



By Maura  
Maxwell

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## Argofruta set for another year of growth

The Petrolina-based company's export manager, Julia Briso, outlines the company's plans for the year ahead



**H**ow have you had to change the way you do business during the pandemic?

**Julia Briso:** The increased restrictions have, unsurprisingly, had numerous repercussions for the business. It has made forecasting consumption rates much more difficult, for example, due the market instability caused by lockdowns.

Furthermore, ports and government infrastructure have also been affected, resulting in delays to our operations which have been made more challenging due to social distancing measures and increased security protocols.

Despite this, we remain resilient for the sake of our customers and are proud of our teams for having overcome testing challenges last year.

**What plans do you have for the coming year?**

**JB:**

This year we are making a number of important investments in our table grape operation. We are building a new packhouse exclusively for grapes that will have a packaging capacity of 100 tonnes per day and are investing in 40ha of new production.

With a renewed focus on sustainability, we are also planning to implement Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade certificate in our grape production areas and also pay closer attention to solar energy generation.

Lastly, we are planning a new range for the domestic market with a focus on individual portion size.

**How do you see the European market outlook for 2021? Do you think that demand will continue to rise because consumers are increasingly looking for healthy products?**

**JB:** In general, while consumers may have a renewed focus on healthier foods,

imported fruits come at a higher price and risk a decrease in demand with the onset of any economic crises.

We also see vulnerability in fruits where consumption is connected with wholesale markets and the foodservice sectors (hotels, restaurants and catering), as is the case of airfreighted mango and lemon exports.

Brexit could bring new opportunities to the extent that it puts us on an equal footing in with other competing countries like Mexico and Peru with regard to tariffs for fruits like lemons and grape. But Brazil, still does not compete on a level playing field in the European Union because it pays tariffs that other countries do not have to pay.

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<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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