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**Chilean blueberry estimate down 13 percent from last season**

The Chilean Blueberry Committee, together with iQonsulting, updated its export estimate for the 2023-24 season, forecasting exports of 76,500 tons of fresh blueberries. This new figure reflects a decrease of 7 percent compared to the first estimate made in October, and a decrease of 13 percent from 2022-23.

"This new forecast takes into consideration the effect of the rains during the first two weeks of November, as well as other associated climatic events such as frost and hail," said Andrés Armstrong, executive director, who pointed out that the fruit is developing and progressing similar to previous seasons, as are weekly exports. "We're seeing a pattern similar to the average of recent seasons, which will generate an initial peak of more than 5,000 tons in week 49. Meanwhile, the period of highest volumes, with up to 8,000 tons weekly, will occur between Weeks 51-2023 and 03-2024."

Armstrong reported that, to date, exports of fresh blueberries are 18 percent greater than last season, and "the inclusion of new varieties and strong decrease of non-recommended varieties are dominating our exports." He also highlighted that, regarding the types of shipments, "air shipments have led exports to date with 1,422 tons and a growth of 170 percent compared to the same period last season. Maritime shipments are starting to increase, reaching 495 tons, which is 56 percent less than what was shipped during the same period last season."

Year-to-date shipments to the U.S. are rapidly ramping up, with 276 tons exported during Week 45. In total, 892 tons of fresh blueberries have been shipped to the U.S. this season, compared to just 357 at the same time last year.

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