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An update on Chilean grapes and cherries

By

Keith Loria

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[The Chilean Grape Committee](#)'s latest estimate for the season came out on Jan. 9, and export volume on table grapes is expected to stabilize at approximately 68 million boxes this season.

The ASOEX Table Grape Committee's projection highlights an increase of 1.2 percent compared to the third forecast delivered by the sector last December, with fresh Chilean grapes reaching 67,741,801 boxes and 555,483 tons, according to Karen Brux, managing director of the Chilean Fresh Fruit Association.

"It should be noted that, although the new estimate is higher than what was projected in December, it shows a decrease of 8.9 percent compared to the previous season," Brux said. "A decrease that is explained mainly by a varietal replacement within the industry."

In this regard, Iván Marambio, president of ASOEX noted the new estimate shows a slight increase, reflecting that little by little, shipments are returning to normal, driven by the increase in exports of new varieties, especially white and red, versus a decrease in shipments of traditional varieties.

"This is a very positive sign since it reaffirms the work and efforts of the industry by promoting varietal replacement that is beginning to be felt in our shipments," Marambio said. "This is also confirmed by our consumers, who will be able to enjoy an increasingly better Chilean grape."

Along the same lines, Ignacio Caballero, coordinator of the Table Grape Committee, pointed out that the new varieties will reach 36,724,746 boxes, while the traditional ones, including Red Globe, will reach 31,017,055 boxes.

"We continue to show in this new projection that more than 50 percent of our exports will be of new varieties, especially white and red," he said. "The new white varieties will exceed 13 million boxes, the black ones four million and the red ones 18 million boxes."

Among the new white varieties, Arra 15, Timpson, Sweet Globe, Autumncrisp, Blanc Seedless and Cotton Candy stand out. Among the black ones, Sweet Favors, Sable Seedless, Sweet Sapphire, Maylen and Midnight Beauty are tops. For red, Timco, Allison, Sweet Celebration, Scarlotta Seedless, Arra 29, Jack Salute, Candy Hearts and Ralli Seedless are the most in-demand varieties.

Now, when it comes to destinations, Caballero explained that North America will continue to be the main fresh Chilean grape destination with an estimate of 37,218,578 boxes, followed by Asia with 13,923,978 boxes. While Europe is in third position with 9,059,231 boxes.

The coordinator highlighted that in the last meeting of the committee, and approval to carry out a fifth estimate would be announced the first week of February. He also noted that the estimates fluctuate

based on external variables that affect the volume, availability, dates and destinations of grapes, such as weather conditions, freight, availability of labor and other global logistics variables. external to the sector.

When it comes to cherries, the Asoex Cherries Committee estimated exports would grow to 80 million boxes, amounting to around 400,000 tons. And though it's less than the 89 million boxes estimated last October, it will still set a new record for shipments of these fruits worldwide.

“Cherries have become the main fruit exported by Chile, there is no doubt about that, especially given the importance of this industry for the country’s economy, the generation of jobs and the positive image of the country generated around it,” Marambio said. “So far, we are very optimistic with the development of the cherry season, as it has been a much better year than the past, especially in logistical terms, which has allowed us to untie knots and arrive with the fruit in condition, quality and time that the markets expect.”

[Keith Loria](#)

About Keith Loria |

A graduate of the University of Miami, Keith Loria is a D.C.-based award-winning journalist who has been writing for major publications for close to 20 years on topics as diverse as real estate, food and sports. He started his career with the Associated Press and has held high editorial positions at magazines aimed at healthcare, sports and technology. When not busy writing, he can be found enjoying time with his wife, Patricia, and two daughters, Jordan and Cassidy.

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