

Colombia sends first blueberry export of the year to U.S.

With two shipments – equaling 600 kilograms in total – Colombia sent its first blueberry export of 2019 to the U.S. market.

These shipments mark the first important volume of the fruit to be sent after test shipments were made in 2018. Those initial exports were sent to verify compliance with the Western nation’s phytosanitary requirements, said ProPlantas.

Luis Carlos Afanador, general manager of ProPlantas and member of Asocolblue, elaborated on these early exports to PortalFrutícola.com.

“At first, we sent small exports to validate that the product could enter the country with the quarantine protocols that existed at that time. We made it through the New York airport by making a methyl bromide application at the destination. ”

He commented that the first shipment of blueberries this year complied with the U.S.’s protocols. They also met the needs of the GlobalGAP certification of the European market, he added.

“This export program, which already started with this shipment of 600 kilos, will continue in a continuous program that focuses on serving the windows that are available in the blueberry market, which should be from February to April and May, and from August to November. ”

Meanwhile, considering this year’s projections, Afanador stressed that Colombia should reach a production of 2,700 tons.

The nation expects to export anywhere from 270 tons to 300 tons of this volume.



Future looks bright for Colombia's blueberry exports

According to him, production is only going to increase in the years to come.

The general manager indicated that the Colombian blueberry industry expects to reach 5,000 tons of production in 2020. Of this volume, it will export 1,500 tons.

By 2021, it expects to reach 8,000 tons of production and send 3,200 tons of exports. What's more, he's optimistic this figure will rise significantly in the following year. He predicts volumes will reach 14,500 tons produced, with 7,250 exported in 2022.

Afanador explained that in 2018 Colombia's blueberry producers reached 400 hectares planted and that by 2019 they could reach 600 hectares.

"They [the blueberry producers] have been concentrating only and exclusively on the local market, because it has been very elastic and, seeing the consumption of the region, maybe Colombia is the one that has the most local consumption."

Still, he highlighted the potential of Colombia to develop its blueberry export campaign. In particular, he noted the nation's broad infrastructure for air shipments, thanks to its flower industry.

In terms of export markets, he said the country will focus on the U.S. and Europe for now.

"Today, we must think of other more sophisticated markets such as Asia or the Arab world. Colombia is still not ready to access them, but we do have export protocols authorized for the European market and the United States."

Lien article :

<https://www.freshfruitportal.com/news/2019/06/17/colombia-makes-it-first-blueberry-export-of-the-year-to-u-s/>

