Year						
Argentina	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Area Planted	31000	31000	31000	31000	31000	31000
Area Harvested	30000	30000	30000	30000	30000	30000
Bearing Trees	15600	15600	15600	15600	15600	15600
Non-Bearing Trees	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700
Total No. Of Trees	17300	17300	17300	17300	17300	17300
Production	370	370	450	350	450	350
Imports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Supply	370	370	450	350	450	350
Exports	88	88	53	53	50	50
Fresh Dom. Consumption	200	200	250	200	250	190
For Processing	82	82	147	97	150	110
Total Distribution	370	370	450	350	450	350
(HECTARES), (1000 TREES), (10	00 MT)					