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## Westfalia sends first Colombian Hass to South Korea



The 18-tonne shipment marks the opening of another new market for Colombian avocados

**W**estfalia Colombia, part of the Westfalia Fruit Group, has carried out the first shipment of Colombian-grown Hass avocados to South Korea. General manager Pedro Aguilar said the company was proud to lead Colombia's charge into this market.

"As a team we have worked closely with the Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA) and the Korean government to ensure that the specific protocols were met and I am very happy to say that 18 tonnes of best quality Colombian avocados can now be enjoyed by Korean consumers," he said.

"As part of the Westfalia Group with production in established origins such as Peru, Mexico, Chile, the US and South Africa, we work with many government authorities and regulators to open markets by driving processes and phytosanitary protocols between countries for the benefit of the whole supply chain."

Globally, Westfalia's agronomy and technical teams work closely with many local growers to help them achieve international accreditations including GlobalGAP and GRASP as well as meeting the specific criteria for new markets.

"It is our expertise in this area that differentiates Westfalia Colombia from other local producers and ensures that we are the supplier of choice to many emerging markets, including South Korea," Aguilar continued.

"It is good to know we are helping to create a long-term benefit for many rural communities as well as providing employment at our packhouses in Antioquia".

Avocado consumption throughout Asia and specifically South Korea continues to grow. South Korea's per capita consumption is currently estimated at just 260g, compared to the more

developed markets such as the UK at 1.5kg per capita or the US at 3.5kg per capita.

Westfalia Colombia exported over 10,000 tonnes of avocados between May and September last year from its state-of-the-art packhouses and storage facilities. The company said the continuous development of agronomy and growing techniques, helped it ensure the responsible use of resources and optimum productivity.

Historically, Westfalia Fruit Colombia has exported to the European market. More recently, it has been working closely with the ICA to successfully achieve efficient phytosanitary applications and monitoring to meet the robust requirements of new markets including the US, Canada, Costa Rica, Argentina, Japan, UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Westfalia Fruit Colombia was the first to

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export home-grown avocados to the US, Costa Rica and Japan, and continues to be the largest Colombian exporter of Hass avocado to both markets as well as to Argentina.

“Across the world, consumers’ love of avocados continues to grow,” Aguilar said. “To ensure Colombian Hass avocados can access the international market, as an industry we need to continue working closely with growers in partnership with the ICA, regulators

and accreditors to ensure ethical and sustainable practices are evidenced throughout the supply chain and naturally part of our daily operations to benefit us all.”

Alk Brand, CEO of the Westfalia Fruit Group added: “Delivering the first Colombian avocados to South Korea is a great example of how working together locally and as a global group can benefit all stakeholders, including local growers and our international customers”.

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