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## Brazilian papayas feeling effects of El Niño



Weather phenomenon causing abundance of smaller, sweeter Golden papayas

**N**orth American papaya importer HLB Specialities is reporting an unusually large volume of small Golden papayas due to the effect of the current El Niño conditions in Brazil.

However, the unprecedented drought in the growing region means fruit is showing a high sugar content and intense sweet flavour due to its small size, the company said.

HLB Specialities is the largest importer of Brazilian papayas into the US and Canada. According to Caliman Agricola, HLB's main Brazilian papaya supplier and one of the world's largest growers and exporters of this fruit, the state of Espirito Santo normally receives 900-1200mm of rain per year. In 2015 the precipitation levels did not reach 600mm, which places a strain on production.

"In spite of our growers' sophisticated irrigation system, nothing replaces natural rainfall, and the fruits are ripening before they grow to the usual size," explained Lorenz Hartmann de Barros, director of sales at HLB Specialities.

Commercial Golden papaya production is concentrated on sizes 8, 9, and 10, with each fruit weighing on average 15-12oz.

"Those sizes normally make up 80 per cent of production, but currently the growers are seeing over 50 per cent of the crop yield in sizes 10 and 12, which weigh 12-10oz," said Hartmann de Barros.

This smaller fruit is showing exceptionally sweet flavour, since it is maturing faster under high temperatures, dry conditions with low humidity.

"Now is the right time

to try Brazilian Caliman papayas, because they are very sweet, with a pleasant aroma, and as always, extremely healthy," Hartmann de Barros continued.

Caliman papayas are FairTrade Certified and non-GMO. HLB Specialities imports a variety of tropical fruits, including organic and conventional Formosa papayas, FairTrade Golden Caliman papayas, rambutan, goldenberries, mangoes, avocados, and limes through its US headquarters in Pompano Beach, FL. Its sister company HLB Tropical Food supplies top retailers and wholesalers in Europe through its location in Kelsterbach, next to the Frankfurt/Main airport.