

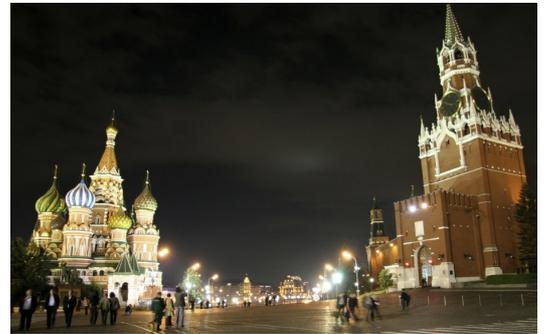
The international marketing magazine for fresh produce buyers in Europe



By Maura Maxwell

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Ecuador seeks closer ties with Russia



The Andean nation wants to boost bilateral cooperation on technical, health, phytosanitary and customs issues

Ecador is looking to strengthen its trade links with Russia and diversify its product offer in that market through the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU).

Ecuador is already the main supplier of the Russian banana market, with 98.1 per cent of Russian imports coming from the Andean country and it is hoped that forging closer links could allow it to boost exports of additional fruits and vegetables among other products.

Speaking to the Russian press ahead of a planned visit to that country in October, foreign minister Pablo Campana said: "In order to pave the way for the strengthening of bilateral trade regulations, we need to develop the instruments that will allow us to build the commercial relationships and establish areas for bilateral cooperation, such as collaboration between technical, health, phytosanitary and customs agencies".

The minister will travel to Russia on 15-18 October and meet with phytosanitary authorities to present Ecuador's new model for investment management.

Campana said the Russian market is of crucial importance to Ecuador, having become the fourth most important destination for the country's non-oil exports including bananas, seafood and flowers since 2016.

The minister said the granting of mutual tariff preferences and the reduction of non-tariff barriers were a priority for the Andean nation.

He also indicated that the negotiation of a memorandum of understanding between the Eurasian Economic Commission and the Ecuadorean government is now "practically complete".

The EEU is a regional integration body that includes Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

Between 2010 and 2016 exports from Ecuador to Russia increased by 5 per cent in value and 4 per cent in volume according to data from the Central Bank of Ecuador.

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