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## Chilean blueberry potential skyrockets

Annual production of the fruit in Chile is tipped to reach an impressive 95m tonnes by 2010

South America's leading fruit exporter is seeking out new export markets to absorb the country's exponential rise in blueberry production.

National berry organisation Berries of Chile predicts blueberry production in Chile to reach more than 95m tonnes by the 2010/11 season.

Chilean grower body Fedefruta claims the blueberry crop has risen by 40 per cent alone this season and,

with demand for the fruit estimated to be growing at a rate of 10 per cent each year, the association's blueberry committee president, Gabriel Ormeño, is urging suppliers to open up new export markets to absorb the growing offer and ensure prices remain stable.

According to figures from Decofrut, prices for Chilean blueberries have fallen slightly this season due to the large increase in volumes. During weeks

two to seven, the average price for a 1.5kg carton in the US was US\$10.90, compared with US\$13.40 during the same period last year.

Currently, there are some 10m hectares of land planted with blueberries throughout Chile.

