

## **Chili: les exportations des myrtilles vers l'Europe et l'Asie ont augmenté**

"It was a very atypical season. First, we were affected by frost in September, which made us revise our production estimates by 10%," said Andrew Armstrong, manager of the Chilean Blueberry Committee.

"Then, on December 24, we received notice from the USDA demanding fumigation at origin for Chilean fresh blueberries from the regions VI, VII and VIII. Hence, shipment levels to this market were very low until the fumigation on arrival was approved. From that moment, shipments started to normalize; specially because that was the most critical stage of the port shutdown, which brought many operational difficulties and the need for air shipments to comply with the commitments with our customer," he explained.

Following this, the international outlook for Chilean blueberries has changed a lot, as well as its participation in target markets. However, Armstrong noted that despite the overall panorama of Chile's blueberry industry, "the good news is that the new markets, Europe and Asia, have grown 14% and 30%, respectively, to date."

"On the other hand, the United States and Canada have fallen by 30%. Thus, to date, the United States and Canada account for 67% of exports, Europe for 24% and Asia for 9%," he added.

Finally, when asked about the challenges in 2014, Armstrong said that the first thing the country had to do was to adopt a new strategy to combat the *Lobesia botrana*. Additionally, he stated, they had to work to gradually release the quarantined areas as they represent more than 70% of Chile's productive potential.

He also indicated that it was essential for them to further enhance the product abroad.

"We must continue working on the quality and image of our blueberries. We must also continue to work on promotion and market development. This season showed the importance of having alternative markets," he concluded.

Source: [www.freshplaza.com](http://www.freshplaza.com), 19/02/2014