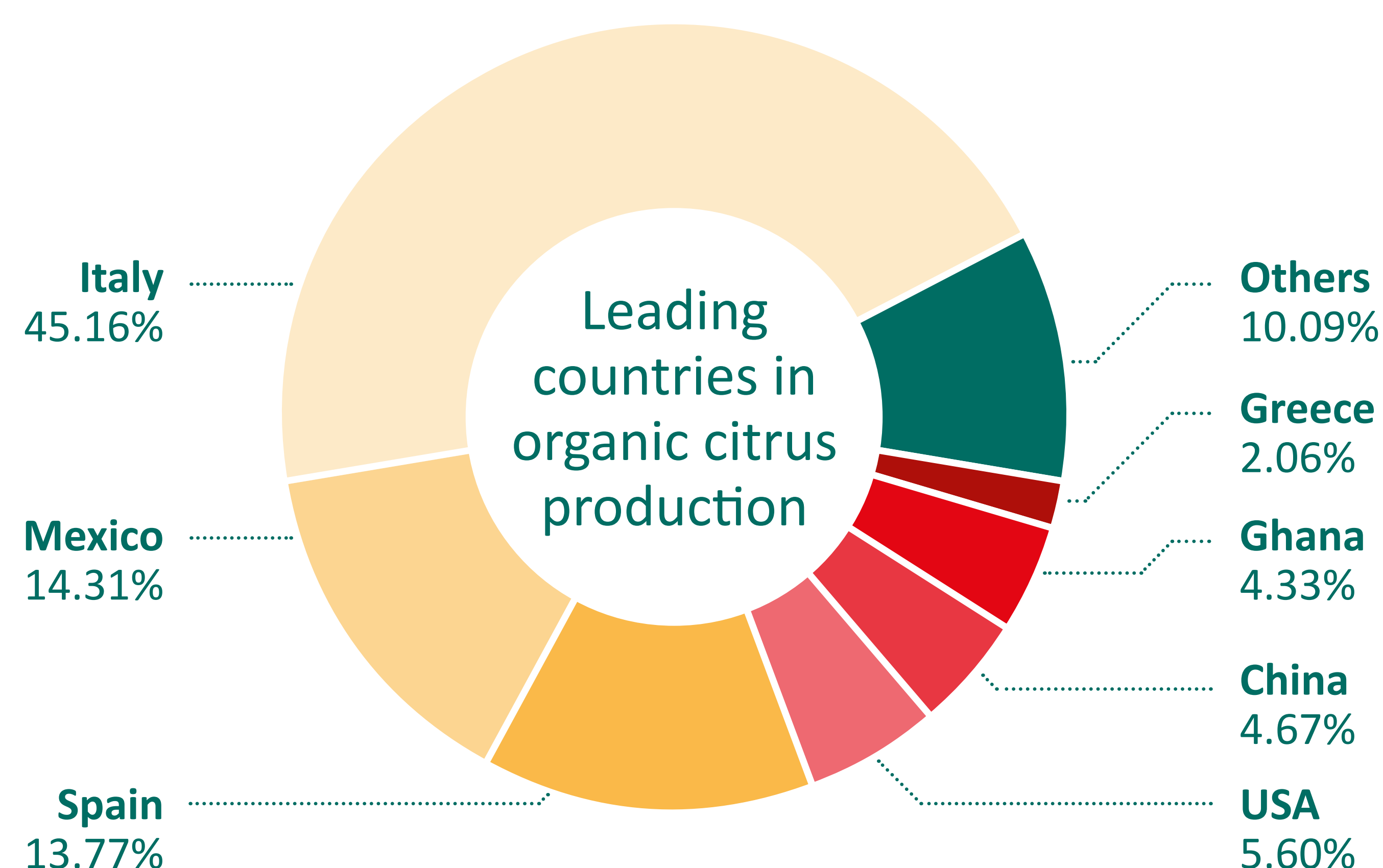
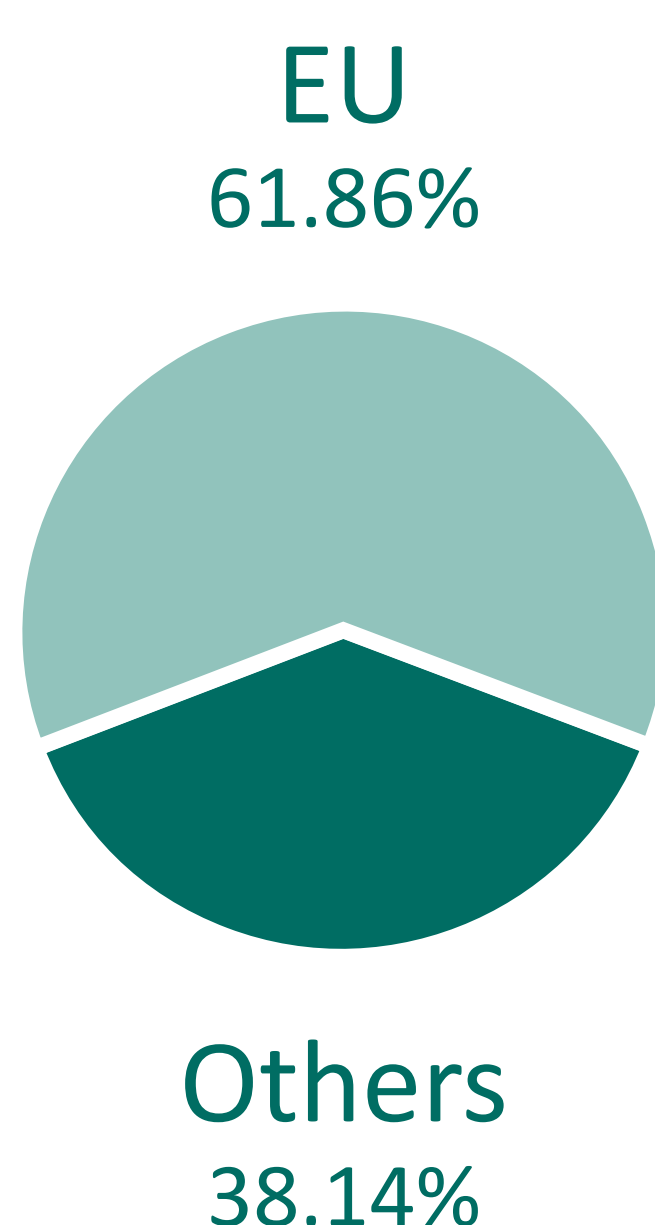


BIOFRUITNET: Innovative solutions in European organic citrus fruits production

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Citrus fruit

Citrus is the most extensively cultivated tree fruit crop in the world, grown in more than 140 countries. Citrus plays an important role in organic farming systems, being one of the most highly demanded products on the market, particularly for organic citrus juices. Some European countries belonging to the Mediterranean basin are considered the leaders in organic citrus production; among them, Italy is the main producer, representing more than 45% of the total world production area.



Challenges in organic citrus growing

Citrus fruits are severely affected by pests and diseases and characterised by poor economic plans. Since organic growers cannot rely on many synthetic inputs, they face difficulties to compete with the conventional fruit market.

The specific challenges are:

- Presence of widely distributed phytophagous species, which have significant economic importance



Citrus mealybug,
Planococcus citri



Orange spiny whitefly,
Aleurocanthus spiniferus



California red scale,
Aonidiella aurantii



Mediterranean fruit fly or
medfly, *Ceratitis capitata*

- Microbiological alterations by fungal agents (e.g. green and blue mould caused by *Penicillium spp*), or by physiological nature (due to the lack of orchard maintenance, wrong harvesting methods, incorrect handling of the fruits)



Blue and green mould mixed
infection on sweet orange



Green mould on lemons



Citrus packing line

- Limited local guidelines and agricultural recommendations to avoid fruit losses and improve the qualitative production

BIOFRUITNET innovative solutions

- Improve the management of the organic citrus orchards, particularly on the preservation of soil fertility
- Restore biodiversity and improve the adaptivity of local “cultivars” to the selected environment
- Improve the use of natural resources and reduce the use of external inputs, safeguard of the marginal areas to increase the local agrobiodiversity
- Enhance biological control through the biodiversity valorisation

BIOFRUITNET objectives



Facilitate networks
and interaction
among citrus fruits
growers, advisors
and researchers



Promote the
most important
citrus varieties
cultivated in
organic farming

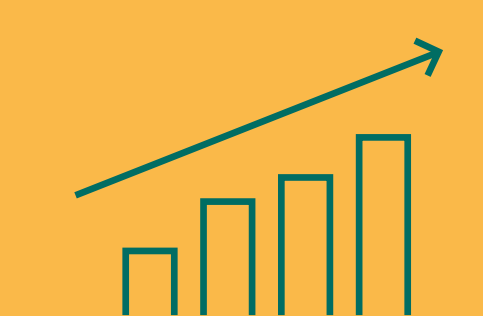


Identify the key
limiting factors
problems in organic
management of the
citrus orchards

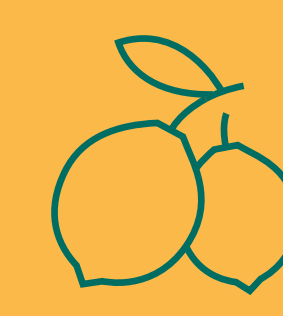


Collecting locally found
best practices and
making them available
to citrus fruit growers
across Europe

BIOFRUITNET expected benefits



Improving management
strategies (e.g. irrigation,
soil fertility, pest and disease
prevention and control)



Providing pre- and
post-harvest methods
to improve the shelf
life of citrus



Sharing of best
practices and model
of valorisation of the
organic citrus sector

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