Southern Hemisphere Association of Fresh Fruit Exporters

Newsletter

February – March 2025

Association update

SHAFFE members elect new president, vice-president

In February, SHAFFE members unanimously elected a new president and vice-president. SHAFFE's presidents and vice-president serve two-year terms, and in February 2025, **Marta Bentancur**'s term as president of the association ended.

Over the past two years, Marta (of **UPEFRUY**, Uruguay) has reinvigorated the association and secured its financial and administrative stability. She led the association into very active times by setting up various working groups focusing on, for example, logistics, sustainability and market access. In addition, Marta drove the improvement of the association's new collection and reporting system for statistical data on exports and production of fresh fruits in the Southern Hemisphere, which remains one of the group's core activities. The association's staff and members are extremely grateful for all the work that Marta has done to enable the association to tackle all future challenges through open dialogue and collaboration between all players in the Southern Hemisphere fruit industry.

Taking over from Marta is **Nathan Hancock**, CEO of **Citrus Australia**, the peak industry body representing Australian citrus growers. In this position, Nathan plays a key role in supporting growers and exporters through market development, biosecurity initiatives, and industry advocacy. Nathan also serves as the chair of the Plant Health Australia Plant Industry Forum and as the chair of the Horticulture Council Market Access Committee, demonstrating his leadership in plant health and international trade policy.

Jorge de Souza, technical and project manager of **Abrafrutas**, Brazil, will serve as vice-president. Abrafrutas is the Brazilian Association of Producers and Exporters of Fruits and Derivatives, which represents Brazilian fruit producers and exporters and promotes the growth of Brazilian fruit exports to international markets. Like Nathan, Jorge has decades of experience in the fruit industry, having worked inter alia as a banana grower, as operations director at Zeneca Seeds, and as president of Abanorte, a banana growers' association, and Frutvale, a fruit cooperative.

As SHAFFEs' president and vice-president, Nathan and Jorge will work to further professionalize SHAFFE and grow its role as the representative of the Southern Hemisphere fruit industry, enhancing collaboration between players in the industry and addressing key global trade and production challenges.

Fhumulani Ratshitanga, CEO of **Fruit South Africa**, remains treasurer of the association. Fruit South Africa is the umbrella body for the South African fruit industry, representing the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa, the South African Table Grape Industry, Hortgro, the Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum, and the South African Subtropical Growers' Association. Like that of her colleagues on the SHAFFE board, Fhumulani's career in the agricultural sector spans decades, having worked for the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, and the Perishable Products Export Control Board.

Nathan Hancock, president

Jorge de Souza, vice-president

Fhumulani Ratshitanga, treasurer

General Members' Meeting at Fruit Logistica 2025

SHAFFE's members met for a general meeting on 5 February in the sidelines of Fruit Logistica, with a quorum present to reflect on the activities of the past months, assess financial performance, and approve the group's new administrative setup.

During the first part of the meeting, participants reviewed the association's activities since the last general members' meeting in October, in Madrid. For the Working Group on Sustainability, items discussed include our upcoming webinar on bio-inputs, as well as our ongoing discussions with the GlobalG.A.P. secretariat on the Environmental Sustainability Solution, the new standard on environmental sustainability due to be launched later this year. For the Working Group on Statistics, members discussed SHAFFE's improved system for the collection and diffusion of export and production statistics, which will be launched in the coming weeks. Meanwhile, SHAFFE's Working Group on Logistics is currently drafting, in collaboration with the Global Coalition of Fresh Produce, a voluntary charter of good shipping practices. The aim of the charter is to remedy the current challenges in shipping faced by exporters, including limited choice among providers, inadequacies in the services offered, and unfair and confusing add-on costs and penalties appearing unexpectedly on shipping invoices.

During the second part of the meeting, members approved the association's financial report and its new administrative setup, which foresees the formal registration of the group as a not-for-profit association under Italian law.

Overall, the meeting provided an opportunity for the SHAFFE members to reconnect and exchange ideas and experiences, giving a new impetus to our work to further the interests of the Southern Hemisphere's fruit industry.

"The feeling you get is the opportunity to level set and connect with each other. It's refreshing to see that producers and exporters all over the Southern Hemisphere are facing similar problems; within SHAFFE, we can confront ideas and formulate solutions to approach these challenges in a similar manner."

Nathan Hancock, Citrus Australia and SHAFFE president

SHAFFE transmits comments on draft Environmental Sustainability Solution to GLOBALG.A.P. secretariat, continues dialogue

Over the past months, SHAFFE has been actively involved in GLOBALG.A.P.'s Working Group on the new "Environmental Sustainability Solution" (ESS), with several of our members participating in discussions with the GLOBALG.A.P. secretariat. SHAFFE members also held internal consultations on the various chapters of the new standard – on water, soil health, biodiversity, footprinting, greenhouse gasses, and food loss and waste. These consultations culminated in a consolidated list of shared comments on the draft standard and each of its requirements, which was transmitted to the GLOBALG.A.P. secretariat on 28 February. We will keep up our dialogue with GLOBALG.A.P. as they continue working on the framework (i.e. the general rules of operation) for the new standard and modifying its requirements to reflect comments from stakeholders, including SHAFFE. A copy of the document outlining SHAFFE's comments on the draft standard was sent to all members on 28 February.

Keep an eye on our upcoming events and activities:

→ A webinar on bio-inputs

→ A webinar on plastic packaging regulations in major destination markets

→ The launch of a voluntary charter of good shipping practices, in collaboration with the Global Coalition of Fresh Produce

→ Regular meetings of our various Working Groups, on Sustainability, Market Access, Logistics and Statistics.

→ ... and for our internal functioning, the registration of our group as a formal legal entity (not-for-profit association) under Italian law, with new statutes and new internal rules of procedure that will create two types of members, regular members and associate members.

More to follow soon!

SHAFFE
Southern Hemisphere Association of Fresh Fruit Exporters

Fruit Logistica 2025 – SHAFFE participates in panel discussion on global logistics

On 6 February 2025, SHAFFE participated in a panel discussion on global logistics at the Logistics Hub of Fruit Logistica, organized by the Global Coalition of Fresh Produce. The aim of the discussion was to identify, together with actors along the entire fresh produce chain, possible strategies to address some of the challenges in global shipping facing fresh produce operators today. SHAFFE was represented by Deon Joubert, special envoy for market access and EU matters at the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa and leader of our Working Group on Logistics. Other participants included Ron Lemaire, Canadian Produce Marketing Association and chair of the Global Coalition of Fresh Produce; Tineke Van de Voorde, key account manager shippers and forwarders, Port of Antwerp–Bruges (BE); Leo Holt, president, Holt Logistics (US); and Steve Alaerts, director, Foodcareplus (BE) and chair of the Supply Chain Council of the International Fresh Produce Association.

Participants stressed the importance of community-building and collaboration among all actors along the supply chain, to increase efficiency and strengthen resilience in the face of supply chain disturbances. Everyone agreed that transparency is key; data sharing and the publication of "report cards" indicating actors' performance, for example on port in-and-out times, were therefore highlighted as elements that may improve the functioning of the supply chain.

Participants agreed that a voluntary charter of good practices for fresh produce shipping, laying out a common set of values and good shipping practices, would constitute a powerful instrument towards increased fairness, transparency, predictability and freedom of choice in international shipping. Such a charter would foster collaboration and trust between all players in the fresh produce supply chain, and thus help build ethical and sustainable business relations.

The Global Coalition of Fresh Produce and SHAFFE greed to work together on the formulation of a voluntary charter of good practices in fresh produce shipping over the coming months.

The video of the full panel discussion is available from the Fruit Logistica website at: https://online.fruitlogistica.com/eventdate/Plotting-a-path-How-to-address-freight-challenges-in-the-global-fresh-produce-supply-chain--59f5f8f1-ebbe-4a9b-999d-dfe557a78943?day=2025-02-06

***Ron Lemaire**, Canadian Produce Marketing Association and chair of the Global Coalition of Fresh Produce, speaking with*
***Deon Joubert**, special envoy for market access and EU matters at the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa and leader of the Working Group on Logistics of the Southern Hemisphere Association of Fresh Fruit Exporters*

Global Coalition of Fresh Produce – Update on discussions

The Global Coalition of Fresh Produce – of which SHAFFE is a founding member – held a regular members' meeting on 5 February 2025, in the sidelines of Fruit Logistica in Berlin. SHAFFE was represented at the meeting by its general secretary. Among the points discussed by participants from Africa, Canada, Europe and the United States were:

- The voluntary charter of good shipping practices that is currently being drafted by SHAFFE to promote fairness, transparency, predictability and freedom of choice in international shipping. The Coalition will actively collaborate with SHAFFE in the drafting of this charter;

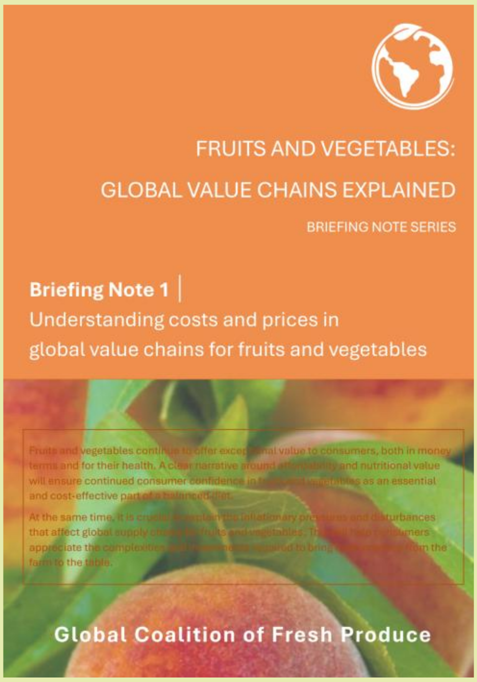
- Regulations on packaging and packaging waste:
    - efforts by the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) to develop a global standard for compostable produce stickers (PLU stickers), in collaboration with organizations such as the International Compost Alliance, to avert the risk that compostable PLU requirements will diverge from country to country (see https://cpma.ca/docs/default-source/media-releases/2024/press-release-certified-compostable-plu-stickers-10-8-24.pdf);
    - the uncertainty surrounding the implementation of the new European regulation on plastic packaging and waste, especially regarding the exemptions to the overall ban on plastic packaging for pre-packed fruits and vegetables weighing less than 1.5 kg that member states will be able to grant;

- The recent tariff threats issued by the US government, and possible retaliation by other countries: abrupt changes in tariffs and a high degree of uncertainty regarding future tariff measures are negatively affecting global supply chains; buyers are unhappy about the expected turbulences in the international trading environment;

- The new US administration's immigration policy, which is having a profound impact on the supply of labour for the fresh produce industry, for example through changes in the H-2A programme, which allows US farmers to hire seasonal workers from other countries.

Draft Briefing Note on Prices and Costs in Global Value Chains for Fresh Produce

The Global Coalition of Fresh Produce is currently finalizing the first briefing note in a series aimed at explaining global value chains for fruits and vegetables to policymakers. This first note focuses on consumer prices for fresh produce, and on cost pressures and disturbances in global supply chains. In a nutshell, the note argues that "*fruits and vegetables continue to offer exceptional value to consumers, both in money terms and for their health. A clear narrative around affordability and nutritional value will ensure continued consumer confidence in fruits and vegetables as an essential and cost-effective part of a balanced diet. At the same time, it is crucial to explain the inflationary pressures and disturbances that affect global supply chains for fruits and vegetables. This will help consumers appreciate the complexities and investments required to bring fresh produce from the farm to the table*."



The Coalition aims to send the briefing note out by Monday 24 March at the latest; any SHAFFE members who want to provide comments to the document are invited to do so asap. You can request a copy of the draft note from the SHAFFE secretariat.

European Commission presents new *Vision for Agriculture and Food*

On 19 February, the European Commission presented its *Vision for Agriculture and Food*, a roadmap for the future of farming and food in Europe (see https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/vision-agriculture-food_en). The new approach to agri-food policy focuses on simplifying regulations and making farming an attractive profession again, rather than raising environmental standards. With this shift, the Commission moves away from its controversial Farm to Fork strategy, which was the agri-food component of the previous mandate's flagship policy, the European Green Deal.

Among the priority areas outlined in the roadmap are food security and sovereignty. Trade negotiations and agreements will be used to their full extent, while protecting the interests of European farmers. The document also foresees a stronger alignment of production standards for imported products to guarantee that the EU's standards do not lead to competitive disadvantage for its own farmers. For this reason, the Commission will start taking steps in 2025 to assess the impact of greater coherence when it comes to the hazardous pesticides banned in the EU. "The Commission will pursue, in line with international rules, a stronger alignment of production standards applied to imported products, notably on pesticides and animal welfare," the text reads. As a guiding principle, hazardous pesticides banned in the EU for health and environmental reasons should not be allowed back into the market through imported products. The Commission also vows to prevent banned substances from being produced in the bloc for export elsewhere.

The Commission will carefully consider any further ban on the use of pesticides if alternatives are not available within a reasonable time and will streamline access to biopesticides in the EU market, to give farmers more alternatives to chemical pesticides.

According to the Vision, a "non-negotiable element" of the EU's policy on imports is food and feed safety. To ensure that relevant food safety legislation is properly implemented and enforced, a dedicated task force will be established, pulling expertise and forces from the Commission and Member States. The goal of the task force is to significantly strengthen import controls and controls "on the ground." Later in 2025, the Commission will propose a comprehensive simplification package for the current agricultural legislative framework, along with an EU digital strategy for agriculture to support the transition to digital-ready farming.

Source: Euronews, 19 February 2025; European Commission, 19 February 2025

European Union – new MRLs for fruits and vegetables

The European Commission has enacted Regulation (EU) 2025/115, effective 21 January 2025, amending Annexes II and III to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005. This regulation establishes new maximum residue levels (MRLs) for pesticides such as **fluxapyroxad**, **lambda-cyhalothrin**, **metalaxyl**, and **nicotine** in various food products – including fruits and vegetables – across the European Union. The full text of the Regulation is available from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2025/115/oj/eng.

NZ Apple and pear industry hits $1 billion in revenue for the first time

Almost two years after the industry took a significant hit during Cyclone Gabrielle, New Zealand Apples and Pears (NZAPI) has shared their 2024 economic impact data, which reveals an annual orchard gate revenue of $1 billion as well as a total economic impact of $2.5 billion to the New Zealand economy. This is a 27 percent increase from $1.9 billion total economic impact in 2023. The industry now employs more than more than 13,500 people. What's more, this upward trajectory is expected to continue with New Zealand Apple and Pear's annual crop estimate predicting the 2025 crop will deliver a 10 percent increase on exports, from 19.1 million TCE in 2024 to a potential 21.0 million TCE in 2025. The annual crop estimate data predict the 2025 crop to deliver an excellent, clean harvest of high-value, premium-quality fruit. Textbook winter and spring conditions have ensured New Zealand's apple and pear harvest have exceptional colour, eating and flavour. Storability is expected to be as good as ever and the crop is incredibly clean. NZAPI Chief Executive Karen Morrish says this season's crop is a return to form after several challenge years for the industry and is reflective of a move towards more high-value varieties. "New Zealand apples and pears are renown as a premium product. While New Zealand is not the biggest supplier of apples in the world, we punch well above our weight globally. Our growers take pride in producing fruit that is healthy, clean and sustainable, and this year's crop is exactly that." Demand in the industry's key export markets is strong, with consumers consistently returning for New Zealand fruit, says Morrish. "We take immense pride in the economic impact that our industry contributes to New Zealand and the regions we live and work in and our economic impact statistics highlight the value of the industry's work," she says. "With little change in planted area, increasing costs and yet a growth in our economic contribution, we can be confident that this has come from increased productivity, investment in high-value IP varieties and a diversification of international markets. Our industry is pulling sustainable levers to grow our contribution and NZAPI wants to ensure a healthy operating environment that is conducive to prosperity remains."

New Zealand Apples and Pears, 10 February 2025

CGA – Uncertainty over South Africa's tariff-free citrus exports to the United States

A recent law that allows South Africa's government to expropriate and redistribute land has irked the United States, triggering aid cuts by Washington and outbursts from President Donald Trump. Many fear that the African nation could now potentially lose some of its US trade privileges as relations between the two countries deteriorate. South Africa is the largest beneficiary of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), a US trade agreement that provides preferential duty-free access to the US market for sub-Saharan African nations. Some US lawmakers want those benefits withdrawn when AGOA is reviewed this year.

Justin Chadwick – who stepped down as CEO of the Citrus Growers Association on 31 January – spelt out exactly how bad it would be for the industry if Trump terminated SA's AGOA benefits. "AGOA keeps our citrus tariff-free, allowing us to compete with southern hemisphere rivals such as Peru and Chile – countries that already benefit from lower costs and duty-free access," he said. "If removed, we risk losing thousands of rural jobs and over a billion rand in export revenue, as currently 35 000 local jobs and an additional 20 000 jobs in the US depend on these exports." AGOA has helped South African citrus maintain its foothold in a market that received 110 415 tons of produce in 2022/23 – roughly 9% of the nation's total citrus exports. Over the past five years, exports to the US have nearly doubled, demonstrating a strong global demand for premium-quality citrus. However, the potential revocation of tariff-free status presents a substantial risk. Analysts estimate that the loss of AGOA benefits could reduce export volumes by as much as 10% and destabilize an industry employing tens of thousands. While South African leader Ramaphosa said he was ready to "do a deal" with the US to repair the countries' relations, government trade representatives are reportedly engaged in early-stage discussions to explore alternative market access strategies. Key stakeholders, including the CGA, government officials, and independent trade specialists, advocate a collaborative approach. The priority must now be to negotiate resilient trade agreements while actively identifying alternative markets, such as India and China, to ensure long-term stability and growth. Chadwick said that citrus exports to India had already tripled since 2020, reaching 30 000 tonnes, although the 30% import tariff remains a significant barrier. In an increasingly uncertain trade landscape, the resilience of SA's citrus industry will ultimately be determined by its capacity to innovate, adapt and engage in strategic policy discussions.

Source: CNN, 2 March 2025; South Africa's Freight News, 14 February 2025

Cítricos chilenos evidenciaron baja en 2024 con Estados Unidos como principal destino

El Comité de Cítricos de Frutas de Chile informó que las exportaciones totalizaron 397.417 toneladas durante la temporada 2024, cantidad levemente inferior con relación a 2023, cuando los envíos alcanzaron 399.824 toneladas. "El inicio de la temporada 2024 estuvo marcado por el impacto de la sequía para los cítricos, especialmente en la Región de Coquimbo", indicó Monserrat Valenzuela, directora ejecutiva del Comité de Cítricos de Frutas de Chile. En la misma línea, dijo que "las lluvias ocurridas durante la temporada se iniciaron posteriores al inicio promedio de la cosecha de clementinas, lo que afectó el rendimiento de esta especie". En Chile, la superficie plantada con clementinas alcanza 4.000 hectáreas. Del total, el 70% se concentra en la Región de Coquimbo, según el Centro de información de Recursos Naturales (CIREN). "Para los limones existe una recuperación de los huertos después de la helada de 2022", señaló Valenzuela, "y eso impacta en el aumento del volumen de exportación". Estados Unidos se mantuvo como el principal mercado, con envíos de clementinas por 50.353 toneladas; limones con 60.467 toneladas; mandarinas con 128.958 toneladas; y naranjas con 97.602 toneladas. Frutas de Chile destacó que otro destino clave fue Japón, que se ubicó como un mercado importante para las exportaciones de limones.

Chilean citrus fruits showed a drop in 2024 with the United States as the main destination

The Chilean Citrus Fruit Committee reported that exports totaled 397,417 tons during the 2024 season, slightly lower than in 2023, when shipments reached 399,824 tons. "The start of the 2024 season was marked by the impact of the drought on citrus fruits, especially in the Coquimbo Region," said Monserrat Valenzuela, executive director of the Chilean Fruit Citrus Committee. In the same vein, she said that "the rains that occurred during the season began after the average start of the clementine harvest, which affected the yield of this species." In Chile, the area planted with clementines reaches 4,000 hectares. Of the total, 70% is concentrated in the Coquimbo Region, according to the Natural Resources Information Center (CIREN). "For lemons, there is a recovery of the orchards after the 2022 frost," Valenzuela said, "and that impacts the increase in export volume." The United States remained the main market, with shipments of clementines for 50,353 tons; lemons with 60,467 tons; mandarins with 128,958 tons; and oranges with 97,602 tons. Frutas de Chile highlighted that another key destination was Japan, which was positioned as an important market for lemon exports. "The United States is undoubtedly the main destination market for Chilean citrus fruits. In the 2024 season, it received 98% of the clementines, 95% of the mandarins, 93% of the oranges and 63% of the lemons. Lemons also have a market in Japan and South Korea, countries that

"Estados Unidos es sin dudas el principal mercado de destino para los cítricos chilenos. En la temporada 2024 recibió el 98% de las clementinas, el 95% de las mandarinas, el 93% de las naranjas y el 63 % de los limones. El limón tiene también un mercado en Japón y Corea del Sur, países que recibieron 21.000 y 10.200 toneladas respectivamente", dijo la ingeniero agrónomo.

En relación a la competencia, esta está dada principalmente por Sudáfrica, Australia, Argentina, Perú y Uruguay. "Sudáfrica mantiene firme su oferta de naranjas con un muy buen producto, al igual que Australia. En limones también hay fuerte competencia de Sudáfrica y Argentina. Perú, con su oferta de easy peelers, siempre es una competencia importante», puntualizó Valenzuela. «La necesidad de explorar nuevos mercados es siempre un desafío para evitar la condición de Estados Unidos como un monomercado", indicó la directora ejecutiva del Comité de Cítricos de Chile.

Fuente: Federcitrus, 31 January 2025

received 21,000 and 10,200 tons respectively," said the agronomist.

In relation to competition, this is mainly given by South Africa, Australia, Argentina, Peru and Uruguay.
"South Africa is keeping its supply of oranges firm with a very good product, as is Australia. In lemons there is also strong competition from South Africa and Argentina. Peru, with its offer of easy peelers, is always an important competition," Valenzuela said. "The need to explore new markets is always a challenge to avoid the condition of the United States as a monomarket," said the executive director of the Chilean Citrus Committee.

Source: Federcitrus, 31 January 2025 (automatic translation)

Acuerdo Mercosur-Unión Europea: una oportunidad clave para los cítricos uruguayos

Con exportaciones que superan las 70.000 toneladas anuales y una fuerte presencia en mercados como Estados Unidos, Europa y Brasil, los cítricos uruguayos buscan diferenciarse frente a grandes países productores de cítricos. Sin embargo, el camino no está exento de obstáculos, desde barreras arancelarias hasta los impactos del cambio climático y la logística. "El mercado ha evolucionado con algunos altibajos. Aunque Uruguay es un actor relativamente pequeño frente a gigantes como Sudáfrica, Chile y Perú, su estrategia se enfoca en la diferenciación. La apuesta está en nuevas variedades de mandarinas sin semillas, con mejor color y sabor, que permitan competir con un valor agregado y que ya son una realidad en la estructura varietal del país", menciona Marta Bentancur, de Upefruy (Unión de Productores y Exportadores de Frutas de Uruguay).

El acuerdo Mercosur-Unión Europea también representa una oportunidad clave. "Nos permitiría reingresar al mercado con mandarinas", explica Bentancur. En 2014, el aumento del arancel de ingreso al 16% obligó a desviar la producción casi en su totalidad hacia Estados Unidos. Un nuevo tratado podría cambiar el juego para los exportadores uruguayos.

"El cambio climático viene jugando un papel muy importante", advierte Bentancur. En 2024, fenómenos meteorológicos extremos, como lluvias intensas y heladas severas, redujeron la producción y afectaron la calidad de los cítricos. Este tipo de fenómenos, cada vez más frecuentes, obligan a los productores a invertir en tecnologías de mitigación y adaptación.

Agreement Mercosur–EU: a key opportunity for Uruguayan citrus

With exports exceeding 70,000 tons per year and a strong presence in markets such as the United States, Europe and Brazil, Uruguayan citrus fruits seek to differentiate themselves from large citrus producing countries. However, the path is not without obstacles, from tariff barriers to the impacts of climate change and logistics. "The market has evolved with some ups and downs. Although Uruguay is a relatively small player compared to giants such as South Africa, Chile and Peru, its strategy focuses on differentiation. The bet is on new varieties of seedless mandarins, with better color and flavor, which allow them to compete with added value and that are already a reality in the country's varietal structure," says Marta Bentancur, from Upefruy (Union of Fruit Producers and Exporters of Uruguay).

The Mercosur-European Union agreement also represents a key opportunity. "It would allow us to re-enter the market with mandarins," Bentancur explains. In 2014, the increase in the entry tariff to 16% forced production to be diverted almost entirely to the United States. A new treaty could be a game-changer for Uruguayan exporters.

"Climate change has been playing a very important role," warns Bentancur. In 2024, extreme weather events, such as heavy rains and severe frosts, reduced production and affected the quality of citrus fruits. These types of phenomena, which are increasingly frequent, force producers to invest in mitigation and adaptation technologies.

La logística es otro reto. "Hoy tenemos, en lugar de 14 días a Róterdam, casi 30", señala Bentancur, sobre el aumento del tiempo de tránsito de los contenedores. "La frecuencia en los envíos y las múltiples paradas previas a la llegada a destino generan costos adicionales y afectan la frescura del producto. Se están explorando soluciones con las navieras para establecer rutas más eficientes", añade.

La industria citrícola uruguaya está trabajando en la medición de huella de carbono y huella de agua, destacando un proyecto en marcha que permitirá a todas las empresas del sector calcular y reducir su impacto ambiental.

Además, la investigación en nuevas variedades está cobrando protagonismo. "Algunas están en proceso de patentado en el exterior, lo que podría abrir nuevas oportunidades comerciales. Nuestro Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones (INIA) busca, por ejemplo, adelantarse a la variedad Clemenules aproximadamente en dos semanas, con énfasis en híbridos que pueden cambiar de color naturalmente en la planta, evitando el proceso de desverdizado postcosecha. Además, muestra avances en otros cítricos, como un limón sin semillas y nuevas variedades de naranjas Valencia, las cuales se proyecta que dominarán una parte significativa de este segmento en los próximos años", afirma Bentancur, sugiriendo que la innovación genética será clave en los próximos años.

"Esperamos una mejor campaña en 2025, confiando en un aumento del volumen de exportación, como consecuencia de la entrada en producción de nuevas variedades producto de cambios de copa y nuevas plantaciones, y en condiciones meteorológicas más favorables. Aunque los precios aún no podemos estimarlos, la calidad y la diferenciación seguirán siendo el eje estratégico del sector", concluye Bentancur.

Fuente: Freshplaza, 19 de febrero 2015

Logistics is another challenge. "Today we have, instead of 14 days to Rotterdam, almost 30," says Bentancur, about the increase in container transit time. "The frequency of shipments and the multiple stops prior to arrival at the destination generate additional costs and affect the freshness of the product. Solutions are being explored with shipping companies to establish more efficient routes," she adds.

The Uruguayan citrus industry is working on measuring its carbon footprint and water footprint, highlighting an ongoing project that will allow all companies in the sector to calculate and reduce their environmental impact.

In addition, research into new varieties is gaining prominence. "Some are in the process of being patented abroad, which could open up new commercial opportunities. Our National Research Institute (INIA) seeks, for example, to get ahead of the Clemenules variety by approximately two weeks, with an emphasis on hybrids that can change color naturally in the plant, avoiding the post-harvest degreening process. In addition, it shows advances in other citrus fruits, such as a seedless lemon and new varieties of Valencia oranges, which are projected to dominate a significant part of this segment in the coming years," says Bentancur, suggesting that genetic innovation will be key in the coming years.

"We expect a better campaign in 2025, trusting in an increase in export volume, as a result of the entry into production of new varieties as a result of crown changes and new plantations, and in more favorable weather conditions. Although we cannot yet estimate prices, quality and differentiation will continue to be the strategic axis of the sector," concludes Bentancur.

Source: Freshplaza, 19 February 2025