



Export of organic blueberries

Argentina has comparative advantages to supply this growing market with multiple products from its regional economies due to its variety of climates, the fertility of its soils, its entrepreneurial capacity and the possibility of supplying against season.

With 3,7 million hectares under organic monitoring during 2019, Argentina ranks 2nd in the world ranking for certified organic area, only after Australia. This is mainly due to livestock production that occupies 3,4 million hectares, while 238 thousand correspond to surface area for plant production. In this context, there is an important growth in the harvested area of blueberries, having gone from 156 hectares in 2011 to 1.001 hectares in 2019.

The production of blueberries in Argentina is located at a latitude in which there are temperature ranges and marked seasons of the year that make the fruit have a higher sugar content and therefore a sweeter flavor. At the same time, production is more natural as a result of soils rich in organic matter and nutrients, as well as a natural environment that does not favor the development of pests, allowing crops to be very healthy and environmental intervention to be minimal. All this, added to the fact that the water quality is so good that it does not need any type of intervention, results in organic production being able to occur very naturally.

Organic certification with approval for the EU, Japan and Switzerland

A fundamental characteristic that has made this prestigious position possible for the country from the beginning is its standard and control system. In this regard, Facundo Soria, Coordinator of the Organic Production Area of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of the Nation, explained that "since the 90s the country has organic regulations similar in their requirements to those of



the European Union, who immediately recognized us as a third country, which allowed us to quickly access and position ourselves as a reliable supplier in the main consumer market for organic products at that time. After a few years, Argentina gave a legal protection to the entire system, through Law 25.127 of 1999 ". Currently the Argentine organic certification has approval for the European Union, Japan and Switzerland, and is in negotiations to achieve equivalences with the United States and South Korea. "These equivalences allow Argentina to reach more and more consumers. Argentine organic products, especially fruits, are highly recognized abroad, not only because of the country's prestige and the endorsement given by SENASA, but also because of the intrinsic quality of the products. "

The evolution of organic blueberry production was slow at first, and as knowledge spread, growth was unstoppable. Francisco Estrada, representative of the Argentine Blueberry Committee - ABC, explained that "in the NOA, the climatic factor has allowed the transition to organic production to be made easily, in addition to the fact that there is a clear global trend for consumers to choose products with these characteristics". In this area, between 80% and 90% of the production is organic or is in the process of being certified.

European Union and the United States, the main export destinations In 2019, 47.922 tons of organic fruits were exported. The main producing provinces were Río Negro (40%), Tucumán (22%) and Chubut (17%). In the case of Tucumán, lemons and blueberries stand out. The exported volume of blueberries in its different categories went from 697.979 kilos in 2015 to 2.206.935 kilos in 2019. Regarding fresh blueberries, there was a growth of 70% in 2019 versus 2018, reaching 1.907 tons, ranking third in volume of organic fruits, behind pear and apple.

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