

## EU and Russia receiving their Indian grapes

The exports of fresh grapes got off to a good start this year with the early arrival of the fruit and strong demand from the traditional markets such as the EU and Russia. The season started early by a couple of weeks in mid-January, and shipments are up 28% at 15,383 tonnes as against 12,058 tonnes in the same period last year.

This surge is despite the 20-25% crop damage that was caused by the rains brought about by cyclone Ockhi in November-December sweeping through the key growing regions of Nashik, Maharashtra. Jagannath Khapare, President of the Grape Exporters Association of India, said despite Ockhi shipments are not down because domestic production capacity is about 3.5 million tonnes, while exports were about 232,000 tonnes last year.

Khapare: "Exports this season are expected to reach around 7,000 containers to the European Union and around 8,000 containers to non-EU markets, including Russia."

Farmers are getting a farmgate price of ₹60-70 per kg (0.76-0.88 euros) for the white variety of Thompson, meant for exports; about ₹10 (0.13 euros) lower than last year. There is a slight correction in prices for the white and black varieties, while the red varieties are fetching ₹80-90 per kg (1.01-1.33 euros).

According to thehindubusinessline.com, now exports have begun, the shipments are expected to pick up pace in the weeks ahead. More than half the shipments so far have been destined for The Netherlands, followed by markets such as the United Kingdom, Germany and Denmark.

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