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Spain

Citrus

Spain Bans Citrus Fruit from Argentina and Brazil

2003

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Report Highlights:

On November 12, 2003, Spain banned imports of fresh citrus fruit from Argentina and Brazil. The Ministry of Agriculture said that inspections of fruit from these countries had shown a higher incidence of exotic organisms, including one that causes citrus canker.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Madrid [SP1]
[SP]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Spanish Ministry of Agriculture issued an order, effective November 12, 2003, that prohibits the import of fresh citrus fruit from Argentina and Brazil.

The Ministry said that phytosanitary inspections of fruit from these countries had detected the presence of several exotic organisms that attack citrus. Three of these organisms (the bacteria *Xanthomonas campestris (axonopodis) pv.citri*, and the fungi *Guignardia citricarpa* and *Elsinoe spp.*) have been detected several times in imports coming from Argentina and Brazil and at higher infestation rates than in previous shipping seasons. Many shipments had to be rejected.

The bacteria *Xanthomonas Campestris (axonopodis) pv.citri*. produces "citrus canker." Spanish Plant Health Authorities consider this exotic bacterium as the most dangerous threat to the Spanish citrus sector. Spanish authorities have already informed the EU's Permanent Phytosanitary Committee of its action and have requested more stringent phytosanitary requirements for these imports.

Although Spain exports more than 3 million tons of fresh citrus per year, it also imports fresh product from third countries during the off-season months. During the 2002/03 season (August/July), Spain imported 68,737 tons of fresh citrus from Argentina and 9,975 tons from Brazil.