



José - Antonio García
Director



Linkedin

"A boat does not go forward if everyone rows in his own way" (Swahili proverb)

22,670

This is the data of the social capital of the sector. **The data of the direct employment generated by the lemon sector in Spain** and that is distributed in the tasks of cultivation in the field, harvesting, preparation of the product in the warehouses, quality controls and processing industries.

The most important thing is that behind this data there are people and families, and above all women (more than 50%) who make it possible for lemon trees to bear fruit and for lemons to reach consumers as a fresh product on the shelves, as juice being a ingredient in many drinks and foods, or as a natural preservative replacing E330 in jams and other processed foods... but they also make it possible for yogurts to have that characteristic texture thanks to the pectin that is extracted from the peel and dehydrated pulp of lemons. Without forgetting the essential oil of lemon, key ingredient in soft drinks, but also for cleaning and cosmetic products.

All this is possible thanks to the talent, dedication and passion of 22,670 people of different sexes, religions, nationalities or races.

Without them none of this would be possible.



Good things come to those who wait, and mountains can be moved

After 8 years of studies, meetings and multiple reports, the EU DG SANTE has published the Guideline on Pesticide Processing Factors accepting the values proposed by AILIMPO. What is this about? Let us try to explain it in a simple way. In 2005, the EU publishes legislation regulating maximum residue levels (MRLs) for pesticides in food, but at that time it only does so for fresh produce, for example, lemons sold on the fresh market. MRLs are not set for processed products (e.g. cold pressed lemon oil), but there is a commitment from the European Commission to do so. Years go by, five, ten, fifteen... but this task is still pending.

In the meantime, problems begin to arise in the market when lemon oil is analysed and residues are detected above the MRLs established for fresh fruit, which is absolutely logical since, due to their chemical nature, the pesticide molecules are concentrated in the lemon oil, which is extracted from the skin cells of this citrus fruit. But is that a problem? Well, it turns out that it really isn't, since **lemon oil is not consumed directly, but is an ingredient that is incorporated in very small quantities in other products** that the final consumer does ingest, so the potential risk to human health is ...zero.

As we can see, it's all common sense and easy to understand. But logic and common sense are not enough as it turns out that we need an official paper, and that is where AILIMPO's work begins in 2014 and has now concluded 8 years later.

What are the lessons we have learned in this time?

The administrative and bureaucratic machinery in Brussels is slow, sometimes very slow. But if you work hard and provide data and arguments you get things done in the end. That is lobbying, and that is what AILIMPO does.

Another lesson is that **the union of the sector is strength**, and with enthusiasm and perseverance you get things done.

This work has really been an adventure, some people told us that it was crazy and that we were wasting our time. But **enthusiasm moves mountains**, and in this case, it has moved the European Commission, which is a really hard and high mountain.

Thanks to all of you who have helped us. **Let's go for the next mountain!**

