

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By Maura  
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## Clearer picture emerging of Chilean fruit losses

Initial estimates from producer association Fedefruta put losses to fruit production at US\$150m



**C**hilean fruit producers have already lost US\$150m as a result of last week's unprecedented heavy rains and the final tally is likely to be much higher, according to producer organisation Fedefruta.

"The US\$150m figure is preliminary and does not include the losses that will be seen later due to eventual rotting and other phenomena," said Valenzuela, adding that auxiliary industries like packaging, transportation will also be impacted.

"There are producers who have already lost everything, hundreds of small farmers that are facing a very complicated situation, and the state must take emergency measures to help all of them," he said.

A survey of the damage by the producer

organisation shows that an estimated 53 per cent of mid-season table grape varieties have been lost in the affected regions.

"Regarding stonefruit there is 30 per cent damage in volume per hectare at harvest, and in blueberries, 32 per cent of what was left to harvest in the orchards, mainly from Ñuble in the south," it continued.

Finally, the estimated damage in apples and pears is 21 per cent of volume per hectare."

By region, Fedefruta said that 78.2 per cent of fruit producers in the Valparaíso Region reported some degree of damage from the rains, as well as 66.7 per cent of growers in the Metropolitan Region and 85 per cent of growers in O'Higgins.

Meanwhile, 57.2 per cent of producers in Maule reported some kind of problem

due to the inclement weather. Among those who had damage, 79.7 per cent reported fruit splitting, 41.5 per cent fruit drop, 17.8 per cent said trees had been damaged and 9.7 reported damage to vineyards and orchard structures.

The farmers surveyed by Fedefruta have requested urgent financial assistance to help them recover the fruit and prevent it from rotting, as well the extension of credits and access to financing tools to overcome the crisis.

Agricultural unions estimate that 10-15 per cent of jobs will be lost due to the lower harvest.

"Fedefruta has requested meetings with the Ministry of Agriculture, Finance and Economy, as well as Corfo, to deliver this information and seek immediate solutions," Valenzuela said.

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