

Chile: Red seedless table grape category regains export top spot

The 2016-17 Chilean table grape export season officially ended in week 28 with the last registered shipments, wrapping up a campaign that saw a slight year-on-year rise in volumes.

Chilean fruit exporters' association ASOEX said the country's total exports had increased 4% to 730,264 metric tons (MT).

It also pointed out the season had been significantly earlier than other years, with peak export volumes registered four weeks earlier than last season.

Red seedless grapes regained their position as the most exported category with 271,428MT, which represented 37% of total exports.

In second place were red seeded grapes, with 221,555MT and a 30% share, and in a close third came white seedless grapes with 196,770MT and a 27% share.

Black seedless grape exports increased 15% year-on-year to 32,924MT to achieve a 5% share. Other varieties represented around 1% of exports.

North America remains the leading market, with exports rising 11% year-on-year to 364,770MT – half of Chile's grape shipments.

In second place came the Far East with 170,085MT. Shipments to the Chinese mainland and Hong Kong dropped 27% to 97,992MT, although ASOEX noted exports to Indonesia nearly doubled to 8,251MT.

While shipments to Europe increased by 15% to 127,695MT, the continent is receiving a far lower proportion of Chilean grape exports than in 2010-11.

Other destinations received 9% of shipments.

Exports rose from all Chilean regions except from Atacama, which saw an 11% decline. The biggest increase came from neighboring Coquimbo, which saw a 12% year-on-year lift.

Last season saw 293 Chilean companies export table grapes – 23 fewer than the previous campaign. Subsole was the leading exporter, representing 4.93% of volumes, followed by Del Monte (4.88%) and Rio King (4.46%).

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