

Chilean tropical fruit imports increase by 600%

According to data from the National Customs Service, Chilean tropical fruit imports increased by nearly 600% in the last 3 years; a sector led by green plantain, coconut, mangoes, and passion fruit, among other products.

The main reason behind this substantial increase, which went from 1.1 million in 2014 to almost 8 million in 2017, is the strong migration there's been in the country and the origin of the people migrating into Chile, as they mostly come from the Caribbean.

Marketers from la Vega in Santiago said that, 10 years ago, the niche business focused on what Peruvians preferred to consume, but that nowadays it focuses on the fruits preferred by Venezuelans, Dominicans, Haitians, and Colombians.

Passion fruit, mango, coconut, and papaya are some of fruits that are imported in large quantities from Peru and from Caribbean countries.

The green plantain (barraganete) is also one of the most purchased products, stated Nexar Alcivar, the general director of Imporfrut, a company dedicated to the import of fruits.

"Chile imports 12 containers of 1,080 twenty two-kilo boxes per month. It has a good reception among immigrants because it is part of the daily diet in the Caribbean and down to Ecuador," he said.

The data were also confirmed by the Federation of Fruit Producers. Luis Schmidt, the president of the Federation, said there had been a notorious increase in purchases of tropical fruits in recent years, but that it wasn't only due to an increase in immigration. According to the professional, it is also due to the Chileans' greater purchasing power.

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