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By Maura Maxwell

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Chilean export volumes rise in 2016/17

Shipment to North America and Europe grew, while exports to Asia and the Middle East were down on the previous season



Chilean fruit exports for the 2016/17 campaign grew 4.3 per cent in volume to 2.598m tonnes according to Asoex. But the figures fell short of the record 2.654m tonnes exported in 2012/13, reflecting the impact of frosts and heavy rains in several regions.

"Despite the fact that overall volume of shipments was higher than in the previous year, the season was affected by adverse climatic events, notably frost and unexpected rains, that negatively impacted production and disrupted exports," said Asoex president Ronald Bown.

"In addition, harvesting of practically all fruits occurred between two and three weeks earlier than usual, which led to an earlier start to shipments and caused an overlap with local production and disrupting the market."

Bown said the effects had been particularly severe in the US. Although shipments to this market finished 9.7 per cent up on 2015/16, returns were down significantly on the previous season.

Meanwhile, exports to Europe grew by 8.7 per cent to 596,891 tonnes, making it the second fastest growing market in 2016/17 behind the US.

Exports to Asia and Latin America registered a slight decrease of 0.6 per cent and 2.2 per cent, while shipments to the Middle East fell by 8 per cent, explained mainly by lower exports to Saudi Arabia (-5 per cent) and the United Arab Emirates (-14 per cent).

Table grapes were the leading export, with volumes climbing 6.5 per cent on 2015/16 to 732,498 tonnes. Apples were second with exports of 616,694 tonnes, followed by kiwifruit on 179,393 tonnes.

The biggest increases in shipments were in avocados (+36.5 per cent), pears (+17 per cent), cherries (+13.8 per cent) and blueberries (+13.7 per cent).

Together, the following five markets accounted almost 60 per cent of exports: the US with 869,296 tonnes; China and Hong Kong (269,117 tonnes), the Netherlands (186,704 tonnes), Colombia (109,428 tonnes) and the UK (107,859 tonnes).

Meanwhile, China (not including Hong Kong), consolidates its position as the second target market for Chilean fruit.

"China has become a destination of key strategic importance for Chile. In fact, thanks to the efforts of the industry, together with the public sector, we have become the leading supplier of fresh fruit to China," Ronald Bown said.

Meanwhile, Asoex announced that a

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

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Chilean delegation visited Vietnam last week to meet with representatives from the country's phytosanitary body with the aim of reactivating exports to that market.

At present some Chilean fruits are prevented from entering Vietnam as a

result of phytosanitary regulations being updated. However, Chile managed to gain access to the market for grapes in 2016 and is confident that further progress can be made to opening up the market for other products.