



World Citrus Organisation

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World citrus community continues efforts to supply safe, high quality, nutritious citrus fruit to consumers around the world amid COVID-19 outbreak

Amid the global outbreak of COVID-19, the world citrus community has stepped up its efforts to ensure the continuous supply of safe, healthy, and high-quality citrus fruit for consumers around the world. The global citrus sector has focused on ensuring the protection of workers across the chain, keeping global citrus production and supply going, and making sure that consumers have access to citrus fruit, essential for a nutritious and tasty diet.

Since its outbreak in China, the unprecedented coronavirus crisis has had a deep impact on the functioning of global markets and supply chains, and the citrus sector is not an exception. Against this backdrop, and on behalf of the world citrus community, the World Citrus Organisation would like to re-confirm the strong commitment of the sector to continue supplying safe, high quality, healthy citrus fruit all around the world. This is particularly important given the high nutritional value of citrus fruit, especially their high Vitamin C content. Among its many functions, Vitamin C contributes to the normal function of the immune system.

The coronavirus crisis has created a number of challenges for the citrus market including:

- a slow-down in operations across the chain (production, packing, trade, etc.) due to the strict measures implemented on physical distancing in virtually all countries;
- trade restrictions resulting from logistical issues (e.g. shortage of containers and trucks availability)
- a slow-down in cross-border operations;
- an increase in costs across the chain.

The citrus sector is working around the clock to tackle these challenges, and has taken measures to provide the highest protection to workers across the supply chain. These include, among others:

- telework for non-essential personnel
- security distances between essential operating staff
- strict hygiene precautions
- health checks for workers in the field
- establishment of protocols to deal with coronavirus cases.

These precautions will be on continuous review to ensure the highest level of safety for essential workers, and to continue meeting consumer demand for citrus fruit around the globe. In addition, the sector is working to ensure the highest food safety and hygiene measures. The [European Food Safety Authority](#) and the [US Food and Drug Administration](#) have confirmed that there is no evidence that transmission through food consumption could occur. The citrus sector would however like to remind consumers to continue following the precautionary recommendations issued by the [WHO](#) on good hygiene practices during any food handling and preparation, such as washing hands or avoiding potential cross-contamination between cooked and uncooked foods.

WCO warmly welcomes the general recognition by national authorities world-wide on the need to ensure food security and supply, and the recognition of citrus production and trade as an essential activity. Global co-operation is essential to restrict the spread of the virus, to keep borders open to citrus trade and to set in place temporary facilitations for customs operations.

In these challenging times, WCO and its members are deeply committed to meeting consumers demand for healthy, high quality citrus fruit.



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Note to the Editors: World Citrus Organisation is a global platform for dialogue and action that brings together citrus producing countries. For more information, contact the association at wco@worldcitrusorganisation.org or visit the association website worldcitrusorganisation.org.