

The Mexican citrus industry is expecting a small rise in citrus exports this season, despite ongoing drought issues.

An annual GAIN report by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) forecasts exports to rise by 3% to 62,000 metric tons (MT) for the 2019-20 season.

This rise partly reflects an increase in exports out of Nuevo Leon to the US. Overall, industry sources say that good pricing and high demand in markets will contribute to the rise.

While some categories out of the country have seen slight and steady improvements - like limes and grapefruit - final production will depend on weather conditions, the report said.

### **Mexican citrus production broken down**

In the case of oranges, the report forecasts production of 4.4m MT for 2019-20. In comparison, the industry recently revised numbers for the 2018-19 season down to 4.3m MT.

However, exports of oranges are minimal, with just 1.3% sent abroad last season.

For limes, with continued droughts in the key producing regions, the industry doesn't expect that conditions will improve in the upcoming months.

There is not yet an official forecast for 2019-20 lime production, but the USDA is forecasting 2.4m MT, which would be in line with last year.

In contrast to oranges and limes, grapefruit producers anticipate relatively good weather. The production forecast is 468,000MT.

Mexico has three varieties of grapefruit - red, pink and white pulp varieties. Despite weather looking alright for the fruit, producing regions have been pretty dry in the past few months.

Exports for the fruit are also up. From 2017-18 to the last season, exports are expected to rise by 11%. This represents increased demand from markets - of which, the U.S. makes up 30% of market shares of the fruit. For this season, exports are projected at 23,000MT.

## **Citrus greening**

Additionally, it details the current situation with regards to citrus greening in the country. After the industry first detected the disease - Huanglongbing (HLB) - in 2009, its food safety authority has implemented monitoring programs.

While production since 2017 has decreased as a result, the area of planted and harvested trees past couple of years has risen.