

Chinese authorities have published the phytosanitary protocol for Chilean citrus shipments, officially opening up the huge market to one of the world's biggest exporters of the fruit.

China's General Administration of Customs (GAC) issued the protocol for all citrus types on Monday, following the signing of an [agreement between the two countries](#) in December last year.

The first consignment has now been approved for export.

Oranges, mandarins, clementines, lemons grapefruit will all now be able to enter China, providing an alternative market for an industry that remains heavily focused on the U.S.

Jorge Valenzuela Trebilcock, president of the Chilean Fruit Growers Federation (Fedefruta), said: "In these times of the pandemic it is hard to know the impact that this opening will have in the short-term, but the entry of Chilean citrus to China is one of the best bits of news we have received in years."

"This is because it will provide a huge boost for citrus growing regions, where economic and human resources are being invested for these crops, to enhance their quality and postharvest life, and to adapt them to climate change and drought."

He said that it's important to build a presence in markets that allow for growth in citrus orchards in Chile.

"Our task now is to fully understand the demand and supply of this fruit in China, which varieties are most sought after, which segments of the population consume them, and what advantages or windows do we have in China."

Chile has forecast total citrus exports of 353,000 metric tons (MT) this season, an 8% rise driven entirely by big increases in soft citrus volumes that more than offset expected declines in oranges.

The country's Citrus Committee is estimating a 24% rise in mandarins, a 21% increase in clementines, flat lemons volumes, and a 13% decrease in orange exports.