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Chilean prune output drops

Projected volume increases wiped out by last September's freeze

Chilean prune production will be lower in the coming season due to the impact of last September's freezing temperatures. Andrés Rodríguez of the Chilean Prune Association said the cold snap had put paid to an anticipated increase in production. Around 62,568 tonnes of prime material was harvested, which when added to the 558 tonnes carried over from last season, equates to an export crop of 56,182 tonnes for 2014/15.

Adverse climatic conditions also led to a 23 per cent fall in exports of Chilean

prunes in 2013/14, during which 59,424 tonnes were shipped compared with 76,726 tonnes a year earlier. Insufficient cold hours in the winter months followed by high temperatures in the spring affected blossoming and resulted in a lighter crop, according to Andrés Rodríguez of Chile Prunes, who said despite the shortfall, the season was characterised by excellent quality and good sizes.

Shipments to Russia fell by 50 per cent to 8,546 tonnes compared with 17,259 tonnes in 2012/13, while

sendings to Germany fell from 5,358 tonnes to 4,554 tonnes, a decrease of 15 per cent. Exports to Italy and Poland also fell by 35 per cent and 27 per cent respectively.

However, Mexico saw an 11 per cent volume increase, taking 9,011 tonnes in 2013/14 compared with 8,084 tonnes a year earlier.

