



# AILIMPO WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

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**"Every force is weak if it is not united" (La Fontaine)**

## RECIPROCITY

One of the great challenges facing the Spanish citrus sector is exporting to markets outside the EU. There are many difficulties to overcome: logistics, the right cultivation to prolong the shelf life of the fruit, or the ambition to get out of the comfort zone.

But the **main problem is the phytosanitary barriers that many of these countries impose on us, often arbitrarily** with the sole aim of making it difficult for us to access these markets. This is undoubtedly the main reason why 94% of our citrus exports remain in Europe. To export to countries such as the USA, China, Japan, South Korea or Australia, a very strict specific protocol is imposed on us that acts as a barrier and according to some calculations this means an extra cost of an average of 0.09 €/kg which includes the registration of orchards, technical audits, travel of inspectors, translators, cold treatment, on-site inspection, documentation... **In fact, there are so many obstacles that in some cases the result is that the volume exported is equal to zero.**

And all this contrasts with the ease of access that third countries have to export their citrus production to the EU. In fact, the EU does not oblige any citrus-producing country in the world to require the fruit to undergo cold treatment in order to come to Europe. A very curious thing indeed. Europe has positives and negatives, but specifically on this point, it is not doing well.

This is where **the idea of reciprocity comes into play, demanding the same rules of the game from each other, an idea that has now been renamed "mirror clauses" in trade agreements.** Same dog, different collar.

## A REFLECTION ON SUSTAINABILITY



A word that we hear and read more and more every day, with a concept that is often difficult to define and a very broad scope. Sometimes it is a customer requirement that acts as a simple commercial filter. Often, and erroneously, it is a "flexible" criterion that is demanded according to market demand or price.

However, there is another more interesting approach: through the sustainability strategy, the sector or any company can analyse, measure and manage the impacts we have on society and the environment. **In a business like ours based on the short term (especially the fresh produce market), sustainability has two very positive initial impacts:** it forces us to think in the long term, and it forces us to manage indicators for continuous monitoring. Because sustainability is not an objective, it is an attitude, a journey that begins and never ends. At AILIMPO we have always insisted on the triple focus of sustainability: economic, social and environmental. And the starting point must always be economic sustainability, the fair remuneration of all actors involved in the supply chain. Without this, we cannot demand environmental and social aspects. **The magic is to be found in the virtuous circle of these three axes, which feed back on each other and ensure the survival of our sector in the future.** And I am sure that a sustainable sector is a sector that generates more value and greater profitability. Without abuses in internal relations, and with benefits not only within the sector, but also for the stakeholders.

## THE DATA: CO2 FOOTPRINT

Spain's lemon plantations have a large capacity to capture atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>. As a result, **the net fixation of the crop amounts to 360,550 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.** Although the sector emits CO<sub>2</sub> in the course of its business at an amount of 49,300 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (18,122 during transport, 19,705 in handling and packaging warehouses and 11,473 in processing plants), we conclude that its net carbon footprint is 311,250 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. Therefore, the lemon sector in our country actively contributes to the fight against climate change by being a real carbon sink.

