

Peru, Ecuador expect “normal” mango seasons in 2017-

18

The Ecuadorian and Peruvian mango harvests are now underway, with stable expectations for volume despite the effects of a Coastal El Niño weather system in Peru earlier this year.

Peru is just starting out harvests of its first volumes which will rise more strongly toward the end of the year before peaks in the early months of 2018, while Ecuador’s supply peaks will be more focused between now and December, running through to mid-January.

Ángel Gamarra, president of Peruvian grower association Promango, told Fresh Fruit Portal the first exports of the season were expected to take place this week with neighboring Chile as the first destination for the campaign.

“It’ll start with five or six containers weekly and it’ll increase, sending to Chile all season long,” he said.

The Peruvian executive said the first shipment would include the Edward and Haden varieties, while exports of the country’s star variety Kent would start with larger volumes in November via air freight.

He expected a fairly “normal” production season of between 240,000-280,000 metric tons (MT), of which 130,000-150,000MT will be exported as fresh fruit.

“The rest will go to the local market, industry and juicing,” he said.

While the United States and Europe continue to be the leading markets, Gamarra expressed near term ambitions to ship more mangoes to emerging markets like Japan and South Korea.

Gamarra emphasized that while northern neighbor Ecuador was a great supplier of mangoes, it did not pose much of a competitive challenge to Peru.

“When they lower their level of production, we start. That’s in the month of November until midway through December when they finish the season,” he said, adding the two countries had very different varieties too with Ecuador mostly shipping Tommy Atkins while in Peru 90% of production was dedicated to Kent.

Ecuadorian expectations

Ecuadorian National Mango Foundation president Sergio Cedeño said his industry was set to produce between 13.5-14 million boxes of mangoes this season, which would be similar to last year's 13.7 million.

He said weather issues meant Tommy

Atkins mango harvests were delayed by between one and two weeks due to lower light levels and low temperatures, however this would not impact on total production.

Harvests are underway with the Ataulfo variety.

"Close to 90% are exported to the United States and the rest goes to Canada, New Zealand, Mexico, Chile, Europe and a bit to China. The shipments are mostly via sea freight, which corresponds to 98%," he said.

"Air freight shipments are sent to China and Europe but it's a small percentage."

He added not only was Ecuador meeting the needs of the U.S. market for fresh mangoes, but demand in the country had also gone up for processed product.

"That's very good news for Ecuador," Cedeño said.

"We produce in these three months: October, November and December, so we don't want to clash in this period with Brazil or Peru so there isn't excess supply and U.S. prices fall.

"Brazil is finishing now in October, Mexico finished in September, Peru starts in December, but its peak is January and February.

"In our case, we have peaks in November and December. For every country it's important to have their space and thus get adequate supply without saturating markets."

He added the industry was hoping to sign a protocol this year for exports to South Korea.

"In November a delegation is coming from Korea to visit Ecuadorian mango farms and packing houses to sign a protocol and export, hopefully this year. If not, it'll be the next."

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