

Britain's favourite fresh produce magazine since 1895



By Camellia Aebischer

Wednesday 17th April 2019, 6:07 GMT

Chile patiently awaits quality kiwifruit

New harvesting parameters set this season for better quality supply in terms of flavour and storage potential



To better compete in the busy kiwifruit market, Chile's Kiwi Committee has implemented stricter harvest parameters through its Maturity Assistant Programme which have delayed the start of the kiwifruit season.

Parameters have been tightened again this year, with the aim to supply markets with better quality produce of good flavour and sweetness, as well as storage potential to allow for strategic distribution in line with marketing opportunities.

Chile's first green kiwifruit for the season were harvested on 9 March, and picking in the major production zones is now beginning.

Chile's Kiwi Committee said a cooler summer's end and beginning of autumn has resulted in slower starch degradation, therefore increasing sugar levels. It also means there are lower volumes than in previous campaigns but will make arrivals to the market more gradual.

A majority of Chile's kiwifruit supply is exported, with this year forecast at 175,000 tonnes. Hayward (green) is expected to account for 94.4 per cent of the share, with yellow kiwifruit making up 3.4 per cent and other varieties making up the rest.

Total supply this year is expected to be down around 5 per cent from last year's 184,000 tonnes.

The committee said this

is largely due to a decrease in planted hectares and adverse weather affecting a small production region in Chile's north.

Supporting a quality harvest, the Kiwifruit Committee and Asoex said they will carry out a number of promotional campaigns across key markets like India, and hold a media campaign for importers in China and Europe.

Asoex will also launch a campaign in the US this season through its California office to promote consumption of Chilean kiwifruit, highlighting the benefits of the region and positioning it as a quality, best value product.