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First Ecuadorean Hass heading for Europe



Mira Fruit, the company that packed the fruit, is planning to send five containers in the next two months

The first trial shipment of Hass avocados from northern Ecuador is on its way to Spain, after being shipped from the port of Guayaquil last weekend.

According to a report in *El Universo*, the 20-tonne consignment was grown by a number of small producers in Carchi, Imbabura and Pichincha and packed by Mira Fruit, which set up its own packing facility earlier this year.

Mira Fruit's Andrés Reina said the company plans to send five containers between now and December to Spain, the Netherlands and Russia.

In addition to the avocados from the Northern Sierra, the company is also planning to pack fruit grown in Ecuador's Santa Elena region from next year.

Mira Fruit, which was created from the merger of Spanish companies Ecolijar

Group and Sherry Quality, has ambitious plans for avocado exports. Its facility has the capacity to pack up to three 20-tonne containers per day.

Thanks to the increase in global demand, Hass avocados have been identified by Ecuador's Ministry of Agriculture as one of the non-traditional products with high export potential.

Up to October of this year, plant health authority Agrocalidad certified 666,278kg of avocados for export, according to data from the Ministry of Agriculture.

It is estimated that there are around 400ha of Hass avocados planted in the Sierra and 250ha on the Coast. One of the fastest growing areas is on the Santa Elena peninsula.

Hass avocado organisation Corpoaguante,

which brings together 24 growers, estimates that in five years' time plantings will have reached 5,000ha.

Mira Fruit is also planning to carry out trial shipments of the larger, traditional avocado consumed in Ecuador.