

Chile: Cherry and blueberry exports have been exceptional thanks to China

Chilean cherry and blueberry exports have been exceptional so far in 2018, as they have been driven by purchases from China, according to a report released by Chile's Foreign Ministry's General Directorate of International Economic Relations economic international (DIRECON).

"Cherry and blueberry shipments have achieved their best historical performances; cherries with 856 million dollars and an annual growth of 187%, and blueberries with 485 million dollars and an annual increase of 39 per cent," according to the September 2018 Foreign Trade Monthly Minute.

According to Chile's Federation of Fruit Producers (Fedefruta), this year, China was the main destination for Chilean cherries, as exports to this destination amounted to 771 million dollars, which means that 90 percent of Chilean cherries were exported to this market.

The president of Fedefruta, Jorge Valenzuela, said that the cherry exports had increased thanks to the good weather conditions, and the entry into production of thousands of hectares of cherry trees in the central and southern area of the country. Valenzuela stated that according to Ciren and Odepa's last Fruit Cadastre, the area devoted to cherry plantations in the O'Higgins Region between 2015 and 2018 had increased by no less than 57.9 percent, going from 8,675 to 13,699 hectares. He also said that China's consumption of Chilean blueberries was also increasing.

According to the report, exports of agricultural, forestry, and fishing products achieved their best historical performance in the January to September period, amounting to 5.425 billion, i.e. 14 percent more than in the same period of the previous year.

The sector is led by fruit shipments, which achieved a record figure of 4.791 billion and accounted for 88 percent of Chile's agricultural, forestry, and fishing exports.

The report also noted that during the first three quarters of 2018, Chile's trade totaled 111.869 billion dollars, i.e. 15 percent more than in the same period of the previous year, the highest figure achieved since 2013.



Similarly, exports also achieved their highest amount for the first nine months of the year since 2013, totaling 56.946 billion dollars, i.e. 14 percent more than in the same period of 2017.

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