Okra spearheads Honduran export drive

Oriental vegetables are a major generator of export revenue for the Central American country

New trade agreements helped lift Honduran vegetable exports by 4.5 per cent in 2017.

Germán Pérez of the National Association of Industrialists (Andi), said 146,000 tonnes of vegetables were sold overseas compared with 140,000 tonnes in 2016, making Honduras the leading vegetable exporter in Central America.

Export revenue grew 5 per cent to US$45m, placing Honduras ahead of Guatemala with US$38m.

Production of oriental vegetables such as okra is rising steadily, fuelled by demand in new markets.

"The opening of Asian markets are providing opportunities to continue this growth," Pérez said.

Cuasa is the country's biggest okra producer, plans to increase its okra acreage by 20 per cent in 2018. The company is also diversifying its offer with new products including courgette and Yellow squash.

"We are the only producer in the world that cultivates okra throughout the year in a sustainable manner,” the company's marketing manager Abril Flores told Fruitnet.

"2017 was our most successful season ever in Europe as it was the first year in which we were able to maintain a year-round presence in the market, competing with local producers."