



منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of  
the  
United  
Nations

Organisation  
des  
Nations  
Unies  
pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

## COMMITTEE ON COMMODITY PROBLEMS

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP ON CITRUS FRUIT

#### Fourteenth Session

Rome, 27-28 March 2007

### COLLECTION OF STATISTICAL DATA ON CITRUS FRUIT

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The FAO Intergovernmental Group on Citrus Fruit has the responsibility for, *inter alia*, collecting, processing, analysing and publishing data on citrus production and trade worldwide. At the previous meeting of the Group in May 2003, delegates made suggestions regarding the collection and presentation of data (see document CCP: CI 03/13). This document explains how these suggestions have been implemented and proposes additional measures to respond to these requests. It also reviews the replies to FAO's annual questionnaire on citrus received in recent years and makes suggestions to increase the quantity and quality of data produced by the Group.

## II. ANALYSIS OF THE REPLIES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

2. The Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Group on Citrus Fruit despatches a statistical questionnaire on an annual basis to the Member Governments and trade representatives of 72 countries. A sample of the questionnaire is provided in document CCP: CI 07/CRS.3. The recipients include 27 net exporting countries and 39 net importing countries (see Table 1 in Annex). With the replies received the Secretariat was able to cover about 97 percent of world exports and 58 percent of world imports (in volume) over the period 2001-2004. The rate of reply over the same period varied between 54 and 62 percent for net exporting countries and between 23 and 36 percent for net importing countries. This relatively low level of response is insufficient to produce the optimum picture of trade flows, especially as regards importing countries. For those countries that do not reply the Secretariat has to use other sources of data.

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3. A detailed analysis of the replies received shows that there is generally a good rate of reply for balance sheets of fresh citrus (production, imports, exports, processing and consumption by country). The rate is much lower for questions regarding harvested area, percentages of bearing and non-bearing trees and especially grower prices.
4. The rate of reply is extremely low for certified organic citrus. The Group discussed organic citrus for the first time at its Twelfth Session in Valencia, Spain, in 1998. At the Thirteenth Session in Havana, Cuba, in 2003, the Secretariat presented a study on international trade in organic citrus and citrus fruit (document CCP: CI 03/CRS.9). Delegates argued that the organic market was very dynamic and requested the Secretariat to provide specific statistics for organic production. In 2001, the Secretariat added in the questionnaire a page with questions on production, imports and exports of certified organic oranges, tangerines, lemons and grapefruit. However, over the past four years only a handful of countries have replied. This may be explained by the fact that the number of countries that produce certified organic citrus is still limited and that most national statistical services do not distinguish between conventional and organic agricultural products yet. Those services that are responsible for completing the questionnaire may seldom have the requested information.

### **III. RESPONSES TO THE REQUESTS MADE BY THE GROUP AT ITS PREVIOUS SESSION**

5. At the Thirteenth Session of the Group, delegates recommended that the Californian Valencia late oranges be included into the output of the Northern Hemisphere, and not into that of the Southern Hemisphere. While recalling that the rationale for this choice was that those oranges are sold during the marketing period of the Southern Hemisphere, the Secretariat has followed this recommendation as can be observed in document CCP: CI 07/CRS.1 presenting citrus statistics.
6. The delegate of Spain noted that the term “tangerinas” may not be the correct translation for the English term “tangerines”, and suggested that “grupo mandarinas” may be more appropriate. The Secretariat explained that the use of the term *tangerinas* in Spanish and *tangerines* in French comes from the FAO Terminology database. The FAO Statistics Division uses this term and the Secretariat decided to use the same terms in order to be consistent within FAO and within the United Nations system as a whole. In order to clarify their meaning, the Secretariat slightly modified the questionnaire to specify what types of citrus fruit these terms cover (see document CCP: CI 07/CRS.3). The Group may now wish to discuss possible alternative terms in Spanish and French. The FAO Terminology Unit has included the term “grupo mandarinas” as a recommended translation for “easy peelers”.
7. The Group also requested more detail on trade statistics for the different varieties of tangerines. However, it is not clear whether national statistical services would have the variety-specific information necessary to respond. The Group may wish to provide guidance on which sub-groups of tangerines should be specified in the questionnaire and what mechanisms should be developed to ensure that the rate of reply will be satisfactory.
8. In order to accommodate the Group’s request for price analysis the Secretariat has taken the initiative to request wholesale price data for various types of citrus fruits in the questionnaire (document CCP: CI 07/CRS.3). The Group may wish to indicate whether such prices are appropriate or whether prices should be collected at a different stage (i.e. import or retail level).

### **IV. SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE THE COLLECTION OF DATA**

9. One possible cause of the low rate of reply is that the institution or service responsible for completing the questionnaire in the recipient country may have changed and the Secretariat may not be aware of this change. It is therefore essential that the list of recipients of the questionnaire be up to date. The questionnaire is sent to the official channels of communication of the member

governments listed in the official Correspondence Directory of FAO. Delegates may wish to provide the contact details of other institutions that are responsible for collecting the relevant data, such as the relevant statistical department of their government. Suggestions or comments should be indicated in the form that the Secretariat will distribute during the session (CCP: CI 07/CRS.4) and sent to:

Secretary  
Intergovernmental Group on Citrus Fruit  
Trade and Markets Division  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla  
00100 Rome, Italy  
Fax (39-06) 57054495  
E-mail: est-registry@fao.org

10. In the cases where there is no official reply the Secretariat has to turn to alternative sources recognized as official sources in the country to cover the data gaps. Delegates are invited to provide, should they wish so, relevant contacts that may be used as alternative sources of data in the absence of an official response from their country. These contacts may be, for example, specialized news agencies or institutions of the citrus industry such as trade associations, organizations of producers, or groups of importers or exporters.

#### **A. USING ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

11. In order to increase the rate of reply and accelerate reception, the Secretariat suggests sending the questionnaire by e-mail in addition to the usual despatch by post. Members may wish to provide additional relevant e-mail addresses (for example those of the statistics departments of their government or other institutions responsible for the collection of data on citrus trade). These addresses would allow more regular communication with the Group members and would prove useful when the Secretariat seeks specific country data.

#### **B. FACILITATING EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON THE DATA PROVIDED**

12. Usually FAO receives the filled questionnaires from government ministries through their permanent representations in Rome. The replies seldom provide the contact details of the service and official who completed the questionnaire. The Secretariat suggests that such information be requested in an additional page of the questionnaire. Thus, the Secretariat would be able to contact the relevant official to obtain clarifications when necessary. In cases where different services and officials are responsible for completing different sections of the questionnaire all their details would need to be provided.

13. In its present form the questionnaire only indicates the contact details of the Secretary of the Group. In order to facilitate communications and respond to possible enquiries from Members, the Secretariat plans to add the contact details of the person in charge of the questionnaire. The statistical authorities of member countries seeking clarification on some questions would have the possibility to communicate directly with this person. Similarly, an extra page will be inserted to explain the reasons and purpose of the questionnaire, and the benefits that Members can reap from responding, to increase the rate of reply. These arguments will also be summarized in the covering letter.

14. The Secretariat usually despatches the questionnaire 40 days prior to the deadline for response. Following the suggestion of one member country that more time should be given for the

preparation of the replies, the Secretariat suggests sending the questionnaire 60 days (2 months) before the date of response.

### C. ADDING RECIPIENT COUNTRIES

13. While the questionnaire is sent to virtually all countries that export significant quantities of citrus, several countries that import substantial quantities are not included in the current mailing list. The list of recipient countries was established many years ago. The Secretariat has noticed that some countries that played a negligible role in citrus trade then have now become substantial net importers. Individual consumption of fresh citrus has grown in many regions due to economic growth and rising incomes. For those countries which do not cultivate citrus, this growth has translated into rising imports. This is especially the case for the economies in transition of Central and Eastern Europe. This development can also be observed in some countries in the Middle East, especially the Arab states of the Gulf, where both population and incomes have expanded. Another reason why the Secretariat did not send the questionnaire is that some of these countries were not FAO members until recently.

14. It should be noted that although FAO did not send the questionnaire to these countries, it has taken into account their trade in the citrus data it publishes. These data originate from alternative official sources of information, such as national statistical yearbooks. However, more detailed citrus data could be obtained through the questionnaire and therefore the Secretariat suggests adding the net importing countries listed in Table 1 below to the mailing list of the questionnaire.

**Table 1 – Importing countries to be included into the mailing list of the citrus questionnaire**

Albania	Kazakhstan
Austria	Latvia
Bahrain	Lithuania
Bangladesh	Oman
Belarus	Russian Federation
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Slovakia
Croatia	Slovenia
Czech Republic	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Estonia	Ukraine
Jordan	United Arab Emirates

15. The Group may also wish to add the four net exporting countries listed in Table 2, as they have raised their exports substantially over the past decade.

**Table 2 – Exporting countries to be included into the mailing list of the citrus questionnaire**

Georgia
Pakistan
Syrian Arab Republic
Zimbabwe

#### **D. CERTIFIED ORGANIC CITRUS**

16. As explained in section I, in spite of the interest expressed by the Group, very few countries provide information on organic citrus mainly due to the lack of data in their national statistical departments. In a rising number of countries organic farmers and traders are organizing in associations which often keep statistics on the production and trade of organic products. The Secretariat encourages Group members to contact these associations in order to obtain the requested data. Also, Members may wish to provide the contact details of these associations in the form that will be distributed during the session (CCP: CI 07/CRS.4).

#### **E. CITRUS JUICES**

17. In order to facilitate the processing of questionnaires, the pages on citrus juices now specify the HS codes (HS 2002). As explained in section I, country balances are difficult to calculate when countries import and export citrus juices of different concentrations. To solve this problem the Secretariat suggests adding questions on the degree Brix and conversion factors into fresh fruit equivalent in the questionnaire.

18. The Secretariat would like to thank the delegates and their governments for their collaboration and their continuous attention given to statistical matters. It hopes that the proposed changes will enable the collection, processing, publication and dissemination of high quality data on citrus production and trade.

## ANNEX

Table 1 – Replies to the annual questionnaire on citrus

Net Exports				Net Imports			
COUNTRY	2001	2002	2004	COUNTRY	2001	2002	2004
Argentina		X	X	Algeria			
Australia	X	X		Belgium			
Belize		X	X	Bulgaria			X
Brazil	X	X	X	Cameroon			
Chile		X		Colombia			
China		X		Costa Rica			
Cuba		X		Denmark		X	X
Cyprus	X	X	X	EC		X	X
Ecuador	X			El Salvador	X		X
Egypt	X		X	Finland	X	X	X
Greece	X	X		France			
Honduras	X			Germany			X
India	X			Grenada			
Israel	X	X	X	Guatemala		X	
Italy	X	X	X	Haiti			
Lebanon	X	X	X	Hungary	X	X	X
Mexico	X		X	Indonesia			
Morocco	X		X	Ireland			
Peru	X			Japan	X	X	
Spain		X	X	Kenya	X		
Thailand	X	X		Libya			
Tunisia		X		Luxembourg			
Turkey	X	X	X	Malaysia			X
Uruguay			X	Netherlands			
USA			X	New Zealand	X		
Venezuela				Norway	X		
				Panama	X		
				Paraguay	X		
				Philippines	X	X	X
				Poland	X	X	X
				Portugal			X
				Rep. of Korea			
				Romania	X		X
				Saudi Arabia	X		
				Serbia and Montenegro			
				Sweden	X	X	
				Switzerland			X
				Uganda			
				UK			
<b>Reply</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Reply</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>
<i>in percentage</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>in percentage</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>33</i>
<b>Net Exports</b>	<b>97%</b>			<b>Net Imports</b>	<b>58%</b>		

